

Research article

Textual Analysis of Conflict and Political Songs of the Dentsefo and Tuafo Asafo Companies of Effutu, Winneba

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ABSTRACT

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Despite the global recognition of political messages in music, it is evident that such expressions often lead to friction and disagreement among the warrior groups. This study aims to investigate the political expressions and conflicts within the music of the Asafo companies in Winneba. The research utilizes participant observation and semi-structured interviews as its primary methods, drawing inspiration from existing literature. The perspectives of 10 *Asafo* company leaders are examined to discern the factors contributing to conflicts in their songs. The data collected through participant observation and interviews is subjected to textual analysis. The study's findings reveal a consistent theme across all Effutu songs emphasizing conflicts and wars. These musical expressions are characterized by explicit elements of rivalry, provocation, and challenge. The study suggests that stakeholders should redirect their efforts towards using music as a means to foster peace and harmony among the Asafo groups in Winneba, rather than allowing them to serve as tools for conflict. This implies a need to rethink and restructure the current approach to musical expressions within these communities, emphasizing their potential for promoting unity rather than discord.

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1. Introduction

The political expression in music has been identified in many communities. This political expression in music is seen mostly to be done by warrior groups in African communities. In the political activities of these warrior groups, music is used to portray a specific message. The political message in music is usually in the context of time and it mostly creates the sense of unity in the community. All music is a tool for the creation and consolidation of a community (Attali 1985, p.6). Therefore, music is a form of communication, which builds understanding among people in a community. While some political messages in music can stir up friction, disagreement, or discord among warrior groups, others engage in the creation of new music. This includes compositions that either commemorate a conflict or shed light on latent conflicts. Eyerman (2002) opines that music is also used to clarify and disseminate ideology. Music which is used for peaceful purposes can also be opened to abuse by those who attempt to create conflicts. Such groups perform music that generates conflict.

Basically, the conflict arises between two powerful Asafo groups. Music provides an excellent medium for understanding conflict and politics. Music is part of humanity and it plays an important role in the social, political and cultural life in African societies. Political songs are very popular across many societies in Ghana. There are political songs and dances for warrior groups. Turkson (1982) explains that warrior groups among the Akan

societies of Ghana are called *Asafo*. *Asafo* companies are ancient warrior organisations that exist in all Akan societies of Ghana. These companies have developed into political organisations and music plays a vital role in their activities.

The Effutu have two main *Asafo* groups; the Dentsefo and the Tuafo. The Dentsefo was the primary *Asafo* of the Effutu, and later, the Tuafo emerged, leading to competition and conflict between the two groups. The Asafo tradition, as practiced by the Effutu in the coastal area, is considered a vital part of national life. The Effutu celebrate the Aboakyer festival, where the Asafo companies play a major role. This festivity spans three days, from Friday to Sunday. The musical activities of the two Asafo companies during the festival are notably competitive, creating fertile ground for conflicts. The politics and conflict in music among the Asafo companies are partly fueled by chieftaincy disputes in Winneba, encompassing kings and other lower political offices.


2. Literature Review

2.1 The Origin of the separated Effutu Asafo

The people of Winneba assert that even though they have always had the *Asafo*, the institution of the two-fold division of the town is a recent occurrence which took place in the reign of *Bortsie Komfo Amu*, probably towards the end of the eighteenth century (Ayensah, 2013). This significant change is connected in various accounts to the change in the mode of sacrifice made to

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the paramount god, *Penkye Otu* (Takyi, 2013). According to the story, *Bortsie Komfo Amu* went to the paramount god and told him that some white human beings have come and if we kill a man for sacrifice, they shall catch us and put us in prison. He therefore made an offer to the god that they shall give him ten and three cows, but the god did not accept. He pleaded again to give the god twenty sheep but the god again rejected the offer. The god told them that he would not accept the offer because the animals which they were substituting for a human were unclean. The king then asked the god to suggest an animal that he would like, and the god said the people should go to the bush to bring him a live leopard as their annual offering. The king agreed and as the history goes, when the people of Winneba went to catch the first leopard, the animal mauled eleven people, two of whom were brought back home alive but dying. The god then suddenly came upon *Bortsie Komfo Amu* who, in trance, reeled shaking with laughter. He then spoke. You opposed to give me one man. Now I have had my fill of human blood with eleven men dead. Now I shall tell you what you should henceforth bring as your yearly sacrifice to me. The god then asked them to bring a fallow deer caught live and whole. This according to legend is how the people of Winneba started catching a live deer as their annual sacrifice to their paramount god, *Penkye Otu*. (Takyi, 2013)

For some time after this, the town folk kept up the practice of going as one body to catch the animal to offer to their god. All the people belonged to the one *Asafo*, which is now said to be the Dentsefo No.2. A distinct No.1 *Asafo* company had not then arisen. After the death of *Bortsie Komfo Amu*, *Bondzie Quaye* one of the kings of Winneba who succeeded him took the first step in the line of creating two distinct groups. To speed up the catching of the deer, he selected the sons of all the elders of Dentsin and formed them into scouts, whenever the town had to go to the bush to catch the deer, the *Twafo* (scouts) went ahead into the bush to prepare the way for their fathers to come and catch the animal. *Gyabin*, an elder of No.2 *Asafo* placed at the head of the scouts, later requested that his youngsters be allowed also to take part in the actual catching of the deer instead of only leading the way to the bush. The elders agreed. The forest which *Gyabin* took his youngsters is still called after him. It is called *GyabinMpow* (*Gyabin* forest). It is the practice for the No. 1 *Asafo* Company to go to bush through that area. This then explains how the *Tuafo* came out of the Dentsefo. Today each of the two groups has its own symbols, emblems, tutelary gods and music. The fact that it is the first deer which is used for the annual sacrifice has established competitiveness in the relation between the *Asafo*. (Ayensah, 2013)

2.2 Performance Context

The Effutu *Asafo*, as stated already, has two *Asafo* companies called Dentsefo No.2 and *Tuafo* No. 1. Each of the companies has a central shrine called *posuban* which serves as a store room for regalia, musical instruments and focus for sacrifices just as all other companies in the neighborhood (Acquah, 2008). It is decorated yearly before the celebration of the annual *Aboakyer* festival. Traditional music and dance are very closely connected with ceremonies of the life cycle, worship, festivals and recreation (Nketia 1958, p.76). As stated earlier on, major occasion for the performance of *Asafo* music is the traditional festival.

Traditional music is held for many purposes in Africa. Some are held to celebrate bumper harvest or Agricultural boom. There are other festivals held to commemorate historical events. Some of them are *Hogbetsotso* of the Anlo, *Akwambɔ* of the Gomoa and *Aboakyer* of the Effutu of Winneba, the main occasion in which *Asafo* music features (Acquah, 2008). Oral tradition reveals that *Aboakyer* is celebrated by the people of Effutu to commemorate their paramount god, *Penkye Otu* who

gave them protection from all dangers during their migration. *Aboakyer* festival as celebrated by the Effutu people are divided into phases spread over three days, Friday to Sunday of first Saturday of May and most of the activities mandate *Asafo* music to feature prominently from the beginning to the end during the festival celebration. Both companies on Friday before the festival prepare the paths that lead to the forest by performing rituals believed to combat likely magical objects that might be hidden by rivalry groups. The companies therefore carry their gods through the principal streets of Winneba with provocative songs. Relations between them are characterized by mock hostility, jeering and insulting behavior, sometimes erupting into physical violence between members of opposing companies.

Traditionally, another context of performance of *Asafo* music is during the funeral celebration of its members. The *Asafo* features with its music when a member is "called to rest". They go to the house from the day the death is reported to perform and share their sympathies with the bereaved family until the final day when the corpse is at last buried. The *Asafo* during the funeral display emblems and symbols of their own deeds of valour while singing songs that provoke rivalry.

3. Methodology

The data for this article was based on a thesis written in partial fulfillment for the award of an M Phil degree in music at the University of Ghana in 2014. A qualitative approach was employed to gather the views of the *Asafo* leaders on the research topic. The selection of a qualitative method stems from its emphasis on capturing the holistic, dynamic, and individual facets of experiences. This approach enables a comprehensive understanding of these experiences within the context of those undergoing them, as articulated by Bryman (2012). This supports the experiences of the leaders without bias.

3.1 Data Collection

Data collection of information throughout the celebration with daily attention to the models developed was done. Data was collected through audio recordings and interviews from *Asafo* members, leaders, some community members as well as observers from other places. It was important since "interviewing is one of the most common and most powerful ways we use to try to understand our fellow human beings" (Fontana and Frey 1994, p. 361). Data for the study was collected from the field between March 2013 and April 2014. In all 100 songs were collected for the project but 10 of the songs are used for the purpose of this paper. Using participant observation, the researcher participated in almost all the activities of the two *Asafo* companies to gain intimate familiarity with the groups and also to get first-hand information from the people.

