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Composers of African Art Music in Contemporary Ghana: Locating Identities

by

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Abstract

African art music composers in Ghanaian universities negotiate a multiplicity of identities in a time characterized by frequent international communication and travel. This thesis explores these identities and asks, what does African art music, a combination of Western and indigenous African musical elements, mean today? In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, European Christian missionaries introduced Ghanaians to Western styles of composition. During the pre-independence era, Ephraim Amu (1899–1995) first began to explore what it means to be African in the realm of Western-inspired art music by incorporating traditional music that could be appreciated by Ghanaians. Composers in subsequent generations, such as J. H. Kwabena Nketia (b. 1921), studied and continue to study and teach composition in Ghanaian and foreign universities, placing African art music amidst global flows of Western-inspired art musical practices. Students and professors at three Ghanaian universities navigate Christian, Pan-African, national, ethnic, and cosmopolitan identities through their compositions.

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Chapter One: Introduction

> In the interconnected global ethnoscape of the late-twentieth century, the aesthetics of 'art' and popular music alike increasingly bore the mark of hybridity and cultural crossover. It is a world in which once-secure musical boundaries became highly porous; in which transnational cultural exchanges produced an array of richly intersecting multicultural musical forms; indeed, a world in which 'polystylism' was itself considered a representative hallmark of a post-modern condition that challenged the very concepts of cultural authenticity and artistic originality (Scherzinger 2004, 584).

Arrival in the Field

Walking towards the School of Performing Arts at the University of Ghana is a challenging study in musical perception for a recently arrived North American student in Ghana. Being surrounded by the conglomeration of musical styles at the university was all at once affirming to my expectations and profoundly surprising during my first days in the country in 2008. From several blocks away, on one of the main roads that circles the Legon campus of the University of Ghana, drummers and dancers in the main dance and performance hall could be heard practicing relentlessly for an upcoming performance. The sounds of the Departments of Music, Theatre Arts and Dance Studies mixed together in the complex of buildings that is the School of Performing Arts. In a small building just outside of the courtyard that forms the center of the Department of Music, I could hear a *seprewa*, a ten-string plucked harp, accompanying a lone voice singing palm wine music, a genre of music centered around the guitar, first introduced to West

Africans by Portuguese sailors in the fifteenth century. On most days, the sounds of a traditional xylophone, made of hollow gourds and various lengths of wood playing rhythmic pentatonic melodies, spread into the market adjacent to the school. The palm trees, heavy humid air and persistent heated drumming were exactly what I was looking for in my six week study abroad experience in Ghana. The atmosphere was rich with new sounds for someone who, only days earlier, was performing a concert of works by Beethoven and Sibelius for a packed audience of upper class Chicagoans.

Figure 1. Department of Music at the University of Ghana, Legon. 2010. (Photo by author).

However, upon stepping into the courtyard of the Department of Music, something sounded drastically out of place. I was at once fascinated and perplexed while walking from the street to the faculty offices at the back of the courtyard. Students standing outside of classrooms were surrounded by the sounds of traditional drumming and singing in the dance hall just a

few doors away from somebody playing a Handel suite or the music of one of Ghana's art music composers on a rickety upright piano. The various musical types mixed together in the courtyard through the slatted windows of the department offices. A professor played a recording of one of Beethoven's symphonies as he discussed the work with a student. Moments later a student began to practice a piano work by Ghanaian composer and ethnomusicologist J. H. Kwabena Nketia (b. 1921), and another sang through several verses of a hymn well known throughout church congregations in Ghana. Behind the Department of Music, several old upright pianos sat in pieces in the sun, as the rain from the previous night evaporated off the decaying wood into the tropical air, reminders of the enduring presence of Western instruments in Ghana and their associated art music tradition.

