

Asante Ivory Trumpets in Time, Place, and Context: An Analysis of a Field Study

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A note on the spelling of Twi words

Certain words in the Twi language of the Asante contain phonetics with different phonemic values difficult to express in Roman script. For the purpose of representing such words, the marked vowels *ɛ* and *ɔ* are used. In Twi, the sound of *ɛ* is as the *e* in “led,” or the *ai* in “said.” The sound of *ɔ* is as the *o* in “oral,” or the *au* in “caught.” These distinctions are important in words such as *seseɛ* and *bosoɔ*. The font *ɲ* sounds as the *ŋ* in “sing” and appears in the Gã word *koɲ* and Helen E. Hause’s spelling of the Twi word *aben*.¹

A digraph is a group of two successive letters whose phonetic value is a single sound. Several occur in Twi and in this article. The sound of *ky* is as the *ch* in “church.” The sound of *hy* is as the *sh* in “shell.” The sound of *kw* is as the *qu* in “quack.” The sound of *dw* is as *ju*, the sound of *nw* is as *nyw*, and the sound of *tw* is as *tshw*; these last three have no exact equivalents in English. In Twi grammar, singular nouns beginning with the letter *a* begin with the sound of the digraph *mm* in their plural forms, such as in *aben* and *mmen*, which mean “horn” and “horns” respectively.

This article is based on my 2001 fieldwork on the Asante ivory trumpets in The Republic of Ghana, the former Gold Coast of Africa. The seven ivory trumpet ensembles of the Asantehene² (the King of Asante) are the *ntahera*, the *kwakwrannya*, the *mmentia*, the *nkontwema*, the *amoakwa*, the *nkrawoben*, and the *nkofe*. The purpose of the study is to place the Asante ivory trumpet tradition in its historical and cultural context and to examine ensemble structures and musical logistics. Most of the article’s sources are derived from interviews, field recordings, transcriptions, and analyses, but I also corroborated oral traditions with written, archaeological, and linguistic accounts. The findings constitute a substantial contribution to our understanding of tusk-trumpets in Ghana while also leading to new hypotheses concerning their use and significance.

Introduction

A brief background to the Akan and Asante of Ghana

The Asante, the founders of the Asante Empire (ca. 1700), are a part of the Akan people who constitute about half the population of modern Ghana. Adanse, south of Kumase in the

Asante region, has been identified as the cradle of Akan civilization. The Akan migrated in clans to the present Asante region, according to Adu Boahen, from around 500 AD onward and formed early states.³ By the middle of the seventeenth century a number of states, including Kumase, Dwaben, Kokofu, Nsutu, and Bekwai, had been founded by the Oyoko clan and eventually united to create the Asante federation, the purpose of which was to fight the oppressive Denkyira, whom they defeated in 1701.⁴ The term “Asante” derives from the Twi phrase *osa nti*, which means “because of war.” Osei Tutu of the Oyoko became the first Asante king, i.e., the Asantehene. The suffix *-hene* means “chief,” and in the case of Asante, “king.”

Oral tradition⁵ tells how the Oyoko, Aduana, Bretuo, Asona, Ekoona, Asekyiri, and Agona clans migrated northward from Asantemanso, where it is said the people emerged from a hole in the ground.⁶ Ivor Wilks maintained that this myth about a people arriving to a region from a down or up direction, instead of east, west, north, or south, indicates a people’s belief in indigenous status.⁷ The Akan believe they are first and foremost, Akan deriving from the root *kan*, which means “first and foremost.”⁸ But Wilks also commented that it is likely the hole-in-the-ground myth represents the beginnings of agriculture.⁹ This same myth prevails in Hani, where it is said the hole is at Begho.¹⁰

The Akan language, Twi, belongs to the Kwa group of languages of the Niger-Congo.¹¹ Migration theories have been explored, but searches for Akan roots become precarious when oral claims are without supporting evidence. The modern nation of Ghana took its name in 1957 from the first West African kingdom, the Kingdom of Ghana (ca. 500-1230). Before 1957 Ghana was known as the Gold Coast, named after the metal the Akan have been harvesting and exporting for more than a millennium. However, some oral traditions tell that the Akan, and thus the Asante, are descended from the ancient Ghanaians. Current scholarship now examines the connection as a possible avenue of cultural diffusion. It is also believed that the Akan court at Begho developed from contact with the Mande from Mali, which postdates the Kingdom of Ghana, reaching its peak in the fifteenth century.¹²

Asante, unknown prior to 1698, emerged as a political entity in the later part of the seventeenth century. Earlier in that century, groups of Twi-speakers drifted northward from Adanse, south of present Kumase, and around 1660 the Oyoko arrived under the leadership Obiri Yeboah, who demonstrated statecraft and imported European firearms from the coast. Oyoko was struggling for control of Kwaman when Osei Tutu I, the first Asantehene, was chosen to succeed the deceased Obiri Yeboah. Tutu knew statecraft, for he had previously served at the Denkyira and Akwamu courts. Moving northward, Osei Tutu defeated the chieftains of Domaa, Tafo, Kaase, and Amakom, and established supremacy in Kwaman. Prior to 1698 he built the new capital at Kumase and received the allegiance of conquered states to form the Asante federation.¹³

The field study

I conducted field research on the Asante royal ivory trumpet ensembles from September 2001 through January 2002 on an invitation from the Catholic Archbishop of Kumase, Ghana, the Most Rev. Peter Kwasi Sarpong. The archbishop is also a cultural anthropologist

who has previously conducted fieldwork with Asante court trumpet ensembles.¹⁴ Sarpong's fellowship provided me access to the Asante royal family and an opportunity to receive permission from the Asantehene Osei Tutu II to study the ensembles. The music is a protected tradition associated with the court and spirituality. I performed for the Asantehene on an ivory trumpet at Manhyia Palace for the Akwasidae Ancestor Veneration on 9 December 2001.

For the duration of my study I lived in Santase, a few miles southwest of central Kumase and adjacent to Frankyenebra, the home of the *nkontwema* trumpet ensemble. I frequently visited and stayed in Kokobriko, the village of the *ntahera* trumpets, and I made sojourns to locations where other court trumpet players live, including Manhyia, Asokwa, Suame, Ahwerewam, Bonwire, Ejisu, and Asikuma. I collected field recordings and interviews, and made transcriptions and cultural analyses. In addition, I consulted with J.H. Kwabena Nketia at the University of Ghana, Legon, about the study, and he told me that my task would be to obtain musical information that the musicians probably had never tried to explain before.

Few studies have been done on the Akan ivory trumpets. The first musical analysis of an ivory trumpet ensemble in Ghana was Nketia's analysis of a *ntahera* in 1962.¹⁵ He stated



Figure 1

The Kumase *ntahera* group (all photographs by the author, Ghana, 2001).

that the trumpets are used for communication through variable tones that reproduce verbal texts in much the same manner as drums. The leading part, he noted, imitates the falling intonation of speech, and the ensemble plays a hoquet over which the lead trumpet “talks.”¹⁶ The most notable study, by William G. Carter, is on the Dwaben *ntahe*.¹⁷

Classification of the tusk-trumpet

Akan court trumpets are ivory and made from the tusks of elephants. The lip-receiver is cut into the concave side near the narrow tip. When held and blown, a tusk arcs subtly and horizontally around the blower’s face, projecting the sound sideways and slightly backward. The instruments can be classified as side-blown trumpets, lateral trumpets, or transverse trumpets. In the system of Sachs and Hornbostel they are lip-vibrated aerophones, what Anthony Baines has termed *labrosones*, from the Latin *labrosus*, which means “lip,” and *sonus*, which means “sound.”¹⁸ But following R.S. Rattray’s discussion of the *tympanophonetic*¹⁹ *atump*, the Asante talking drums, I prefer to use the Greek *cheilophonetic*²⁰ when discussing lip-vibrated aerophones used for surrogate speech. A surrogate speaker’s lips, rather than the vocal chords, vibrate through the tusk and produce word-tones. But when trumpet tones are blown as signals, they may be sub-classified as *cheilosemantic*, as Rattray had classified drum signals as *tympanosemantic*.²¹

Victor-Charles Mahillon catalogued the tusk trumpet as *trompe en ivoire*,²² under the broader classification of *instruments à embouchure*.²³ Following Mahillon, I classify the Asante blowing-tusk as an “ivory trumpet,” although classification as a “horn” cannot be ruled out. Most European references to the instrument call it a “horn,” but I believe the term is misleading since it is a tusk in spite of its conical bore. Organologists have stated that for a tube to be a trumpet, at least two-thirds of its bore must be cylindrical.²⁴ Since this is not the case for tusks, they are acoustically “horns,” but for contextual reasons I prefer to classify them as trumpets.

Carter, quoting Nketia, states that African “horns” are made from animal horns or elephant tusks, and “trumpets” are made from wood.²⁵ But elsewhere Nketia uses both terms interchangeably for Akan tusks.²⁶ The archaeologist Merrick Posnansky uses the term “ivory trumpets,”²⁷ apparently to distinguish them from horn as a material. But the Asante generically say “horn” when translating the Akan Twi word *aben* into English, for this term has been widely used throughout their recorded history.

Sarpong used the term “horn” in his publications, but he told me that the instruments should be called by their Twi terms, *aben* for a singular horn and *mmen* for plural.²⁸ Helen E. Hause spelled *aben* as *aben* and recorded the term as meaning “animal horn(s),” but by association becoming “the generic term for a wind instrument made from a horn or an elephant tusk.”²⁹ The Asante, however, formerly had a specialized term for an elephant tusk that differentiated it from a horn. This term is *asokoben*, or *asokoben*, and it derives from the prefix form of *esono*, meaning “elephant,” combined with *ko*, the prefix form of the term for animal horns in the Gã language of Asante’s southeastern neighbors, with the suffix form of *aben*, “horn.” I think that since the Asante conceptualize a tusk as functionally different from a horn, there is reasonable justification to differentiate tusk further by using the English

term “trumpet,” or even better, simply “tusk.” In colloquial Twi the word *aben* has replaced *asokoben*, but the conceptual difference remains, and the tusks’ social and spiritual functions at the courts parallel that of trumpets elsewhere.