3.2 Participants and Sampling

For the study, ten leaders of *Asafo* companies were chosen, ranging in age from 42 to 60, each having dedicated a minimum of 8 years to their respective groups. These participants were drawn from communities within the Central Region of Ghana. Having been affiliated with these *Asafo* groups since their youth, they ascended to leadership positions. The selection process employed purposive sampling, ensuring that these leaders were specifically chosen to provide valuable insights and rich experiences related to the research topic.

3.3 Data Analysis

The primary analytical tool employed in this study was textual analysis, guided by the systematic steps outlined by Bryman (2012). These steps encompassed defining the scope and objectives, familiarization with the text, identification of patterns and themes, conceptualization, coding and categorization,

application of an analytical framework, interpretation of findings, comparison and contrast, and thorough documentation. The adherence to these steps facilitated a comprehensive and structured approach to the textual analysis process. In researching into the conflict and politics in the music of the Effutu *Asafo* companies, the text of the songs cannot be left untreated; this is because the texts have major roles to perform in human behavior. Merriam (1963, p.187) opines that:

One of the obvious for the understanding human behaviour in connection with music is song text. He further states that the texts of course are language behaviour rather than music sound, but they are integral part of music and there is clear cut evidence that the language used in connection with music differs from that of ordinary discourse.

4. Discussion and Findings

Asafo songs are basically war songs. Most of the Effutu *Asafo* song texts relate to wars and conflict. Among other song texts relate to inter- *Asafo* hostilities, provocation and insults coupled with filthy words.

According to Tsukada (2001), Sheburah explained that “*Asafo* songs tend to cause problems because the song texts include some insulting words and provocative expressions”. A striking feature of song texts in Africa is that, in song, the individual or the group could express deep-seated feelings not permissibly verbalized in other contexts.

Argodoh (2002) draws attention to the fact that:

Song texts in Africa are sometimes a reflection of the concerns of the correction of those aspects of behaviour to which they call for attention. They serve as a directive social control, that is, they are sometimes used through admonishing, ridicule and in some cases even more direct action to effect actual change in the behaviour of erring members of the society.

The *Asafo* song texts are a powerful vehicle for conveying group identity of the company by reminding each member of conflictual situations with other company in the past (Tsukada, 2001). The social sentiments shared by the company members are effectively enhanced to reinforce their solidarity.

Turkson (1972) stated that “*Asafo* song text is a form of oral tradition whose validity cannot be disputed, because it is a common experience of the whole society”. He further stated that it is a tradition transmitted by the older generation directly to the younger ones. Hence there is the need to interpret for the younger generation to understand the linguistic material.

Some of the songs with provocations coupled with insults as consistent theme by the *Dentsefo* and *Tuafo* companies of Winneba for interpretation and analyses are as below:

4.1 *Tuafo Asafo Company (No.1)*

4.1.1 *M’ayE hDn dEn?*

Words	English Translation
<i>Akoo no ho yE fEw</i>	The parrot is beautiful
<i>Osian ne ntEkyerE ntsi.</i>	Because of its feathers
<i>Na m’ayE dEn na nkrDfo kyir me yi?</i>	What have I done to them and people hate me
<i>Mese m’ayE den na nkrDfo kyir me yi?</i>	I say what have I done to them and people hate me?

This song is considered as a self-praising song with some provocative implication. This song is sung by the *Tuafo* No. 1

Company which is compared to the beautiful parrot. The *nkrDfo* in the text represents the *DentsefoAsafo* Company. Because *Tuafo* was split from the *Dentsefo*, they used to attack the *Tuafo* often due to the fact that they were stronger. *Tuafo* says to *Dentsefo*, “what have I done to you”. Why do you attack us? The *Tuafo* tells the *Dentsefo* that they envy them since they are beautiful like the parrot. *Tuafo* attributes the attack from *Dentsefo* to their own beauty instead of their military frailty which is, of course, highly offensive to *Dentsefo*.