My naïve perceptions of Ghana, and on a wider scale, Africa, were challenged by these initial aural impressions at the University of Ghana. I was shocked to find a type of art music, commonly referred to as classical music, that I was relatively accustomed to so far away from home. The last thing that I expected to find here in West Africa was a Baroque or Romantic symphonic work, but I became eager to understand what role this music plays in Ghana, with its foundations in interactions with the European musical canon. How does art music, typically thought of as the music of the West, function in an African country where the overwhelming popular and scholarly interest is in traditional rural music and popular musical forms such as gospel, highlife and hip-hop?

Personal Background

As with many contemporary ethnomusicology research projects, at some point in time the researcher develops a personal connection with the topic of study or the participants. Much of the data presented in this thesis is the product of numerous interviews, and it is therefore necessary to understand how I came to the field and what I have contributed to these social interactions. Kvale explains that the results of an interview are the product of both the researcher and the research participant. He focuses on the "knowledge created *inter* the *views* of the interviewer and the interviewee" (Kvale 1996, 15). Knowledge is created in a coordinated manner between those participating in the interview. Therefore, prior to discussing the goals and perceived ends of this project, it is necessary to locate myself in this project. Charting how these interactions between myself and African art music composers in Ghana came about it is of critical importance to understanding the project in its entirety. The process of locating the researcher in a project allows for an understanding of how initial interest in the subject matter and assumptions about the music came about, and in turn how these interests and assumptions impact interviews.

How does a classically trained cellist coming out of an American music conservatory become acquainted with African art music composers in Ghana? While attending the DePaul University School of Music in Chicago from 2005 to 2009, I was predominantly surrounded by young musicians from North America, Europe, Russia and East Asia, places commonly

associated with Western art music. The topic of study was the Western musical canon and well-known European composers from the past several centuries. Emphasis was on performance experience, immersion in a rigorous routine of daily practice and rehearsals, and a course load focusing on aural skills and music history. As with many North American conservatories, the musical environment was insular and predisposed to favor a certain type of music: the works of contemporary classically trained composers and of the European composer canon, such as Bach, Mahler, and Wagner. The stories of many students at an institution such as this are very similar: dedicated study of an instrument under professional musicians who are viewed as demigods of the music world, as they are experts in musical performance and the Western canon.

However, over time the musical environment at DePaul began to strike me as somewhat narrow. I have many fond memories of my time at DePaul, but at a certain point I desired to engage with the world outside of Western art music culture. Like many students, I became involved with several world music courses at the university during my second and third years of study. For the first time, "ethnomusicology" became a familiar term, and during an "Introduction to World Music" course I learned about a variety of approaches to music. Not only did I begin to recognize the value of the academic study of music in addition to regular practice and performance experience, but I also began to recognize the wealth of musical traditions around the world and the limitations of a strict conservatory education in

Western art music. Along with the study of Senegalese drumming and Irish marching band music, I developed a desire to experience this music for myself. I craved an adventure, an escape from the practice room so common in the Western art music experience, a way to experience something new beyond the Western music canon, and a way to engage with musicians not from my own musical background. However, the last thing that I expected to discover in this escape from the practice room was a well developed art music tradition in a place commonly thought of as being characterized by its traditional and popular music.

Focus of Study: African Art Music

Scholars commonly divide African music into three categories: traditional music, popular music and art music. While these categories certainly do not encompass the entire range of musical genres in Africa, they serve as a starting point for understanding the types of music on the continent. Oftentimes, African scholars broadly present twentieth century African music types in terms of the dichotomy of "traditional" and "contemporary music" (Agordoh 2005; Nketia 1964). Ghanaian scholar Alexander Akorlie Agordoh describes "traditional African music" in terms of its lack of influences from Western culture and popular music and art music in Africa in terms of its emergence out of colonial contact between traditional music and outside cultures (Agordoh 2005, 18–22). This thesis is focused on

African art music, a contemporary type of music in that it is a product of contact between traditional music, colonial enterprises and Western culture.

Until recently, very little attention has been given to the scholarly study of African art music. In the introduction to his study of Nigerian and Ghanaian art music, the Nigerian composer and musicologist Olabode Omojola points out,

> Although a considerable amount of research has been carried out on traditional African music, contemporary musical idioms in Africa have received limited attention by scholars. It is only in recent times that scholars began to accept the fact that, while the preservation and documentation of traditional forms are laudable research projects, new, modern musical practices are also worthy of attention (Omojola 1995, 1).

As will be shown in this thesis, a small but vibrant art music community exists in Ghana, and the study of art music in a country outside of what is typically thought of as the Western world is indeed worthy of study and reflection.

What do I mean by the term "art music" in the context of this thesis? Nigerian scholar and composer Paul Konye broadly defines art music as, "a category of composed music, written or otherwise, which takes into consideration tonal, traditional, structural, and stylistic concerns in its synthesis" and points out that such a definition takes into account cultures around the world that "have developed varying forms of indigenous notation systems for recording their music" (Konye 2007, 45). His emphasis in this particularly broad definition is on the compositional product, and he remains open to the idea that indigenous musicians can produce art music without

coming into contact with Western art music and its tradition of notation (Konye 2007, 47). However, Konye goes on to explain,

> except for rare exceptions, folk and popular music are neither dependent on musically literate musicians (musically literate in a Western sense [conservatory/university system]) nor do they require music in its written form for its dissemination, preservation or performance (Konye 2007, 46).

The "art music" that I focus on in this thesis is distinct from other types of composed music in that it is Western-inspired and founded upon Western music literacy (attained through study in a Western-style education system). This type of notated music is often associated with the works of composers of the European canon such as Beethoven and Bach. Other scholars further illuminate this Western-inspired art music as being characterized by "a purely contemplative tradition" founded upon aesthetic appreciation of the music (Omojola 1995, 5). These perspectives on Western-inspired art music will be further discussed in Chapter Two.

Western-inspired art music composed in Africa and with African musical elements is discussed by African scholars and composers, including my research participants, as "African art music," terminology that I adopt for this thesis. Discourse around African art music frequently involves complex discussions of nationalism and ethnic and Western identities. These issues will be discussed later. However, the term African art music gathers together all strands of the music composition tradition that I present in this thesis. Ghanaian composer and ethnomusicologist George Dor explains, "'contemporary African art music' is the expression most widely used by

scholars to designate an art music idiom that is basically a fusion of Western and African musical elements" (Dor 2003, 49). As will be discussed further in Chapter Two, "contemporary African art music began as a legacy of colonialism and Christian missionary presence and activities" which led to Western musical education and the eventual return to an "African identity" through the use of indigenous or folk musical materials by African composers (Dor 2003, 49–50).

In using Dor's characterization of African art music I will exclude the term "contemporary," as this connotes certain styles of composition in Ghana whereby musical elements such as chance music (compositions with elements that are left up to chance or the decision of the performer) and dissonance are employed. While I will discuss contemporary forms of African art music (works that diverge from tonality and standard forms of composition), my discussion is not limited to this type of African art music. Therefore, for the sake of clarity, I will use the term African art music in this thesis to describe a type of music that is a combination of Western and African musical elements, is composed by those with a formal education in Western music (including musical literacy) and is characterized by a contemplative performance context with a clear distinction between audience and performers on a stage.

Broadening Perspectives on African Art Music

What do I have to contribute to an understanding of art music in a place geographically so far from my home communities in the United States and Canada? What right do I have to say something about African art music in a continent that has been extensively used by Westerners for their own purposes throughout the colonial and neo-colonial eras? A brief overview of the literature on African art music reveals a marked concentration on studies written by those from the countries being discussed, including Ghana and Nigeria. Writings by African composers and scholars including J. H. Kwabena Nketia (1957, 1964, 1974, 1982, 2005), Kofi Agawu (1984, 1996, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c), George Dor (2003, 2005), Olabode Omojola (1995, 2001, 2007) and Akin Euba (1975a, 1975b, 1993, 2001) are frequently referenced in discussions of African art music.

What seems to be missing is the perspective of someone not raised in Africa, but who grew up with art music in another part of the world. Understanding what I, a Western art musician, have to contribute to the study of African art music is very different from trying to understand what I can contribute to a study of music in a traditional setting. Speaking of his approach towards studying traditional drumming in Ghana, ethnomusicologist John Miller Chernoff explains,

> For a Westerner to understand the artistry and purpose of an African musical event, it is necessary for him to sidestep his normal listening tendencies, slow down his aesthetic response, and glide past his initial judgement. The reason why it is a mistake 'to listen' to African music is that African music is not set apart from its social and cultural context (Chernoff 1979, 33).

Chernoff describes the manners in which outsiders in traditional African music contexts need to alter their typical approach towards the music in order to understand it. He emphasizes focusing on "its social and cultural context" instead of its "aesthetic" qualities. However, African art music is unique in that it combines Western and traditional African musical elements. A Western art musician is therefore both an "insider" and an "outsider" with regards to African art music. Traditional music in Africa is often touted for its authenticity and lack of contact with Western cultures, but African art music composers in Ghana frequently describe their connections with other composers abroad and their time studying in Europe or North America. Coming from a background in Western art music, I am able to engage with those in the art music scene in Ghana in ways that even many Ghanaians more versed in popular and traditional music may not be able to. In a sense, I am familiar with Western art music's "social and cultural context," specifically its performance context centered on the clear distinction between performers and a contemplative audience and manners of speaking about and critiquing a performance or score. My experience in these settings in North America allows me to look at these events in Africa with an eye for similarities and differences in relation to my own experiences in Western art music.

It is interesting to note that Chernoff's point that "it is a mistake to listen to African music" may not completely apply to African art music. As is typically the case with art music, listening and aesthetic appreciation of a

work in performance and on the score is a key element of the experience of art music. Having studied such approaches to music in a Western conservatory, I am familiar with this way of understanding music and can engage with composers in dialogue on this level.

However, while I have personal connections with individuals in Ghana and have studied traditional Ghanaian music in both academic and practical settings, my knowledge of music in Africa is very different from someone who grew up on the continent surrounded by music since childhood. I can therefore not claim to completely understand the webs of meanings associated with a traditional melody incorporated into an African art music composition. Furthermore, despite my familiarity with art music communities in North America, it is important to recognize that art music may function in Ghana in completely different ways, and its cultural contexts are certainly not identical to what I know in North America. My experience in Western art music allows me to engage in dialogue with African art music composers in order to understand how our two traditions relate to or contrast with each other. In an increasingly interconnected world it is necessary to incorporate the discussions and perspectives of Western authors regarding African art music that, as noted by many of the African scholars themselves (Dor 2003; Omojola 1995), originates in interactions with Westerners and Western institutions. These Western perspectives can contribute to a broader interpretation of the interconnected international musical tradition of Western-inspired art music.

My shock at finding a musical genre that I am relatively familiar with in such a distant place only relatively recently became possible due to drastic improvements in long-distance travel and communication. As Arjun Appadurai explains, "cultural dealings between socially and spatially separated groups have, until the past few centuries, been bridged at great cost and sustained over time only with great effort" (Appadurai 1996, 28). However, he points out a new condition in which the "*ethnoscape…* the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live" is characterized by increased mobility and movement throughout the world (Appadurai 1996, 33–34). The modern world involves increased contact between individuals who previously were considered geographically distant and therefore uninvolved in each other's lives. However, today, contact such as this can lead to new perspectives on musical traditions including those discussed in this thesis. For centuries, Western music culture slowly spread to places such as Ghana through colonial encounters, and only recently was it a possibility for an American such as myself to travel abroad to take note of this Western-inspired musical practice. The resulting contact provides a unique opportunity to understand how Western-inspired art music functions throughout the world. Both the existence of this type of music, brought about through the presence of European colonizers and missionaries on the African continent, and my capability to study and interact with it are a part of the same processes of increased communication and the sharing of musical values. Not only can music such as this exist, but scholars from around the

world can also study it first hand, leading to exciting new possibilities of interpretation and understanding.

Aim

In this thesis, I aim to understand the meanings, identities and values associated with African art music as well as its functions in the lives of contemporary Ghanaian composers and their respective communities. I will explore what these pieces of art music mean to the composers themselves as they study and teach composition at Ghanaian universities and have their works performed. In addition, I will look into the processes of composition and the pedagogical means by which a student becomes a composer. Such a perspective necessitates an understanding of the interactions amongst different generations of Ghanaian composers. As will be discussed in Chapter Two, at the beginning of the twentieth century Ghanaians were taught Western styles of composition through interactions with European Christian missionaries. These and subsequent generations of composers studied and continue to study composition in European and North American institutions, providing a persisting link between African composers and Western art music education. I will explore African art music in Ghana in terms of its roots in European and indigenous musical traditions as well as its relationship with modern ethnic, nationalistic and Pan-African movements. Exploring these issues leads to a fuller understanding of the ways in which Western influenced art music is conceived in non-Western settings as well as

its role in global flows of compositional practices. In addition, a comparison with Western-inspired art music composition in Egypt will allow for a discussion of similarities and differences between this compositional practice in two countries with contrasting colonial histories. This analysis will illuminate Pan-African and cosmopolitan connections between composers in Ghana and Egypt and characterize the "ethnoscape" that intercultural composers find themselves in at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Figure 2. University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. 2010. (Photo by author).

Area of Research

African art music composition in Ghana is part of the larger practice of Western-inspired art music composition throughout the world. This kind of composition initially arose out of the colonial encounter in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, ease of long distance communication through individual means and mass media perpetuates this practice today. The legacy of the colonial encounter has manifested itself in African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria and Egypt in the form of institutions such as universities and performing organizations that serve as key centers for African art music composition and performance. Well-established university based music and composition programs are centers for the study and propagation of art music composition in Africa. These universities often include art music composition programs housed within larger art and drama departments, and some of these in turn are a part of nationalistic institutions focusing on African studies in the arts. Students and professors in these institutions are also part of global flows of academics and musicians who study abroad in places such as North America, Europe and Asia.

Scope of Research

My research on African art music in Ghana is focused on four professors and three students who have taught and studied composition at the University of Ghana in Legon, the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education in Winneba. All of these students and professors are

currently studying and working in Ghana, but some have also studied composition in music conservatories in Europe and North America. A research sample such as this will allow for an understanding of similarities and differences between the different generations of African art music composers in Ghana as well as how different approaches to art music composition relate to personal backgrounds and educational histories. Central to these comparisons will be an analysis of the origin of this type of music in missionary churches and the continuing relation between composers and Protestant churches. A comparison with four generations of art music composers in Egypt will allow for an understanding of the ways in which Western-inspired art music has manifested itself in a country with a contrasting colonial and post-colonial history.

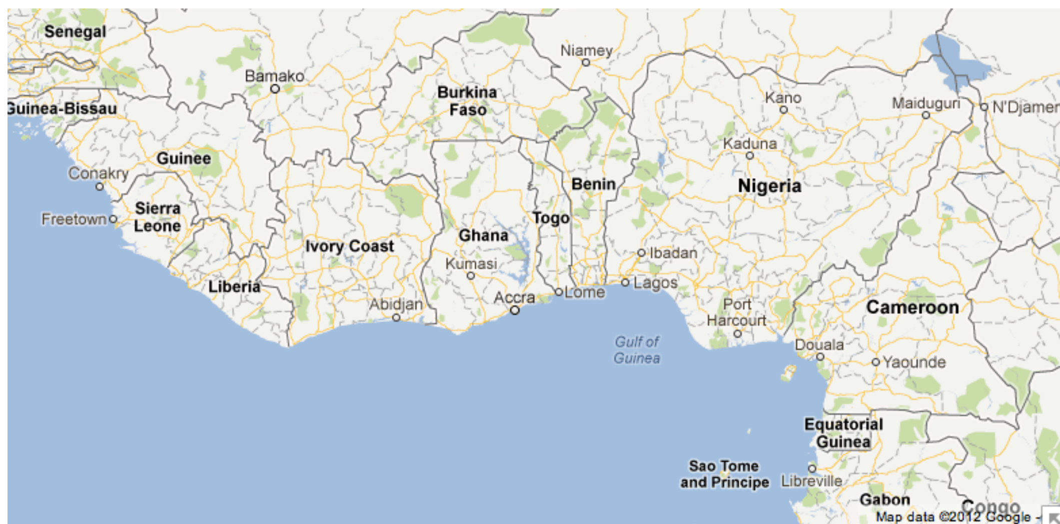

Figure 3. Map showing location of Ghana within West Africa. (http://maps.google.com/).

Ethnomusicological Research Paradigm: Music and Identity

Previous research on African art music has heavily emphasized the analysis of compositions (Omojola 1995; Agordoh 2004b). In these instances, connections between composers' personal backgrounds and the content of the compositions are only briefly mentioned, and rarely are the voices of the composers themselves incorporated. An analytical approach to African art music is certainly a valid and important approach to understanding the ways in which composers integrate both indigenous and Western musical materials. In particular, Ndubuisi Eugene Ifechukwu Nnamani, a Nigerian scholar, has demonstrated how an analytical approach illuminates the ways in which Nigerian art music composers incorporate both Western and indigenous African musical elements for presentation to audiences in Nigeria and abroad (Nnamani 2010).

In understanding African art music composition in Ghana, it is also important to recognize the complex webs of dialogue and discussion around the meanings and identities connected with African art music. Throughout the course of my interactions with African art music composers in Ghana I have found that dialogue is a fruitful medium through which to understand the ways in which composers contemplate their identities and roles in Ghana and on an international scale. In addition, understanding the ways in which personal and educational histories and societal factors play into dialogue on the topic of African art music leads to a more complete picture of this type of music. While an analytical approach illuminates the ways in which Western

and indigenous African elements (often presented as exclusive of each other) are incorporated in the realm of African art music, an ethnomusicological approach emphasizing dialogue helps to display the complexities of the processes around the negotiation and reflection of identity. I am interested in the ways in which composers perceive their works in relation to identity and the ways in which their identities are reflected in the compositions themselves, the lives of the composers and their dialogue about music.

Understanding the relationship between music and identity is key in understanding the roles that African art music plays in Ghana. The identities discussed here are multiple and reflected through the compositions discussed and dialogue about music. Scholars have noted that individuals are composed of multiple identities (Turino 2004, 9; During 2005), and Turino also notes that these constructed identities can be used to "get certain types of political and social work accomplished" (Turino 2004, 9). As I will show, the identities reflected in African art music composers in Ghana allow individuals to situate themselves in relation to other composers as well as with other music associated with various parts of the world. Much of my discussion on identity centers on the term *cosmopolitan,* which Turino describes as "objects, ideas, and cultural positions that are widely diffused throughout the world and yet are specific only to certain portions of the populations within given countries" (Turino 2000, 7). In this case, the term cosmopolitanism comes to the foreground, as Western-inspired art music is a common theme throughout the world and is not exclusively tied to a specific

location. However, location is still a key element of the term cosmopolitan.

Turino notes,

> Cosmopolitan cultural formations… are also usually more heavily influenced by certain particularly powerful sites —England and various European countries in the nineteenth century, the United States, Japan, Russia, and China in the twentieth —through processes such as colonialism and neocolonial economic controls (Turino 2000, 8).

Cosmopolitanism is even tied to the idea of nationhood around the world, an important element of identity for some composers of African art music. The very conception of nationhood elsewhere, in places such as Europe and Russia, came out of the "cosmopolitan thinking of the urban elite… out of 'westernization'" (Taruskin 2012). Turino is particularly focused on the situation in Zimbabwe. However, such cultural formations are equally important in Ghana, as composers employ Western-inspired musical elements.

Music is a key medium through which identities are created and situated. Martin Stokes notes "people… use music to locate themselves in quite idiosyncratic and plural ways" (Stokes 1994, 3). Furthermore, he explains, "musical performance, as well as the acts of listening, dancing, arguing, discussing, thinking and writing about music, provide the means by which ethnicities and identities are constructed and mobilized" (Stokes 1994, 5). Stokes's use of identity in this sense is key, as it involves interactions with music beyond merely performance and listening. While performance and listening are important parts of the situation of identity, dialogue and

thought processes are also included in such a definition. African art music composers situate their identities in such ways.

Research Questions

I am interested in understanding the identities that African art music in Ghana reflects and creates. How are these identities manifested in the composers, their works, the location of performance and the make-up of audiences? How do composers negotiate this music's origins in European musical traditions in relation to modern connections with nationalistic, ethnic and Pan-African movements? How do these identities contrast within the perspectives of different generations of composers, and how do they perceive the complimentary or contradictory nature of these identities in relation to their music? Do current students of this compositional style associate their compositions with nationalistic or Pan-African movements, or have they rather begun to emphasize general cosmopolitan ideals instead? How is the music perceived in terms of global flows of culture and information?

Past writings on this topic emphasize the importance of text (Euba 2001) and the referencing of tradition (Nketia 1982) as important signifiers of African identities in the music. Do all Ghanaian composers think of themselves and their works in terms of an African identity? In addition, how do composers perceive their works in relation to the rest of modern Ghanaian society? I would like to understand the purpose of this

compositional practice, and how it contributes to the livelihoods of the composers and musicians involved. Are these works performed and if not, what is the aim of continuing this practice? What kinds of contacts do composers have with musicians abroad? Are the compositions of Ghanaian composers primarily performed in Ghana or elsewhere? How are these compositional practices related to music institutions such as the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra? Finally, how do the professors and students interact in the transmission of specific methods and values associated with composition?

Research Method

Initial contacts with participants were made during participation in a University of Alberta study abroad program entitled “West African Music, Dance and Culture” during the summer of 2008. Two of the participants, Senyo Adzei and Pascal Zabana Kongo, were guest lecturers during music coursework at the University of Ghana in Legon, Ghana. Subsequent contact with these composers was made in 2009 in preparation for my Master of Arts thesis research undertaken through the University of Alberta. Each of these composers acted as liaisons, introducing me to other students and professors at these universities who compose African art music. Data for this project was collected from April though June 2010 at the University of Ghana and University of Cape Coast in Ghana.

Primary data for this study consists of transcripts of formal interviews with composers from members of the second, third and fourth generations of African art music composers in Ghana. These three generations are the most active in current musical activities in the music departments at their respective universities, allowing for a contemporary understanding of the proceedings and relations at these departments. The first generation of art music composers in Ghana, consisting exclusively of Ephraim Amu (1899–1995), is no longer alive, and I am therefore unable to include any interviews from this generation. However, Amu was often referenced in the content of my interviews and his work continues to influence composers in Ghana today.

Attendance at and observations of musical performances, in both secular and religious settings, provided valuable background data for me as I performed fieldwork. In addition, time spent with research participants in informal settings allowed me to come to a fuller understanding of their lives in ways that have impacted my presentation of them here. Finally, digital scores and word documents of the composers' own analyses of their works provided another angle through which to view their perspectives on music.

Interviews were conducted in English on a one-on-one basis, in which composers were asked to describe their music as well as the music of others. