

## **Amodo Akadumah**

**Ethnic group:** Frafra

**Language (dialect):** Frafra (Gurune)

**Country:** Ghana

**Recording date:** August 18, 2015

**Recording location:** Chief's Palace, Bolgatanga, Ghana

**Total Recording time:** 34:37

**Technician:** Brian Nowak

### **Group members:**

Amodo Akadumah – kologo (two-string lute)

### **Track names -- duration**

1) Seba Ndonga Kila Kale Labe Na – 6:29

Those who are dead and gone will come back to the earth to see

2) Homima Senla Ma Me Mifola Bale Nou – 7:06

The way you know my character, I also know your character

3) Seba Kabuti Ba Ninie Yema , Joan da Bora Ti Soei Ne Neyiza –10:55

Enemies who don't want to see you say witch and robber when they do see you.

4) Amodo Akadumah interview –7:13

5) instrumental improvisation – 2:54

### **Group introduction:**

Amodo's direct relation to the main chief's family already places him in the cultural forefront but his reputation as one of the best singers and *kologo* players in the Bolgatanga area is how people know him best.

His raspy, easy to identify voice, is known for its Gurune dialect purity in phrasing and lyrics. Recorded in the chief's family residence surrounding the palace, these three songs use the acoustic *kologo* with no accompaniment to showcase the all-in-one, more folk-style of performing. Amodo uses a thick piece of plastic to intensify the percussive sound made when striking the strings and leather soundboard.

### **Recording context:**

The *kologo* genre of music is widely popular and one of the truly popularized folk genres of regional West Africa. The Frafra community listens to this music extensively and neighbors or migrant workers also appreciate their style. Amodo's place as the chief's son, and as a popular singer in both folk and modern styles of songs, are both consistent with the proud nature of his confident, solo, acoustic performance.

New forms of *kologo* introduce a repetitive electronic dance pulse to the *kologo*, which is now the most popular style. Endless numbers of groups create new compositions and produce cd and vcd recordings for local sales and tv music shows. It is a true, local music industry. Although the lyrics are always the focus, the quality of the live accompaniment and the new electronic, drum-machine pulse, follow and adorn the melody and lyrics. In the acoustic format, the clicking of the pick against the strings and skin of the lute is the only strictly rhythmic element.

***Notes on Language Use:***

Many lyrics focus on moral advice or issues that arise to challenge us in our lives. One interesting feature is the long names to the songs, as if they have to describe the entire social context, as this is what truly defines the song, no matter its length. Sometimes these names may be shortened for reference in everyday conversation. Similar to reference to concepts based on longer proverbs, or moral lessons at the end of a story, song titles may be nicknamed in a sense.

Amodo also incorporates stories through song, thereby tying an established story-telling tradition to a new form of communication with new music and lyrical styles. Short songs often play a role in traditional storytelling, usually the chorus of a story has a jingle-like refrain, that may be rather long, or multi-versed. Here, the longer format of songs tells a story engaging listeners with a new platform for telling stories and a longer period of time listening to lyrics in a culture where dancing would usually take the majority of time people spend enjoying music.