4.1.2 *NnyeDkomfo*

Words	English Translation
<i>Nnye Dkomfo oo, nnye Dkomfo a Dtor a</i>	He’s not a fetish priest oo, he’s not a fetish priest oo, he’s a liar
<i>Asafo Dentsefo, hom nye mo adzebafo</i>	Asafo Dentsefo, you and your followers
<i>Hom mbasiafo nye mbanyinfo nyinara</i>	Your females and males as well
<i>Homdzi KOboye n’ekyir a daakye hom enyim boguase</i>	When you follow <i>KOboye</i> in future you will be disgraced
<i>Ei, nnyeDkomfo oo aye ee, yee ii</i>	Ei, he’s not a fetish priest oo aye ee yee ii
<i>Asafo Dentsefo, mo mbasiafo Ne mbanyinfo nyinara</i>	Asafo Dentsefo, your females and you males as well
<i>Homdzi KOboye n’ekyir a daakye hom enyim boguase</i>	When you follow <i>KOboye</i> in future you will be disgraced
<i>Nnye Dkomfo oo aye</i>	He’s not a fetish priest oo aye
<i>KOboye ye okohwini aa</i>	<i>KOboye</i> is a liar
<i>nnye Dkomfo a Dtor a</i>	He’s not a fetish priest aa, he’s a liar

This provocative song is usually sung to ridicule the *Dentsefo*. *Koboye* was the fetish priest of the *Dentsefo* and very powerful as well. In one of the *Aboakyer* festivals, the priest performed some rituals for the *Dentsefo* to be the winners in the competition. But unfortunately, the *Dentsefo* did not even catch a deer in that year’s competition. This song was sung by the *Tuafo* to ridicule the *Dentsefo* that their so-called priest is a liar but not a real priest. The *Tuafo* again mock the *Dentsefo* that they will always be disgraced if they keep on following their priest. Whenever this song is sung, the *Dentsefo* become very furious especially after being conquered. It normally results in a conflict between the two companies. The elongation of the vowels at the end of some of the lines depicts emphasis; therefore, long musical notes are set to them.

4.1.3 *Posu*

Words	English Translation
<i>Agoo, agoo wonkEbisa Asafo Dentsefo de</i>	Agoo, agoo go and ask Asafo Dentsefo that
<i>Hn posu no osi hD, anaa woebu?</i>	Is their <i>Posu</i> standing or broken?
<i>Oho oo onnyi hD!</i>	No oo! It’s not there
<i>Agoo, wonkEbisa Asafo Etsibafo de</i>	Agoo, go and ask Asafo Etsibafo that
<i>Hn posu no osi hD, anaa woebu?</i>	Is their <i>Posu</i> standing or broken
<i>Oho oo! onnyi hD aa</i>	No oo! It’s not there aa

<i>Aban no abu aa, aban no abu aa onnyi hɔ</i>	The aban is fallen aa, the aban is fallen aa it's not there
<i>Kodwoo Manso ɔso ben?</i>	How big is Kodwoo Manso?
<i>ɔdenkyemampon ɔakɛda buw mu</i>	Great crocodile has slept in a cage
<i>Atwer pu nsu a yɛbɔnom</i>	When frog spews water, we shall drink it

The *posu* and *aban* in the text are the short form of *Posuban*, which is the central shrine of the *Asafo*. The *Tuafo* went to destroy the *Posuban* of the *Dentsefo* overnight and asked if it still there or not. But the reply they got was that it was not there. The *Tuafo* Company sings this song to show that they are very brave to penetrate into their opponent's territory and destroyed their valuable asset. *Kodwoo Manso ɔsobenin* the text describes the rival as weak and not strong. *ɔdenkyemampon* (great crocodile), is a very wild animal but since it has been tamed it has no strength again. *Tuafo Asafo* describes the rival as *ɔdenkyemampon* (great crocodile), metaphorically manifesting the inability of the *Dentsefo* to fight them in spite of their strength. This song casts insinuation telling the opponent that they are not strong to battle with them.

4.1.4 *Wɔyembowa!*

Words	English Translation
<i>Agoo, Asafo Dentsefo se wobotwa nantwi</i>	Agoo, Asafo Dentsefo said they will kill a cow
<i>ama Simpa Tuafo; woenntum enntwa oo</i>	for Simpa Tuafo; they couldn't kill it oo
<i>Wɔyembowa!</i>	They're fools!
<i>Agoo, Asafo anɔ se wobotwa nantwi</i>	Agoo, Asafo anɔ said they will kill a cow
<i>ama Simpa Tuafo woenntum annyɛ oo</i>	for Simpa Tuafo; they couldn't do that oo
<i>Wɔyembowa! Wɔyembowa! Wɔyɛ mbowa</i>	They're fools! They're fools! They're fools!
<i>hɛn hɛn Kwesi Atta ee</i>	Our chief Kwesi Atta ee
<i>gyaa ma ɔnka</i>	Forgive and forget

There once was a king in Winneba called *Kwesi Attah* who according to the cultural bearers was described as very cruel. Because of his cruelty, he was not liked by many people in the society. The town folks then consulted the *Dentsefo* group to destool the chief. All efforts by the *Dentsefo* proved futile. The *Dentsefo* then consulted the *Tuafo* Asafo to help them and promised them that after helping them they will thank them by slaughtering a cow for them. After helping the *Dentsefo* to destool the king, the *Dentsefo* did not keep to their promise. The *Tuafo* then sings this song to insult the *Dentsefo* that they are fools for not fulfilling their promise. *Wɔyembowa!* in the text refers to the *Dentsefo* and it is a serious insult that provokes them.

4.1.5 *Yenam Nyaa*

Words	English Translation
<i>Yese hɛn bo nndwe oo</i>	We said we're not satisfied
<i>Apagyafɔ yɛnam nyaa</i>	Apagyafɔ we walk slowly
<i>Hɛn bo nndwe da</i>	We're not satisfied at all.
<i>Kweku Takyi na n'apagyafɔ</i>	<i>Kweku Takyi</i> and his <i>Apagyafɔ</i>
<i>yɛnam nyaa ampae</i>	We walk slowly indeed
<i>Ei! yɛnam nyaa</i>	Ei! We walk slowly

<i>ɔboa da a! yɛnam nyaa</i>	He lies! We walk slowly
<i>Apagyafɔ yɛayɛ Bonsu a osi hyɛn</i>	<i>Apagyafɔ</i> we're like the whale that stops a ship

The *Tuafo Asafo* sings this song to show that their heart is not at peace and will fight with the *Dentsefo*. The fact that they are walking slowly does not mean that they are weak. The *Tuafo* likened themselves to the whale and the *Dentsefo* to the ship. The whale is the biggest and strongest animal in the sea and is able to stop a ship. Therefore the phrase, *yɛayɛ Bonsu a osi hyɛn* (we're like the whale that prevents a ship) in the text means that the *Tuafo* are very strong and brave and no matter what the case may be will fight and conquer the *Dentsefo*.

4.2 **Dentsefo Asafo (No. 2)**

4.2.1 *Adan wo tur egya sar mu*

Words	English Translation
<i>Adan wo tur egya sar mu</i>	You've left your gun in the desert
<i>Adan wo tur egya sar mu a</i>	You've left your gun in the desert a
<i>obanyin ye</i>	Man is good
<i>Adan wo tur egya sar mu</i>	You've left your gun in the desert
<i>Adan wo tur egya sar mu a</i>	You've left your gun in the desert a
<i>obanyin ye</i>	Man is good
<i>Ammfa ammba a yeregye!</i>	Failure to bring it we will take it!
<i>Edze aba a yeregye!</i>	If you've brought it we will take it!
<i>Asomfo aa obanyin ye</i>	Asomfo aa man is good
<i>Adan wo tur egya sar mu aa</i>	You've left your gun in the desert
<i>Wo na! nkefa mbrɛ wo?</i>	Should your mother! Go and bring it to you?

This song is about a *Safohen* (chief warrior) of the *Tuafo* group who went to the bush and left his gun there. When he came home, he was telling people that he left his gun in the bush so they should go and bring it to him. The *Dentsefo* heard it and asked if his mother should go and bring the gun to him. Here the leader of the *Tuafo* is described as a handicapped man, who is not able to fight in the event of war. *obanyin ye* (man is good) in the text attributed to the *Dentsefo Asafo* implies that they are bold. *Wo na!* (your mother!) as stressed in the text is an insult that provokes the *Tuafo*.

4.2.2 *Kwasea Tuafo*

Words	English Translation
<i>Hen mbowa Tuafo ee</i>	Our fools <i>Tuafo</i>
<i>Hen nkwasea nkwasea Tuafo ee</i>	Our foolish foolish <i>Tuafo</i>
<i>Tuafo wɔakɔto sekye</i>	<i>Tuafo</i> has cast an anchor
<i>ato kwamu dua ase</i>	Under the <i>Kwamu</i> tree
<i>Yenye hɔn wɔ asem ee, abora ee!</i>	We have a case with them ee Abora ee
<i>Hen mbowa Tuafo ee</i>	Our fools <i>Tuafo</i>
<i>Hen nkwasea nkwasea Tuafo ee</i>	Our foolish foolish <i>Tuafo</i>
<i>Dentsefo yeakɔto sekye</i>	<i>Dentsefo</i> we've gone to meet anchor

<i>wɔ kwamu dua aseɛ</i>	Under the <i>Kwamu</i> tree
<i>Yɛnye hɔn wɔ asem ee abora ee</i>	We have a case with them ee <i>Abora</i> ee
<i>ɔdoko ee, yee ii, ɔko ngyae tu ee</i>	fighting ee, yee ii, the battle has not ended ee
<i>Akɔtwe manso aba ee</i>	You've brought litigation
<i>Ntwea yi akɔtwe manso abeka hɛn</i>	These dogs have brought litigation upon us

The conflict between the *Dentsefo* and the *TuafoAsafo* companies was settled by the chiefs and the elders in the Effutu traditional council. There was peace on the land until the *Tuafo Asafo* went to throw an anchor under the resting place of the *Dentsefo* to provoke them. The *Dentsefo* seeing the anchor knew that the *Tuafo* want to fight them again. The *Dentsefo* then said if the *Tuafo* want to fight, then the fight has not ended. The *Dentsefo* sing this song to provoke the *Tuafo* by insulting them that they are foolish, fools and classifying them as dogs. One could easily see the dexterity or agility involved in the performance of this song by the *Dentsefo*.

4.2.3 *ɔko Nndae*

<i>Yɛama ɔko nndae oo, wasafo yɛada</i>	We haven't allowed war to end oo, your men have slept
<i>Yɛama ɔko nndae oo, ɔko nso ɔnndae!</i>	We haven't allowed war to end oo, war too has not ended!
<i>Yaw Essiful Amantena ma nyan pafɔ</i>	Yaw Essiful Amantena the great warrior
<i>Ma ɔko nndae oo, yɛama ko nndae ee</i>	Has not let the war to end, we've not let war to end ee
<i>ɔson mbrantse hen ee</i>	Elephant youth king ee
<i>ɔko ndae aa ɔko ndae</i>	war has not ended aa, war has not ended
<i>Hena atwe nafena?</i>	Who has drawn his sword?
<i>Essiful Amantena atwe nafena</i>	Essiful Amantena has drawn his sword
<i>Mbanyin papa resen</i>	Better men are passing by
<i>ɔko nndae ee, yeyɛ mbanyin ee</i>	War has not ended ee, we're men ee
<i>ɔko nndae ee, ɔson mbrantse hene ee</i>	War has not ended oo, elephant youth king ee
<i>ɔko nndae aa ɔko nndae</i>	War has not ended aa war has not ended

This song can be considered as a self-praising song with provocative implication. The *Dentsefo* in this song praise their leader *Essiful Amantena* that he is a hero and a brave warrior who is always ready to fight and describe the *Tuafo* as weak. *Mbanyin* (men) and *ɔson* (elephant) in the text are a poetic image showing strength and boldness. The *Dentsefo Asafo* sees itself as the elephant which is a symbol of strength and power. The expression *mbanyin papa resen* (better men are passing) signifies that the *Tuafo* group are not men is highly provocative to the *Tuafo*.

4.2.4 *ɔwo Ada?*

Words	English Translation
<i>ɔwo ada ee! ɔwo ada ee!</i>	Are you asleep? Are you asleep?
<i>Okotobonku, ɔwo ada? Oho!</i>	Effeminate, are you asleep? No!
<i>ɔwo ada ee! ɔwo ada ee!</i>	Are you asleep? Are you asleep?
<i>Kwesi Budu ɔwo ada? Oho</i>	Kwesi Budu are you asleep? No!

<i>Wɔwo wo baako a yɛmmɛ</i>	Born alone, we don't like
<i>Wɔwo wo mmienu a yɛmmɛ ee</i>	Born twice we don't like ee
<i>Akokɔ bɔbɔn yɛnye hɔn bɔko</i>	When the cock crows we will crow we will fight them
<i>Tuafo, wɔwo wo baako a yɛmmɛ ee</i>	Tuafo, born alone we don't like ee
<i>wɔwo wo mmienu a yɛmmɛ ee</i>	Born twice we don't like ee
<i>Akokɔ bɔbɔn yɛne hɔn bɔko</i>	When the cock crows we will crow we will fight them

The intention of this song is to ridicule the leader of the *Tuafo* (*Kwesi Budu*) that he is always sleeping and not bold to fight. He is been insulted in the song that he lacks manly qualities to enable him to fight. The *Dentsefo* implies that they do not need a few people to fight them but the whole group and since their leader is weak they will fight and conquer the *Tuafo* by dawn when the cock crows. The insults hailed on their leader provoke the *Tuafo* Company. The *Dentsefo* uses this song to tease the opponent to test their strength, boldness and capability of fighting with them.

4.2.5 *Okotobonku*

Words	English translation
<i>Apagyafɔ hɔn hen Kwesi Nyan ee</i>	Apagyafɔ's chief Kwesi Nyan ee
<i>Kyiremfo hɔn hen Kwesi Nyan ee</i>	Kyiremfo's chief Kwesi Nyan ee
<i>Onya ko a ɔbɔko ampa? Ayee!</i>	If he gets a fight he'll fight indeed? Yes!
<i>Onya tur a ɔbɔtow ampa? Ayee!</i>	If he gets gun, he'll shoot indeed? Yes!
<i>ɔtwea! okotobonku a ɔdan ne tun dze kyerZ mbaa</i>	Dog! Effeminate that turns his buttocks to women
<i>Yɛahyia, yɛahyia wasafo a, ɛko ɛbisitia asra wo mba ahwe?</i>	We've met, we've met great men, and did you inform your children of the war?
<i>Hom mfa nyɛ hom nna nom! hom mfa nyɛ hom egya nom!</i>	Do that to your mothers! Do that to your fathers!
<i>Adze a hom dze reye Dentsefo mba ee</i>	What you've done to children of Dentsefo
<i>Hom mfa nyɛ hom nna nom! hom mfa nyɛ hom egya nom!</i>	Do that to your mothers! Do that to your fathers!

Kwesi Nyan in the text is the *Safohen*(great warrior) of the *Tuafo Asafo*. The *Apagyafɔ* and the *Kyiremfo* are the subdivisions in the *Tuafo Asafo* Company. This song is sung by the *Dentsefo* to ridicule their leader that he is not serious to fight because he has the feminine character and he is a disgrace to the *Asafo* fraternity. The background of the song was given as: there was a fight between the Effutu people and the Ashanti. *Kwesi Nyan* who was the leader of the *Tuafo* was not able to fight so he ran away with his company leaving the *Dentsefo* to fight alone. So the *Dentsefo* after the fight told the *Tuafo* to do what they did to them to their mothers and fathers. The mothers and fathers as stressed in the text is a highly provocative to the *Tuafo* and on account of accusation that they were not able to fight.

All the examples of both Dentsefo and Tuafo Asafo songs presented here have consistently demonstrated that the Effutu Asafo songs related to conflicts and wars characterized by explicit nature of rivalry, provocation and challenge.

5. Conclusions

This study employed a combination of textual analysis and semi-structured interviews to delve into the political expressions and conflicts embedded in the music of the Asafo companies in Winneba. By incorporating insights from the existing literature, the research aimed to identify provocative words within the songs that frequently lead to conflicts. The crux of political tensions and conflicts among Asafo groups in Winneba lies in the composition of their song lyrics. Specifically, the music featured during their annual Aboakyer festival is characterized as highly provocative and insulting, acting as a catalyst for conflicts rather than fostering unity among the Asafo groups. Despite the intended purpose of music to bring these groups together for a more harmonious Winneba, it seems to have the opposite effect. The heightened political tension in Winneba is further exacerbated by the ongoing chieftaincy dispute, intensifying the rivalry among Asafo companies. This backdrop of discord underscores the need for a more conscientious approach to the use of music within these groups. While recognizing the healing potential of music, it is imperative to acknowledge its dual nature-capable of both uniting and dividing. Consequently, there is a compelling call to leverage music as a tool for promoting peace and harmony among the Asafo groups in Winneba.

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