Regarding the terms used for the musicians, a singular trumpet blower is an *abenhyeni*, as the suffix *-ni* denotes a single individual. Trumpet blowers are thus *mmenhyefoɔ*, the suffix *-foɔ* denoting a group of people. The infix *-hye-* is complex and is from the word *ohyen*, which means “to blow an *aben*” or a “car or taxi horn.”³⁰ The term means more than honking. It is denotative of a trumpet blower making a statement, for much of their performance, even in musical contexts, is spoken phrases in the surrogate language understood by the *mmenhyefoɔ* and the chiefs. Surrogate speech is spoken tonal text recited from the vibrating lips of the performer. In the case of the Asante *mmenhyefoɔ* the speeches are usually praises or “strong names,” called *mmananee*, to the Asantehene.

Ivory trumpet making

An elephant’s tusks are its incisor teeth; they grow continuously from the elephant’s upper jaw throughout its life. Tusks grow conically hollow for one third of their length from the proximal end. Ivory craftsmen commissioned by the courts sand and file tusks down to trumpet size at their workshops and chisel rectangular lip-receivers, 2.5 x 1.5cm, into their concave sides near the narrow end. For speaking trumpets they drill a vent hole into the apex that can be manipulated by the thumb to produce a higher tone when it is open.

I met the carvers in Kumase’s Ananta District where the Asante’s tusks traditionally have been sent for trumpet making. Kong in northern Ivory Coast had been a source of tusks in Ghana for centuries, although formerly they also came from northern Ghana, particularly Damongo, where the Asante kings have had game reserves.

Elephant hunting and ivory importation have been prohibited in Ghana since the Elephant Conservation Act of 1988. Manfred Kofi Aduamah, the master carver, told me that the Asantehene is sparing with the ivory stock. Damaged trumpets are salvaged, not replaced. I have seen numerous cracked tusks bound in industrial black electrical tape, still in use, and sometimes two broken pieces are attached together to produce one longer trumpet. Several trumpets were so badly damaged by 1997 that the reigning Asantehene, Opoku Ware II, commissioned a new trumpet for each of the Kumase trumpet ensembles. In 2001 I saw two ensembles that were missing instruments due to damage.

The trumpets vary in arc length from 33.7 to 85.1cm, depending on the ensemble for which a trumpet is intended and the particular tonal role it has to play in the ensemble. Since the combination of tusks of different lengths blown together gives that group its unique tonal quality, a group must replace a broken tusk with one of identical length. It is not known when the requirements for lengths of tusks were established.

Ghana was the first country to draw up a national strategy for the conservation of elephants. Most Akan tusk-trumpets traditionally have been taken from the Ghanaian forest and savannah elephants. It is believed lately within the Scientific Exploration Society that the Ghanaian elephants are of a distinct genetic or anatomical form.³¹



Figure 2

Drawing of a naturally hollowed tusk by ivory trumpet carver Manfred Kofi Aduamah, indicating where tip and lip-receiver are cut.

Royal context

Akan ivory trumpets are the property of chiefs and are blown only for ceremonial occasions wherein a chief takes part in a spiritual rite that reifies his connection to Asante ancestry. Even in Christian Ghana, traditional Asante religious practices continue in the process of “inculturation,”³² and the Asante maintain their strong practical devotion to their ancestors. Ancestral veneration is made every forty-two days at the Akwasidae festivals, at which the royal Akan are brought into communion with their ancestors. Trumpets, along with drums, bells, and *kwadwomfofo* singers perform at Akwasidae veneration as they do at royal funerals and political inaugurations. Since these groups perform only on such occasions, Nketia has classified their performances as “occasional music” (as well as “court music”).³³ In Nketia’s terms they are not “recreational,” because they are tied to ritual,³⁴ nor are they “incidental,” because they are an integral part of it.³⁵

In Kumase I observed ivory trumpet ensembles performing at two ancestor veneration at Manhyia Palace (the second of which I joined in the performance), four days of funeral services for the Asantehene’s family elder Nana Kakari in November 2001, at the awarding of an honorary doctorate to the Asantehene Osei Tutu II at Kumase University of Science

and Technology, and at numerous rehearsals scheduled especially for my research. In January 2001 the *ntahera* trumpet ensemble from the Dwaden court performed at the inauguration of Ghanaian President John Agyekum Kufuor, and in August 2002 the seven Kumase ensembles performed at the installation of United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan as a traditional Asante chief. Both Kufuor and Annan are from Kumase, and ivory trumpet recitations praise the living Akan leaders as they equally do the Akan ancestors.

The Asante court in Kumase maintains the greatest number of ivory trumpet ensembles in Ghana, for the Asantehene has been the central political authority in the region since Asante's defeat of Denkyira in 1701. Even in modern Ghana the Asantehene has political legitimacy and serves as governor of the Asante region. Paramount chiefs under the Asantehene's jurisdiction are allowed to maintain specific numbers of trumpet and drum ensembles according to their rank. Akan chiefs outside the Asantehene's jurisdiction also have trumpet groups at their courts. The ivory trumpet tradition is widespread in West and Central Africa, being found in Ghana, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, and the Congo.

Kumase trumpet groups

The Asantehene owns seven ivory trumpet ensembles that have been created or acquired through conquests by past Asantehenes, particularly the first, Osei Tutu I. Two of them are assigned to the Queen Mother, the Ohenmaahene. Those at the Asantehene's Manhyia Palace are the *ntahera*, *kwakurannya*, *mmentia*, *nkontwema*, and *nkofe*, each of which will be explained in the course of this article. Those assigned to the Queen Mother—the *amoakwa* and the *nkrawoben*, who perform at her palace and travel with her to Manhyia for events—will also be described. The *amoakwa* and the *nkrawoben* perform together in one group, accompanied by a drum-and-idiophone ensemble called the *tipre*.

In a performance, a lead speaking-trumpet of a group renders *mmaranee* (praise) as a solo passage, and continues rhythmically reciting a catch-phrase from the *mmaranee* over a two-part melorhythmic hocket played by the ensemble. The ensemble melorhythm also is based on the catch-phrase. The melorhythms played by ensembles in accompaniment to spoken *mmaranee* are considered to be songs, or *nuom* in Twi.

The trumpet blowers in Kumase conceptualize two sound types for their groups: the *pee* group and the *paw* group. The trumpets' lengths physically determine these sound types because short tusks produce high pitches, or *pee* sounds, and long tusks produce low pitches, or *paw* sounds. The *mmentia* conceptually hear *pee* or *paw* when blowing to help them produce the correct sound on a respective instrument. These conceptualizations help blowers physically shape their oral cavities in order to create the air volume required to fill a tusk and thereby produce the fullest possible tone on the instrument. A long tusk thus needs greater air volume at a slower velocity. Thinking *paw* dilates a blower's throat and lowers his tongue to produce more air volume. A short tusk requires greater air pressure in order to displace the higher-frequency sound passing through the vibrating lips into the

short tube. Thinking *pee* raises the blower's tongue to facilitate this and create a faster air speed. The *paw* groups (long trumpets) are the *ntahera*, *kwakwrannya*, and *nkofe*. The *pee* groups (short trumpets) are the *mmentia*, *nkontwema*, *amoakwa* and *nkrawoben*.

Musical structure of an ensemble

The lead trumpet, or speaking trumpet, of a group is called *seseɛ*, meaning "speaker." In a song, the *seseɛ* recites the introductory *mmananee* by lipping tones into the tusk in high-low patterns in imitation of Asante spoken language, Asante-Twi.

William G. Carter conducted a well-known study of the Dwaben *ntahera* that focused in part on *seseɛ* spoken text, initially in his master's thesis (1971)³⁶ and then again in his doctoral dissertation (1984).³⁷ Whereas Carter discovered that a speaking trumpet's bound morphemes and attached vowels are carried in one tone, i.e., one tone per two syllables,³⁸ I found that some three-syllable combinations are also carried in just one tone, such as the elemental phrase "*momma so*," which means, "Lift it up!" "Lift it up" directs the blowers to raise their instruments, for the *seseɛ* is beginning a song. Carter indicated that the Dwaben *seseɛ* articulated three syllables,³⁹ whereas I recorded the *kwakwrannya seseɛ* Bernard Asante articulating the entire phrase with only one. The discrepancy exists among the players and not the researchers.

Carter also noted the rolling *r* rendered with a flutter tongue and the nasal *n* blown as two tones, the second slurring upward.⁴⁰ Varied articulations occur amidst the changes of high and low tones of the surrogate Twi the *seseɛ* has mastered. Carter indicated four tone levels: high, low, falling, rising.⁴¹

The ensemble led by the *seseɛ* consists of two divisions of tusks of varying lengths, longer than the *seseɛ*, and grouped by size into high and low tonal clusters. Each instrument contributes a single pitch to its respective cluster. In songs, the clusters are alternated rhythmically in patterns of interlocking high and low tones, particular to each song, making each a unique and identifiable hocket.⁴²

By convention, seven trumpets make an ensemble. The six that blow the two clusters are divided into three sub-groups, *agyesoa*, *afre*, and *bosoɔ*. There are three *agyesoa*, two *afre*, and one *bosoɔ*. The three *agyesoa* and the *bosoɔ* cluster together. The *agyesoa* and *bosoɔ* respond first to the *seseɛ*'s entrance signal and produce the first cluster on a weak pulse. *Agyesoa* means "responder," and the tusks are shorter than the *afre* and *bosoɔ* tusks. The *bosoɔ*, usually the longest tusk, functions as the *agyesoa*'s ground, though it is not certain whether *bosoɔ* means "bass."

The cluster consisting of *agyesoa* and *bosoɔ* alternates with the *afre*, which are longer than the *agyesoa* tusks but approximately the same length as the *bosoɔ*. The *afre* produce a lower cluster and blow rhythmically on the strong pulses of the song. The *afre* lengths are usually closely matched, just a few microtones apart in pitch. On occasion I have heard *afre* players match unisons somehow, whether intentionally or unintentionally. But matching pitch is irrelevant to a group, for the pitches are untempered and their combinations make unique clusters. Metrically, a song begins on the entrance of the *afre*, after response of the *agyesoa*



Figure 3

Philip Asamoah Bonsu of the *nkontwema* group, blowing a *kwakwrannya bosoq*.

and *bosoq* to the *seseq*. Throughout the *hocket*, the *afre* are always on the strong pulses and the *agyesoa* and *bosoq* always respond. Carter noted that *afre* means “one that calls.”⁴³

In the Kumase *ntahera*, the cluster consisting of the *agyesoa* and the *bosoq* can be written in the Western pitches *d*- 10 cents, *d*- 25 cents, *c#*+ 35 cents, and *Bb*+ 20 cents. This cluster alternates with the *afre* cluster *B*- 10 cents and *Bb*- 5 cents. The *seseq* pitch can be expressed as *eb*¹+ 25 cents, the glides of the surrogate speech revolving around it. The *seseq* usually lips the tones considerably, down often as far as a fourth. The *seseq*'s vent hole is at its apex and is manipulated by the thumb. The vent hole facilitates lipping when the open hole is used for the lower lipped tones. Closing the hole facilitates lipping the pitch up again, for the open-holed lower tones allow for less lip movement when slurring back up to the closed-hole fundamental. The open-hole high tone is used only when cueing the ensemble such as after an introduction. The *seseq* player then opens the vent hole and blows strongly the higher open-holed tone, *e*¹- 15 cents, which is produced in the shorter air column created inside the tusk by the open hole. At a song's finale the *seseq* again signals the ensemble to cadence by blowing this open-holed *e*¹- 15. The *agyesoa* and *bosoq* then cease, and the *seseq* and *afre* cadence together on a formula consisting of three longer tones, lipped in rhythm downward

then up. It must be understood that among the *seseɛ* players in Kumase, the only time the open-holed higher pitch is used is to signal entrances and cadences. Outside of Kumase the *seseɛ* players use the open-holed higher tone in the speech patterns, without any recourse to the open-holed lower pitch. Throughout the songs, various players rattle their tongues in their exhalation, for this articulation adds greater vibration to the tones.

<i>seseɛ</i>	<i>agyesoa</i> and <i>bosoq</i>	<i>afɛɛ</i>
e^1 - 15 cents	d - 10 cents	B - 10 cents
eb^1 + 25 cents	d - 25 cents	Bb - 5 cents
↓	$c\#$ + 35 cents	
lipping down	Bb + 20 cents	

Table I

Tusk pitches of the Kumase *ntahera* group.⁴⁴

Below is a transcription of *Amansa ɛpe Wahyɛ Brabe*, which means “The People Like and Come to See,” connoting “people coming to see the Asantehene.” It was transcribed from a recording I made of the Kumase *ntahera*. The *seseɛ* surrogate speech follows the tonal and rhythmic contour of the phrases. The translation of the speech is as follows:

Lift it up!
 We have lifted ourselves.
 Listen!
 The people come to see.

The *agyesoa* and *bosoq* respond with *Amansa*, which means “the people.” Throughout the song the *seseɛ* with the *afɛɛ* then recite *Brabe*, which means “come,” then *ɛpe wahyɛ*, which means “like and see.”

The origin of the *ntahera* trumpets

The *ntahera* is the most significant of the Asantehene’s trumpet ensembles, and most of the paramount chieftaincies throughout the Akan world also have one. J. Agyeman-Duah recorded that, apart from Kumase, only the Dwaben and Nsuta chiefs had recognized *ntahera* groups.⁴⁵ But Sarpong noted that the chiefs of Kokofu, Mampon, Bekwai, and Ejisu also had the *ntahera*.⁴⁶ I studied the *ntahera* at Kumase, Ejisu, and a Denkyira *ntahera* at Asikuma.

Nketia understood that Osei Tutu captured the *ntahera* trumpets from the king of Tafo.⁴⁷ But Sarpong understood that Osei Tutu created the *ntahera*, then gave it to the Nsutahene to polish and subsequently to the people of Dekyemso to look after.⁴⁸ A.A.Y.

Amansa Epe Wahye Brabe

("The People Like and Come to See,"
meaning "The People Come to See the Asantehene.")

Kumase Ntabera

Surrogate speech

$\text{♩} = 108$

Seseɛ
Agyeso
Bosoɔ
Afrɛ

Mom-ma so. Yea-ma yen ho so. Tie. A-man-sa epe wa-hye Bra-be

Amansa

Brabe
Ep-e wa-hye
Amansa
Amansa
Amansa
Amansa

signal

Example I

Transcription of *Amansa epe Wahye Brabe*.

Kyerematen stated that the *ntabera* surrogate speech conveys no serious messages but that by its sound alone it instills fear in an enemy.⁴⁹ Agyeman-Duah also noted, "When anyone hears the sound of these horns, he runs away."⁵⁰

Nana Kwame Fofie Opoku, the Kumase Ntaberahene, chief of the *ntabera*, revealed to me that the power of the *ntabera* derives from its mythological origin. The fear it instills is not from the sound alone but rather from the *ntabera* spirit that uses the trumpets for its abode. It is said to have descended from heaven with the Golden Stool.

The Asante Golden Stool, the seat of Asante kingship, is vested with the power of the souls of the Asante ancestors, who continue to use it as their abode. They are the souls who protect the Asante kingdom. If the Golden Stool were to be captured or destroyed, the Asante believe it would bring the end of the Asante nation. The Golden Stool is safeguarded and hidden in a royal shrine, where it remains a conduit in ancestor veneration. It consists of carved wood covered in gold leaf, and legend has it that Osei Tutu's high priest and advisor Ɔkɔmfo Anokye conjured the Golden Stool down from heaven to a mountaintop, where it miraculously landed on the lap of Osei Tutu. According to the myth, the *ntabera*, too, was conjured down from heaven with the Golden Stool. For this reason the *ntabera* is the most important of the trumpet ensembles.

The *ntabera* is in essence a spirit that drives away evil to protect the nation. When sounded, it unleashes itself in order to dispel its enemies. The Kumase *ntabera* has been

maintained at the village of Kokobriko since Osei Tutu's time. The Kumase *ntahera* trumpets are still kept in this village where the *ntahera* trumpet blowers live, and where I attended their rehearsals.

Denkyira ntahera

I also researched a Denkyira *ntahera* at the Asikuma court in Ghana's Central Region. Asikuma is a chieftaincy that existed within the old Denkyira kingdom but survived Denkyira's defeat by the Asante in 1701. Denkyira oral tradition dates from before 1500, to the Nkyira court at Abankesieso in the north, when Denkyira was called Nkyira.⁵¹ The people migrated southward because of wars.

The Denkyira trumpet blowers trace the *ntahera* and its repertoire to the court at Abankesieso. Kwame Nkrumah, the Denkyira Kontihene, said that all of the trumpet traditions in Ghana began in Abankesieso. Nkrumah also told me that the Nkyira migrated from the ancient Ghana Kingdom in the Western Sudan (ca. 500-1230), but the connection, lacking archaeological and linguistic evidence, remains precarious. Nkrumah said that the



Figure 4

Denkyira *ntahera*, pouring a libation to the *ntahera* spirit abiding in the trumpets.

first Denkyirahene was a woman named Nana Ayekra Adeboe, and that she was the first to use ivory trumpets in Denkyira.⁵²

Eva Meyerowitz's collected data on the Tekyiman-Brong *ntabera* from the 1940s is similar to Nkrumah's in terms of its matrilinealism. The Tekyiman-Brong trace their ancestry to the Bono (Brong) Kingdom, founded in 1295 after refugees fled south from a kingdom called Dia, located at the Niger River bend. As Meyerowitz gathered, a number of refugees under a new king and queen fled to the Black Volta, and after the king's death, the queen mother hid the court regalia, including the *ntabera*, in order to prevent the election of a new king.⁵³ This *ntabera* was abolished after Brong's defeat by the Asante in 1723.

Kwamina B. Dickson and Rattray have commented that the introduction of a few change-producing families to a society must not be confused with a migration of an entire population.⁵⁴ If we cannot presume the origins of the Akan people from this southward migration, the oral traditions of the *ntabera* might still indicate the ivory trumpets' use in pre-Asante times.

Neither the origin of the *ntabera* nor the derivation of its name is known. The Denkyira trumpet blowers, however, revealed to me a facet of *ntabera* spirituality and the concept of the trumpets as its abode. I participated with the players in a libation to the *ntabera* before the tusks were blown. The libation consisted of pouring a drink over the tusks while praying to the spirit for permission to teach the songs to me.

The *kwakwrannya*

The *kwakwrannya* is another Kumase trumpet ensemble of the *paw* type, i.e., the tusks are long and they produce low tones. Only one *kwakwrannya* exists in Ghana, and it is maintained at the Asantehene's court in Kumase. Although the *kwakwrannya* normally comprises seven tusks, it had only six in 2001 as a result of the damaged *seseɛ*. An *agyesoa* tusk had taken its place and was used for speaking, though it had no vent hole. The *seseɛ* player, Bernard Asante, was skilled at lipping the tones on this tusk without the hole.

The *kwakwrannya* were war trumpets used to precede the Asante infantry in battle, using their sound to instigate bees and other wild animals to attack the enemy. *Kwakwrannya*'s meaning is derived from the phrase *kɔkwam ɛannya*, which means "does not travel without it," denoting it is never left behind.⁵⁵

Sarpong noted that the *kwakwrannya* was created by the traditional priest Ɔkɔmfo Anokye for Suabri, a war general. The legend goes that Ɔkɔmfo Anokye filled the *kwakwrannya* tusks with wasps, bees, ants, and snakes to act as talismans against the enemy.⁵⁶ Sarpong also noted that the *kwakwrannya* received £4 per battle, whereas the *ntabera* received £2 to guard the palace.⁵⁷ The *kwakwrannya* repertoire is identical to that of the *ntabera*, but with different clusters, appropriate to the former's tusk lengths. The *kwakwrannya* trumpet blowers live, and have always lived, in Ahwerewam, a village off Sunyani Road.

The *mmentia*

Mmentia literally means “short trumpets.” The word *mmen* is the plural of *aben*, which means “trumpet” (singular). The suffix *-tia* means “short.” The creation of the *mmentia* is attributed to Osei Tutu I and is said to have descended from heaven with the *ntahera* and the Golden Stool. The *mmentia* perform only praises to the Asantehene and do not play songs. They recite his signature motif, *Atoto We Sane*, which means “We are removing the knot.” The living Asantehene Osei Tutu II took his name from Osei Tutu I, the founder of Asante. The phrase “We are removing the knot” refers to the legend of Osei Tutu I, who was said to have had the ability to untie a legendary knot capable of being untied only by the true ruler. Osei Tutu I hacked the knot with an ax.⁵⁸ Today the phrase symbolizes the Asantehene unraveling society’s problems.

The *mmentia* blowers walk behind the Asantehene in processions and stand behind him when he sits in state. *Mmentia* are found at other Akan courts, where typically only one *abentia* (singular of *mmentia*) is blown. Two *mmentia* are usually blown at once for the Asantehene, and occasionally three. Kyerematen saw *mmentia* plated in gold leaf at the Durbar (Festival) in honor of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, who visited Kumase 14 November 1961.⁵⁹

The *mmentia* are *pee* trumpets, and unlike the *paw* ensembles in groups of seven, they blow in duet or in trio, tuned approximately a whole step apart. *Atoto We Sane* is call-and-response between higher and lower *mmentia*, their cadence forming a whole-tone cluster. When the *mmentia* are blown in trio, they create a triad cluster.

An *abentia* is often blown alone to render individual lines of proverbial *mmaranee*. *Mmaranee* (strong names of the Asantehene) are actually catch-phrases from longer proverbs. The tones produced on an *aben* are denotative of words, and the words are connotative of conceptions contained in the proverbs. These conceptions are rooted in Asante cognition, and *mmaranee* thus evoke strong images and sentiments.

A recitation of Osei Tutu II’s signature motif and *mmaranee* may be translated as follows:

We are removing the knot, Osei Tutu,
Porcupine Opoku, Important Opoku.
Where is my Mother?

You are of ancient royal blood.
Human beings tire, tire, tire for nothing.
Only heaven, only heaven, only earth, no one else.

The connotation of this text is as follows:

We are untying the bonds of oppression.
You are addressing our problems.
Opoku Ware II (the second Asantehene) is the great porcupine. [The

porcupine is the symbol of the Asante people and a fierce fighter that shoots quills from a distance. As soon as one quill is shot it is replaced by another already grown.]

Osei Tutu I looks for his mother because he was an orphan. [His parents were killed in the Denkyira war.]

You [the present Asantehene] are of ancient royal blood.

Human beings are too weak to surpass your power

Only heaven and earth together equal your strength.⁶⁰

Atoto We Sane, the signature motif of the Asantehene Osei Tutu II, is transcribed below in Example 2. It is blown by the *mmentia* as a call and response. The tone is changed on each instrument as the blower opens the vent hole for the higher tone. The tones of the calling *abentia* in Western pitches are approximately c^2 (closed hole) and d^2 (open hole). The pitches of the responding *abentia* are approximately bb^1 and c^2 .

Atoto We Sane
 ("We are Removing the Knot" -
 The signature motif of the Asantehene Osei Tutu II)

Kumase Mmentia

Freely

A - to - to_wesa-ne. O - sei - ee. O - sei - ee Tu - tuee. A - to - to_wesa-ne.
 A - to - to_wesa-ne. O - sei - ee.

Example 2
Atoto We Sane (transcription).

The *asokoben*

As stated earlier, *asokoben* was the specialized term used by the Asante to differentiate an elephant tusk from a horn, derived from the word *esono* (elephant) and the combination of the Gã and Twi words for "horn."⁶¹ But Rattray noted that the *asokoben*, along with the *ntahera* and *nkufe* (*nkofe*) trumpets, were present and performing at the Wukudae ancestor veneration on 17 August 1921.⁶² This reference distinguishes the *asokoben* as an instrument separate from and in addition to the other ivory trumpet groups.

Sarpong noted that the *asokoben* was associated with the *mmentia*.⁶³ Kyerematen observed it in procession following the *mmentia* at the Durbar in honor of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. He described it as being long and said it is also called *asisiben*⁶⁴ (*aseseben*⁶⁵), which means "speaking trumpet." Kyerematen added that the *asokoben* is used

principally to recount history or to send out messages. In 2001 only one trumpet blower I interviewed remembered the *asokoben*, and he told me that the players no longer come to the palace, for “they have grown old and lost their teeth.”⁶⁶ I have not seen them and fear their loss.

The *nkontwema*

The *nkontwema* trumpet ensemble originated in Akyem Kyebi in pre-Asante times.⁶⁷ Oral tradition states that Osei Tutu asked the *nkontwema* to accompany him to war against Denkyira (ca. 1700), but written sources indicate that that Akyem was on Denkyira's side.⁶⁸ Asante eventually conquered Akyem in 1742 under the second Asantehene Opoku Ware, and it is more likely that Asante acquired the *nkontwema* then. The *nkontwema* eventually settled in the village of Frankyenebra near Kumase.

The *nkontwema* is a *pee* group, i.e., the trumpets are short tusks, and it is arranged in a group of seven like the *ntahera* and the *kwakwranmya*. But their sound quality is distinct because of their smaller sizes. Their repertoire is also different. Two of the *nkontwema afre* and one *agyeso* are wrapped in woven red, green, and orange wool, the function of which, apart from decorative purposes, is not known. I was told that the term *nkontwema* is taken from the name of the place in Akyem Kyebi where the ensemble originated. A divination ritual of the same name uses seven antelope-hide cords fastened with talismans of beads, shells, teeth, and horns. The seven cords are believed to be able to predict the future and uncover lies.⁶⁹ The term probably derived from the Twi word for the duiker antelope (*otwe*) from which the cords were made.

The *amoakwa* and *nkrawoben*

According to the Amoakwahene, Nana Agyei Mensah II, chief of the *amoakwa* trumpets at Asokwa, Osei Tutu I acquired all ivory trumpet groups from Denkyira. Asokwa is the district of Kumase where trumpet blowers from Denkyira were platooned to serve the new Asante court after 1701. But Nketia noted that Denkyira trumpet blowers moved to Nsuta after the battle of Feyiase;⁷⁰ thus the Amoakwahene's information may or may not be entirely accurate as concerns the early history of other Asante trumpet groups. But the *amoakwa* and the *nkrawoben* are still based in Asokwa. The *amoakwa* and *nkrawoben* trumpets traditionally have been assigned to the Queen Mother, the Ohenmaahene; they play at her palace in Kumase. Whether their role as the Queen Mother's ensemble came from Denkyira is not known.

The *amoakwa* includes seven trumpets, named *sese*, *agyeso*, *afre*, *boso*, *nkonton* (meaning unknown, possibly drumstick), *Ohenmaafie* (i.e., Queen Mother palace), and *promaso* (i.e., the front yard to Manhyia Palace). Their repertoire is unique. They are augmented by the *nkrawoben* trumpets, for the two groups play together. The *nkrawoben* trumpets are distinguished by their red women's headscarves, called *nkrawo*, wrapped around the tusks. I was told that a combined total of thirty-six trumpets have been blown at once by both *amoakwa* and *nkrawoben*, but usually the number does not exceed eighteen. I saw nine in the group when they performed at funerals. The *amoakwa* and *nkrawoben* are



Figure 5
Stephen Appiah, *amoakwa seseɛ*.

the only Asante trumpet groups that perform arrangements accompanied by a percussion group called the *tipre*, consisting of *atumpan* talking drums and a unique set of iron-plate cymbals called *chian-chian*.

The Amoakwahene still regards the Denkyira as his ancestors, and he maintains that the Denkyira made peace with the Asante and volunteered to serve. He also said the Denkyirahene Ntim Gyakari maintained pure gold trumpets, cast in the form of tusks. The length of a forearm, they were never blown and existed only for show. In processions the carrier held the instrument over his left shoulder with the right hand, his arm crossing his chest. The gold trumpets, the Amoakwahene said, led the processions, followed by the blown trumpets. Sarpong noted that each trumpet group had a “gold horn,” called *asikabɛn* after the word *sika*, which means “gold,” and they were made of ivory with gold plate.⁷¹ The Amoakwahene said that the existing gold trumpets are kept hidden in the royal shrines, to which only the Asantehene and his cabinet have access.

The *amoakwa* and *nkrawobɛn* were the only two groups I encountered in Asokwa in 2001. The meaning and derivation of the term *amoakwa* is unknown, but it is probably the name of the place in Denkyira from where they were taken.

The *asokwafoo*

Both Rattray⁷² and Wilks⁷³ discussed the *asokwafoo*, as the trumpet blowers were once collectively called. *Asokwafoo* literally means “Asokwa people,” and it comprised the royal drummers and trumpet blowers. The drummers were later reorganized into the *akyeremadefoo*,⁷⁴ a separate office. I have heard trumpet blowers nowadays collectively referred to as *mmenhyefoo* because the *ntaherafoo*, *kwakwrannyafoo*, and *nkontwemafoo* have never lived in Asokwa. But Wilks noted that trumpet blowers underwent training in Asokwa every night,⁷⁵ for the name derived from “*asokoben*,” the term for “elephant-horn.” But the *amoakwafoo* and *nkrawobenfoo* remain in Asokwa and are sometimes called *asokwafoo*.

Both Rattray and Wilks described the specific duties of the nineteenth-century *asokwafoo*, which were quite different from the duties of the twenty-first-century *mmenhyefoo*. In a category of *nhenkwaa*,⁷⁶ or palace servants, the *asokwafoo* worked as royal sextons who, among other things, maintained the palace grounds and repaired buildings.⁷⁷ Sarpong noted that the *asokwafoo* were considered as the king’s “wives,” for like “wives,” they could not be sued, have charges brought against them, nor be required to remove their sandals or lower their cloth when standing before the king.⁷⁸

At the time of Osei Kwadwo (1764–77), the fourth Asantehene, the *asokwafoo* became agents for the Company of State Traders. Kwadwo appointed his son Kwasi Ampon as Asokwahene, and under Ampon the *asokwafoo* were renovated. A senior trumpet blower named Kwame Dendo accompanied a trading mission to the coast with the task of reporting on the condition of the reconstructed road. Later, in 1815, the Asantehene’s gold trumpet blower Amankwa Boahen headed a party of two hundred men who arrived in Accra to collect revenues and open talks for further trade.⁷⁹ Rattray noted that the *asokwafoo* traders were not paid, but became rich charging fees on transactions.⁸⁰

In battle, the *asokwafoo* carried ammunition and the chief’s food.⁸¹ But Sarpong noted that prisoners of war were given to the Ntaherahene and Kwakwrannyahene.⁸² Adubofuor noted how the drums and horns kept sounding in order that a flank would not attack a friendly unit by mistake.⁸³ John Beecham in 1841 noted that the tusk trumpet was the most martial of instruments, and every chief had his own “air” so that in the heat of battle his respective position could be ascertained.⁸⁴ The battle calls of the Asumegya, Bekwai, Dwaben, Kokofu, Kumawu, and Mampon chiefs, for which Rattray gave texts and translations, are still played when these chiefs are at court or visiting the Asantehene.

The *nkofe*

The *nkofe* is a long-trumpet ensemble in Kumase that shares its repertoire in part with the *ntahera*, *kwakwrannya*, and *nkontwema*. Its name derives from *kofen* from Gã language, the Gã being the people of the Accra region where the *asokwafoo* went to do commerce. *Kofen* derives from the Gã words *kon*, which means “horn,” and *fɛ*, which means “to blow.”⁸⁵

The fourth Asantehene, Osei Kwadwo, created the *nkofe* in the eighteenth century, apparently for his son Kwasi Ampon, the Asokwahene who renovated the *asokwafoo*. Agyeman-Duah’s first note on the *nkofe* indicated, to the contrary, that Osei Tutu I created it prior to the Akim War and that he captured it at Adanse. But Agyeman-Duah’s second

note states that contemporary sources maintain that the *nkofe* was created by Osei Kwadwo, though without citing a source.⁸⁶

Kyerematen listed the *nkofe* as the leading trumpet group, followed by the *ntabera* at the Durbar in honor of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Kumase on 14 November 1961.⁸⁷ He noted that another name for the *nkofe* is *kokonanya*, meaning “is never left behind when the King turns out in state.”

It proved impossible for me to obtain interviews with the *nkofe*; however, Nkofehene Nana Kofi Owusu II was hospitable to me and allowed the recording of the *nkofe*. Agyeman-Duah indicated that the same Nana Kofi Owusu II has been the Nkofehene since at least 1976.

Owuo and *tatwia*

Ratray described one of the nineteenth-century *asokwafoo*'s roles at a royal funeral, wherein they carried the body to “the place of drippings,”⁸⁸ where it began the first stages of decomposition. In the footnote to this passage, Ratray described a trumpet called *owuo*, meaning “death,” the name taken from its sound.

*Owuo, owuo, owuooo, death, death, death.*⁸⁹

At the Durbar in honor of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Kumase in 1961, Kyerematen listed a trumpet called the *tatwia*, the other name for *owuo*. He noted that it imitated the bark of a dog, which is *otwia*. He further indicated that it is blown in the direction of an enemy to warn them of annihilation if they should approach.⁹⁰ Here again is a trumpet performing a protective function, as with the *ntabera*, in this case blown to protect Queen Elizabeth II. *Tatwia*, or *owuo*, is played at funerals for this same reason—to protect the spirit. Kyerematen also stated that *owuo* was blown for executions in pre-colonial times. The *amoakwa* demonstrated its sound for me. It sounds like a dog's howl, and it is no longer played publicly.

Ivory trumpets as power

The acquisition or creation of ensembles since the founding of Asante has been a right maintained only by the Asantehene. As stated earlier, a chief's rank is reflected by the number of musical ensembles he is permitted to retain by decree of the Asantehene. The Asantehene, the most powerful chief, therefore has the most. At sacred and political events, the Asante court ensembles perform publicly in order to display Asante power and prestige. In the royal processions for the events I observed, the *nkontwema* led the parades, followed by the *ntabera*, and then the *kwakurannya*. The trumpet groups processed amidst drummers and courtesans carrying regalia. The *nkofe* then immediately preceded the Asantehene and the *mmentia* processed behind him.

By convention, when the Asantehene sits in state, numerous polyphonic ensembles play separate songs simultaneously in counter-juxtaposition to create what I have termed a “sound barrage.” The ivory trumpet ensembles perform a very important role in this

phenomenon. Nketia has referred to it as “noises off,”⁹¹ in the sense of much noise being made for the festivity of the occasion. But “noises off” as a description of what the musicians are doing does not explain the underlying cultural reason for doing it, which is to protect the court. In creating a sound barrage, ensembles make staggered entrances based on the Akan aesthetic of “energy level and intensity factor,” wherein gradations of intensity are achieved on the separate energy levels culminating to raise the sound’s intensity.⁹² The term “barrage” has a military denotation in that the sound is directed outward to create a protective barrier for those behind it (*pampim* in Twi). Outside the barrage, enemies are dispelled, while within it the earthly commune with the ancestral. Nketia told me that the “sound barrage” analogy, based on my informants’ descriptions, is a viable explanation for this musical phenomenon.⁹³

Such spiritual functions of music-making in other cultures have previously been noted in trumpet studies. Baines wrote that ancestor’s voices are sepulchral, and ancestors are invited to commune after the appropriate sounds are made through certain musical instruments.⁹⁴ For the Asante, “sound barrage” is not an invitation but the clearing away of harm. Klaus P. Wachsmann⁹⁵ also noted trumpets’ magico-religious functions in cultures, and E.M. von Hornbostel wrote that such sound-producing instruments are invested with “mysterious and superhuman potency.”⁹⁶

Historical, Archaeological, and Linguistic Accounts

Early descriptions

Early descriptions of Akan ivory trumpets by travelers shed light on the trumpets’ early uses and context. The first such description is by Pieter de Marees, member of a Dutch trading expedition in 1602.⁹⁷ Marees noted that horns made from elephant tusks were decorated with incisions and blown only for the king or captain.⁹⁸ I did not see any incised trumpets in 2001. Marees’ work also contains the first illustration of Akan trumpet blowers in the engraving of the “Nobleman’s” ceremony.⁹⁹

In 1681 the French Huguenot Jean Barbot described Akan trumpets of various sizes made from elephant tusks, one with a hole at one end for signaling.¹⁰⁰ The engravings of the three ivory trumpets in Barbot’s book also indicate that Akan tusks were once incised with decorations.¹⁰¹

William Bosman’s references to “elephants’ teeth” as “blowing-horns” in 1704¹⁰² have been criticized for being strongly opinionated,¹⁰³ in spite of the subsequent clarification of his original Dutch text.¹⁰⁴ Bosman indicated the tusks’ use and function in performance for chiefs, whom he described as those who “acquire a reputation and great name among their fellow citizens,” and he also noted tusk-blowing on “merry” days.¹⁰⁵

T. Edward Bowdich’s descriptions from 1817 offer a more valuable contribution. After his arrival in Kumase, he wrote in an apparent reference to a “sound barrage,”

Upwards of 5000 people, the greater part warriors, met us with awful [*sic*] bursts of martial music, discordant only in its mixture; for horns, drums, rattles, and gong-gongs were all exerted with a zeal bordering on phrenzy....¹⁰⁶

But on another occasion he wrote:

The bands, principally composed of horns and flutes, trained to play in concert, seemed to soothe our hearing into its natural tone again by their wild melodies.¹⁰⁷

Bowdich also mentioned a “gold horn blower,”¹⁰⁸ and noted that even the ivory horns’ mouthpieces were ornamented with gold.¹⁰⁹ He classified “horns” as the loudest of the musical instruments, blowing flourishes for “martial and grand effect.”¹¹⁰

Bowdich also explained surrogate speech:

It has been mentioned in the Military Customs of the Ashantees, that peculiar sentences are immediately recognized by the soldiers and people, in the distinct flourish of the horns [ivory trumpets] of the various chiefs: the words of some of these sentences are almost expressible by the notes [tones] of the horns....¹¹¹

Mmɔdwe-mmɔdwe

Bowdich indicated that he saw “horns” ornamented with the “jawbones of human victims.”¹¹² Sarpong, in his 1990 study, stated that the jawboned ivory trumpet is called *mmɔdwe-mmɔdwe*.¹¹³ In Twi, the singular of jaw is *abɔdwe* and the plural is *mmɔdwe*. The double *mmɔdwe-mmɔdwe* denotes a trumpet ornamented with many jawbones. The imagery of the Asante gold brass weights also indicates that as many as nine may be attached



Figure 6

Mmɔdwe. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments, 1889 (89.4.1499). Photograph by Joe Kaminski, with permission from The Metropolitan Museum of New York.

to an *aben*.¹¹⁴ The *mmɔdwe* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Crosby Brown Collection (no. 89.4.1499) has two (see Figure 6).

It has been suggested that the function of the *mmɔdwe* was to signify both enemies and elephants praising the Asantehene,¹¹⁵ but I have not been able to verify this explanation in the field. I was told that the *mmɔdwe* are sacred and kept in shrines. Within this religious context it has been traditionally believed that the jawbone of an enemy transferred his spiritual energy to the force abiding in the tusk.¹¹⁶ A reading from Bowdich illuminates this: He explains that certain body parts of defeated enemies were used as talismans. Warriors would wear a victim's bone or eat a piece of his heart. Bowdich maintained that without harnessing the spiritual forces left astray, the Asante feared "their vigor and courage would be secretly wasted by the haunting spirit of the deceased."¹¹⁷

African traditional religions have been regarded as "animistic";¹¹⁸ however, Asante belief is not in objects having spirits but rather in objects being abodes of spirits. Edwin W. Smith commented that spirits act on one another from their abodes, and he more accurately classified this concept as "dynamism."¹¹⁹

The Mande connection

Posnansky conducted archaeological research at the site of the medieval market town of Begho, outside Hani in Brong Ahafo, northwest of Kumase and near the Ivory Coast border. Ivory trumpet shards were found in a sixteenth-century setting.¹²⁰ This is the earliest hard evidence of ivory trumpet usage that can be traced in an Akan region. This time frame is the same as that of the Nkyira court at Abankesieso, where the Denkyira trumpet blowers told me that a trumpet tradition also once existed. Begho in particular, along with the twenty or so small states in the region in general, had well-established trade links with Jenne, from where Mande traders sought avenues south to the rainforest in Akanland¹²¹ via the route through Kong in present-day Ivory Coast.¹²²

As early as the first Ghana kingdom in the Western Sudan (ca. 500-1250), a people known as the Wangara, with whom a barter system known as the "silent trade" was carried out, lived farther south across the Niger River in the tropical forests. In the "silent trade," heaps of salt and goods carried in caravans across the desert were left for the Wangara in exchange for the gold they left in its place. The exchangers never met and the identity of the Wangara remained a mystery, but they are thought to have been early Akan.¹²⁴ The southward spread of the Mande peoples was a result of this silent trade, although nothing can be said of the time of arrival of the Mande at Begho.¹²⁵ Carbon-14 dates a proto-urban settlement at Begho, called Nyarko suburb, to 965-1125.¹²⁶ B.W. Andah states that the evolution of both local and immigrant groups at the site are yet to be explored in detail, but the present evidence suggests a large, populated settlement with interrelated communities and a developed trade network prior to the Mande.¹²⁷

The ivory carvers in Ananta whom I met and interviewed hold the view that the Mande introduced ivory trumpets to the Akan along with other cultural influence, essentially derived from the Mali court (1234-1483). According to Hause, in the Mandingo language of the Mande and the Malinke dialects, the terms for the elephant tusk trumpet and its

variants are *būrū*, *būnū*, *būlū*, *būdū*, and *b'rū*.¹²⁸ Looking at the earliest references to trumpet usage in Mali, as described by Arab writers, we find animal horn and elephant tusk trumpets in the fourteenth century. Ibn Fadlallāh al-'Umarī (d. 1348) wrote that the Mali royal entourage contained *būq* (Arabic for *trumpet*) made from the horns of animals,¹²⁹ and Ibn Battūta noted in 1352-53 that Mali's military bands consisted of drums and *būq* that were made from the tusks of elephants.¹³⁰ I believe that the Mandingo term *būrū* and its variants

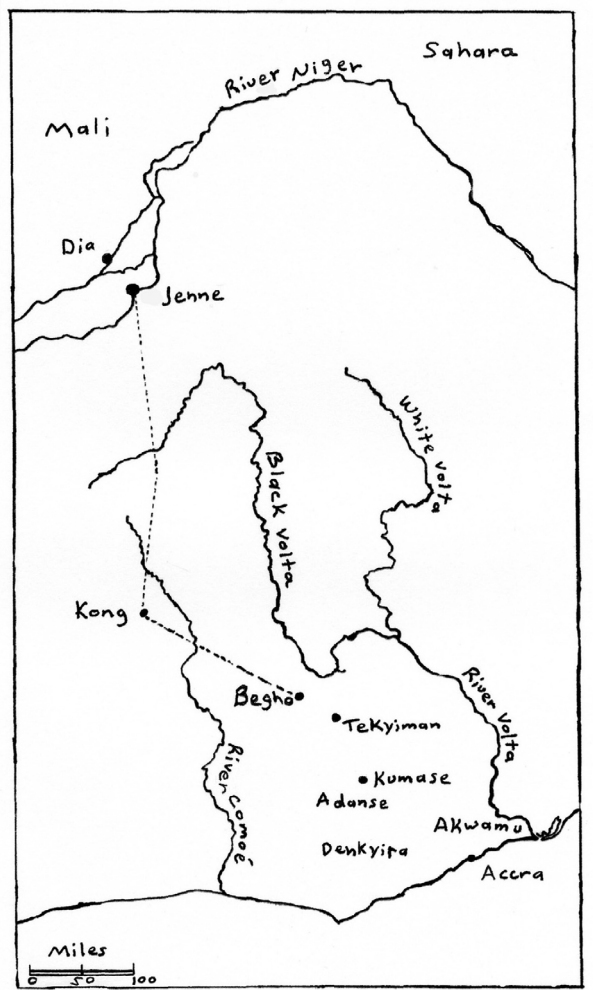


Figure 7¹²³

Map of the Mandé trade route from Jenne to Begho.

are similar to the Arabic term *būq*, just as the Persian term *būri* is probably similar to the Arabic *būq*, Latin *buccina*, or Greek *βωκωνη*.¹³¹ Farmer has outlined the arguments concerning the divergent etymological views of the origins of *būq* and *būri*.¹³² I further maintain that the terms for trumpet prefixed with *bu-* are of the same archaic root but have developed locally at different times in history, while the origin of the root remains unknown. Battūta provides the earliest specific reference to *būq* as an ivory trumpet in medieval West Africa, and if they were ever used at the court of ancient Ghana (ca. 500-1250), no evidence has survived.

Linguistic evidence

Drawing on the linguistic data, I hold the view that ivory trumpets already were in use by the Akan before Mande contact. In his article “The Mande Loan Element in Twi,” Wilks lists the names of two types of drums that were introduced in the cultural diffusion.¹³³ However, he did not list any of the Mandingo terms for ivory trumpet that the Mande may have used, so I believe that there is no evidence that the Akan *abeŋ* is a borrowed concept from the Mande. *Aben* is clearly an Akan term¹³⁴ that bears no relation to the Mandingo *būrū*.

According to Hause, *beŋ* (*aben*), the Akan term for “horn,” is not even the same as the Gã *fēŋ*, which is from *fē*, meaning “to blow.” Since the Gã term for “horn” is *koŋ*, and apparently unrelated to Akan, I draw the further conclusion that the Akan *abeŋ* had its own development, separate from even the Akan’s nearest southeastern coastal neighbors, the Gã.

Oral traditions, historical geographic data, and linguistic evidence reveal that an Akan population was in the rainforest prior to later migrating peoples, though specific time inferences are speculative.¹³⁵ Member groups of the Kwa language family, including the Akan, occupied the region and among them there was a degree of cultural continuation. The linguistic evidence suggests that the Volta-Comoé group, which includes Akan, constitutes the ancestral group to many of the other Kwa subgroups,¹³⁶ thereby making the Akan language among the earliest. The meaning of the term Akan derives from the word *kan*, which means “first and foremost.”

Historical geographic evidence suggests that the rainforest of the Akan was an obstacle to migrating peoples. When penetration did occur, it was not *en masse* but by small groups of people. When outsiders had a cultural influence on their hosts, they were still probably absorbed into the local population.¹³⁷ Rattray stated that the migrations of a few families who produced cultural changes have been confused with large migrations of people.¹³⁸ While the Akan did have cross-cultural contacts with the larger and smaller neighboring ethnic groups of the north and of the Guinea coast, the idea of mass movements is an unconvincing approach to cultural diffusion. Many court cultures in West Africa have had ivory trumpet traditions, including the Gã, the Ewe, the Yoruba, and the Edo. While similarities appear, neither archaeological nor linguistic grounds exist to suggest mass migrations from Benin, nor from ancient Ghana to the north, as some oral traditions suggest.¹³⁹

Terms for ivory trumpet in the various West African languages do not indicate a precedent for Akan borrowing, at least prior to the eighteenth century, when the Asantehene

Osei Kwadwo borrowed the concept of the *nkofo* from the Gã.¹⁴⁰ As stated above, the Mandingo terms for ivory trumpet are *būrū*, *būnū*, *būlū*, *būdū*, and *b'rū*,¹⁴¹ and they have no linguistic similarity to *aben*. Other terms for ivory trumpets used on the Guinea coast have been *me* in Agni, *kofēn* in Gã, *akofē* in Ewe, *fē* in Togo, *akho* or *aho* in Dahomey, *ako* in Edo, *owo* in Yoruba, and *iwo* in Ahlo.¹⁴² Another Edo name for the instrument is *orhu*.¹⁴³ The Akan term *aben* has no linguistic similarity to any of the preceding terms, and my conclusion is that *aben* performance among the Akan is not only a prehistoric tradition, but was an established tradition long before identifiable outside influences affected Akan cultural history. The terms *owuo* and *owo*, which mean “death” respectively in Akan and Yoruba, however have a curious similarity.¹⁴⁴ In Asante the *owuo* trumpet played at funerals to ward off evil, as stated earlier.¹⁴⁵ The Yoruba *owuo* may be a cross-cultural concept, but the term still has no bearing on the origin of the *aben*.

Conclusion

This article has offered an introduction to the ivory trumpet ensembles of the court of the Asantehene in Kumase, Ghana, where the royal tusk blowers practice and perform their ancient art in the twenty-first century. It has explained the conceptualization of the ivory trumpet in Asante thought as regards its classification and royal context, reasons for tusk blowing, and musical logistics of ensemble performance. Oral traditions obtained from interviews with players and chiefs have been corroborated with written accounts of the Asante trumpets, or “horns” as they are most often called, to support the findings. A conceptual hypothesis in need of further investigation is how the “sound barrage” is created and how it functions in religious and cultural contexts.¹⁴⁶ The researcher must seek explicit and implicit meanings for the musical phenomenon.

But the problem with a study of an Akan ivory trumpet tradition is in attempting to ascertain origins. Oral traditions are precarious for two reasons: they are shrouded in myth and they are prehistoric. The fact that they are prehistoric complicates matters when trying to corroborate oral traditions that claim that the Akan migrated from ancient Ghana.¹⁴⁷ Vansina warns that Akan ruling dynasties said to be indigenous often have secret versions about their origin, showing them to be immigrants.¹⁴⁸ But as argued by Andah, and earlier by Rattray, such migrations of ruling-class families were on a small scale, with the rulers becoming absorbed into the local cultures.¹⁴⁹

Archaeological investigation needs to continue in order to sort out directions of cultural influence, but the linguistic evidence suggests the dynamics. Analysis of terms for ivory trumpets on the Guinea coast and in Mali indicate that the *aben* is an indigenous instrument to the Akan, with a development separate and probably prior to the ivory trumpet traditions in neighboring areas.

The people of Hani, near the Begho archaeological site, told me that the first *aben* came out of the hole in the ground with the first people. The story, shrouded in myth, implies an indigenous status for the *aben*, just as it does for the Akan as “first” people. Gaining support from the linguistic hypothesis, I believe it can be said that the *aben* is indeed indigenous.

A chain of court cultures that use ivory trumpets for ceremonials and rituals extend throughout the Congo and West Africa. I do not know to what extent any of them survive, except for those of the Asante, among whom the tradition continues, as does a genuine concern for the repertoires. Ben Asante told me that ivory trumpet songs once numbered in the hundreds, but only some thirty of them are still performed today. Occasionally songs are revived when an elder calls younger tusk blowers to rehearsals, as I have seen Nana Yaw Donkor, the local chief of Frankyenebra and retired *nkontwema seseɛ* do several times.

It would be impossible for any one researcher to conduct fieldwork in all of the African courts, even if the necessary invitations were to be extended. Traditions are too numerous and widely dispersed, and many have fallen into disuse. Sarpong suggests that the present study should be continued to the north, to Ghana's Brong Ahafo Region, then northwest into Ivory Coast to Kong, the Mande center where the Asante procured most of their ivory until 1817—also, presumably, a source of ivory for Mali and ancient Ghana. In 1819 the Asante defeated the Gyaman Kingdom in eastern Ivory Coast, causing the Mande-speaking Dyula state in Kong also to decline. Sarpong feels certain that ivory trumpet groups continue in this region. Gyaman, Sarpong states, had a repertoire older than and distinct from that of Asante, and traces of it may still survive in outlying village courts.¹⁵⁰ The goal of such a study would not be to ascertain the origins of the traditions, but to understand the diversity of the traditions and their diverse repertoires. Ivory trumpet surrogate speech with its ensemble hocket catch-phrases is an oral tradition filled with historical meaning, contained in the metaphors of the denotative word-tones. It is a valuable aid for historians.

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NOTES

¹ The letters *ɛ*, *ɔ*, and *ŋ* are used in place of the IPA (International Phonetic Association) letters *ɛ*, *ɔ*, and *ŋ*. They were shown to me by Tony Atwereboanda, my principle translator and court liaison.

² The current Asantehene is Osei Tutu II, whose namesake was Osei Tutu I, the founder of the Asante federation.

³ Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, 2nd edn. (Essex, England: Longman Group Limited, 1986), 54.

⁴ Osei Kwafwo, *Outline of Asante History* (Wiamoase-Ashanti: O. Kwadwo Enterprise, 1994), 9.

⁵ I follow Jan Vansina in distinguishing oral tradition from oral history. Oral histories are reminiscences and accounts of events that occurred during the lifetime of the informants. Oral traditions, such as those explained in this article, are histories and their evolutions, transmitted beyond

the generation that gave rise to them; cf. Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 12-13.

⁶ Peter Sarpong, "Some Myths of the Origins from Ashanti (Ghana)," in *Naissance de monde et de l'homme* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1969), 195-99. I visited this site at Asantemanso, now covered with forest.

⁷ Ivor Wilks, *One Nation, Many Histories: Ghana Past and Present* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1996), 16.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁰ I visited this hole outside of Hani in Brong Ahafo, northwest of Kumase.

¹¹ Merrick Posnansky, "The Search for Asante Origins: Archaeological Evidence," in *The Golden Stool: Studies of the Asante Center and Periphery*, ed. Enid Schildkrout (New York: Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History, 1987), vol. 65, Part 1, 14-22.

¹² Wilks, *One Nation*, 17.

¹³ Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 110-11.

¹⁴ Peter K. Sarpong, *The Ceremonial Horns of the Ashanti* (Accra: Sedco, 1990).

¹⁵ J.H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Hocket Technique in African Music," *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 14 (1962): 44-52.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

¹⁷ William G. Carter, "The Ntamera Horn Ensemble of the Dwaben Court: An Ashanti Surrogating Medium," (master's thesis, University of California-Los Angeles, 1971).

¹⁸ Anthony Baines, *Brass Instruments: Their History and Development* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1976; rpt., New York: Dover, 1993), 40.

¹⁹ R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1923), 243.

²⁰ From ζειλος, i.e., "lips."

²¹ Rattray, *Ashanti*, 243.

²² Victor-Charles Mahillon, *Catalogue descriptif et analytique du musée instrumental (historique et technique) de Conservatoire royal de musique de Bruxelles*, vol. 3 (Ghent: A. Hoste, 1900), 332.

²³ Victor-Charles Mahillon, *Catalogue descriptif et analytique du musée instrumental (historique et technique) de Conservatoire royal de musique de Bruxelles*, vol. 1 (Ghent: A. Hoste, 1893), 55.

²⁴ *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, ed. Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan Press Limited, 1984), s.v. "Trumpet," by Edward Tarr.

²⁵ William G. Carter, "The Ntamera Horn Ensemble," chapter 1.

²⁶ J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *African Music in Ghana* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1962), 106.

²⁷ Merrick Posnansky, "Archaeology and the Origins of the Akan Society in Ghana," in *Problems in Economic and Social Archaeology*, ed. G. de G. Sieveking, et al (London: Duckworth, 1976), 49-59; and personal correspondence, December 2002.

²⁸ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*; and personal correspondence since October 1999.

²⁹ Helen E. Hause, "Terms for Musical Instruments in the Sudanic Languages: a Lexicographical Inquiry," *Supplement to the Journal of the American Oriental Society* 7 (January-March 1948): 51.

³⁰ Information from Philip Asamoah Bonsu of the *nkontwema* trumpet group.

³¹ Scientific Exploration Society, <http://www.ses-explore.org/current/Ghana.htm> (23 June 2003).

³² Peter K. Sarpong, *Peoples Differ: An Approach to Inculturation in Evangelisation* (Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers, 2002).

³³ Nketia, *African Music in Ghana*, 12.

³⁴ Ibid., 10.

³⁵ Ibid., 14.

³⁶ Carter, "Ntabera Horn Ensemble."

³⁷ William G. Carter, "Asante Music in Old and New Juaben" (Ph.D. diss., University of California-Los Angeles, 1984), 257-309.

³⁸ Ibid., 265.

³⁹ Ibid., 277.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 266.

⁴¹ Ibid., 264.

⁴² Information gathered at my sessions with the Kumase *ntabera*.

⁴³ Carter, *Asante Music*, 278.

⁴⁴ The tone measurements were made on a Korg Chromatic Tuner CA-20.

⁴⁵ J. Agyeman-Duah, *Ashanti Stool Histories* (Legon: Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, 1976), Asante stool 26.

⁴⁶ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*, 2.

⁴⁷ J.H. Nketia, "History and Organization of Music in West Africa," in *Essays on Music and History in Africa*, ed. Klaus Wachsmann (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 3-25, here 18.

⁴⁸ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*, 4.

⁴⁹ A.A.Y. Kyerematen, *Regalia for an Ashanti Durbar* (Kumase: Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, 1961), 4.

⁵⁰ Agyeman-Duah, *Ashanti Stool Histories*, Asante Stool 26.

⁵¹ Told to me by the Denkyira Krontihene, Kwame Nkrumah, at the palace in Dunkwa on the Offin River in the Central Region in 2001; cf. F.K. Buah, *A History of Ghana* (London: Macmillan, 1998), 10.

⁵² Denkyira Krontihene Kwame Nkrumah, Dunkwa Palace, Central Region, December 2001.

⁵³ Eva Meyerowitz, *The Akan of Ghana: Their Ancient Beliefs* (London: Faber & Faber, 1958), 105-06.

⁵⁴ Kwamina B. Dickson, *A Historical Geography of Ghana* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 14-15.

⁵⁵ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns of the Ashanti*, 3.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 3; but the information was also told to me by Nana Owusu, a *kwakurannya sese*.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 9.

⁵⁸ Kyerematen, *Regalia*, 8.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 14.

⁶⁰ Barima Owusu Achaw, *abentiahyeni*, and son of the Mmentiahene provided the Twi text, translation, and connotation.

⁶¹ Hause, "Terms for Musical Instruments in the Sudanic Languages," 51.

⁶² Rattray, *Ashanti*, 94.

⁶³ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*, 4.

⁶⁴ Kyerematen, *Regalia*, 14.

⁶⁵ J.H. Kwabena Nketia, "Surrogate Languages of Africa," in *Current Trends in Linguistics 7: Linguistics in Sub-Saharan Africa* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), 699-732, here 701.

⁶⁶ Barima Owusu Achaw, *abentiahyeni*, and son of the Mmentiahene.

⁶⁷ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*, 3; Frankyenebra is the site I visited most.

⁶⁸ J.K. Fynn, *Asante and its Neighbors 1700-1807* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1971), 39.

⁶⁹ Told to me by the Nkontwemahene Nana Owusu Amsah; cf. Geoffrey Parrinder, *West African*

Religion (London: Epworth Press, 1949; rpt. 1961), 149; and, T.C. McCaskie, *State and Society in pre-colonial Asante* (Cambridge: University Press, 1995), 125.

⁷⁰ Nketia, "History and Organization of Music in West Africa," 18.

⁷¹ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*, 1.

⁷² R.S. Rattray, *Religion and Art in Ashanti* (London: Oxford University Press, 1927) 401; idem, *Ashanti Law and Constitution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), 412.

⁷³ Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, 761.

⁷⁴ K. Nkansa-Kyeremateng, *Akan Heritage* (Accra: Sesewie Publishers, 1999), 83; also told to me by Nana Owusu, a *kwakwrannya seseq*.

⁷⁵ Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, 457.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 458.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 455.

⁷⁸ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*, 8.

⁷⁹ Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, 456-57.

⁸⁰ Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, 161.

⁸¹ Ibid., 124.

⁸² Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*, 9.

⁸³ Nana Otamakuro Adubofuor, *Asante: The Making of a Nation* (Pinanko, Ghana: Nifahene of Pinanko), 7.

⁸⁴ John Beecham, *Ashantee and the Gold Coast* (London: Dawsons, 1841; rpt., 1968), 168.

⁸⁵ Hause, "Terms for the Musical Instruments in the Sudanic Languages," 50.

⁸⁶ Nketia, "History and Organization of Music in West Africa," 14; and Agyeman-Duah, *Ashanti Stool Histories*, Asante Stool 145; Kyerematen, *Regalia*, 4.

⁸⁷ Kyerematen, *Regalia*, 4.

⁸⁸ Rattray, *Religion and Art in Ashanti*, 114.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 114, note.

⁹⁰ Kyerematen, *Regalia*, 14.

⁹¹ Nketia, *African Music in Ghana*, 103.

⁹² J.H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Aesthetic Dimension of Ethnomusicological Studies," *The World of Music* 26/1 (1984): 3-24, here 12.

⁹³ Conversation with J.H. Kwabena Nketia at The University of Ghana, Legon, 18 December 2001.

⁹⁴ Baines, *Brass Instruments*, 37.

⁹⁵ Klaus P. Wachsman, "The Primitive Musical Instruments," in *Musical Instruments through the Ages* (New York: Walker and Company, 1961), 51.

⁹⁶ E.M. von Hornbostel, "The Ethnology of African Sound-Instruments," *Africa: Journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures* 6 (1933): 129-57, here 129.

⁹⁷ Pieter de Marees, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea (1602)*, transl. from the Dutch by Albert van Dantzig and Adam Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

⁹⁸ Ibid., 93.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 167.

¹⁰⁰ Jean Barbot, *Barbot on Guinea: The Writings of Jean Barbot on West Africa, 1678-1712*, ed. P.E.H. Hair et al (London: Hakluyt Society, 1992), 564.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., plate 48, opposite p. 571.

¹⁰² William Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea: Divided into the Gold, the Slave, and the Ivory Coasts* (London: Frank Cass and Company Ltd., 1967; first published in Dutch, 1704; first English edn., 1705).

¹⁰³ John McCall, "The Representation of African Music in Early Documents," in *The Garland*

Encyclopedia of World Music, vol. 1: *Africa*, ed. Ruth Stone (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 74-99.

¹⁰⁴ Albert van Dantzig, "English Bosman and Dutch Bosman: A Comparison of Texts, II," *History in Africa* 3 (1976): 91-126.

¹⁰⁵ Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description*, 135-36; and Dantzig, "English Bosman and Dutch Bosman," 121.

¹⁰⁶ T. Edward Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast to Ashantee, with a statistical account of that kingdom and geographical notices of other parts of the interior of Africa* (London: John Murry, 1819), 31.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 33.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 36.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 362, in "Music" chapter.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 36.

¹¹³ Sarpong, *Ceremonial Horns*, 1.

¹¹⁴ Margaret Webster Plass, *African Miniatures: The Goldweights of the Ashanti* (London: Lund Humphries, 1967), plate 21.

¹¹⁵ Doran H. Ross, "More than Meets the Eye: Elephant memories among the Akan," in *Elephant: the Animal and its Ivory in African Culture* (University of California-Los Angeles: Fowler Museum of Natural History; Hong Kong: Pearl River Press, 1992), 145.

¹¹⁶ Told to me by the Nkontwemahene Nana Owusu Ansa, chief of the *nkontwema* trumpets in Frankyenebra.

¹¹⁷ Bowdich, *Mission*, 300.

¹¹⁸ Geoffrey Parrinder, *West African Religion* (London: Epworth Press, 1949), 10.

¹¹⁹ Edwin W. Smith, "Foreword" to Parrinder, *West African Religion*, xii.

¹²⁰ Posnansky, "Archaeology and the Origins of the Akan Society in Ghana," 49-59; also James Anquandah, *Rediscovering Ghana's Past* (Accra: Sedco, 1982), 101.

¹²¹ Boahen, *Topics in West African History*, 56.

¹²² Wilks, *The Northern Factor in Ashanti History* (Legon: Institute of African Studies, University College of Ghana, 1961), map, 2.

¹²³ Based on the map by Ivor Wilks in *The Northern Factor in Ashanti History*, 2.

¹²⁴ Margaret Mead, "The Asante of West Africa," *People and Places* (New York: World Publishing Company, 1959), 153-69.

¹²⁵ Wilks, *The Northern Factor*, 5.

¹²⁶ B.W. Andah and J. Anquandah, "The Guinea Belt: The Peoples between Mount Cameroon and the Ivory Coast," in *Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh century / UNESCO International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa*, vol. 3 in the series *A General History of Africa* (London: Heinemann Educational Books; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 496.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 504.

¹²⁸ Hause, "Terms for Musical Instruments," 21-22; cf. Louis Gustave Binger, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée* (Paris: Hachette et cie, 1892), 105.

¹²⁹ Henry George Farmer, "Early References to Music in the Western Sudan," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1939): 569-579, here 571; also N. Levtzion and J.F.P. Hopkins, eds., *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2000; Cambridge University Press, 1981), 267.

¹³⁰ Farmer, "Early References," 572; Levtzion and Hopkins, *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources*, 290.

¹³¹ *The Encyclopedia of Islam*, new edition (Leiden [The Netherlands] / New York: E.J. Brill; Paris:

Maisonneuve & Larose, 1993), s.v. “Būq,” by Henry George Farmer.

¹³² Farmer, “Būq.”

¹³³ Ivor Wilks, “The Mande Loan Element in Twi,” *Ghana Notes and Queries* 4 (January-June 1962): 26-28.

¹³⁴ Hause, “Terms for Musical Instruments,” 51.

¹³⁵ Andah, “The Guinea Belt,” 493.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ R.S. Rattray, *The Tribes of the Asante Hinterland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), xx; For a further defense of these linguistic and historical geographic positions on early migrations in the Akan region, see Kwamina B. Dickson, *A Historical Geography of Ghana*, 14-15.

¹³⁹ Andah, “The Guinea Belt,” 495.

¹⁴⁰ See *nkoŋe* in text above.

¹⁴¹ Hause, “Terms for Musical Instruments,” 21-22.

¹⁴² Ibid., 50-52.

¹⁴³ H el ene La Rue, “‘And All the Trumpets Sounded for Him:’ A Comparative Study of Two Royal Trumpet Traditions, England and Benin,” paper read at the 17th Congress of the International Musicological Society, Leuven, Belgium, August 2002.

¹⁴⁴ Hause, “Terms for Musical Instruments,” 50-51.

¹⁴⁵ See “*owuo*” in text above.

¹⁴⁶ See “Ivory trumpets as power” in text above.

¹⁴⁷ As told to me by the Denkyira Krontihene, Kwame Nkrumah.

¹⁴⁸ Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, 97.

¹⁴⁹ R.S. Rattray, *Tribes of the Asante Hinterland*, xx; and, Andah, “The Guinea Belt,” 493.

¹⁵⁰ Sarpong, personal conversation, 2002.

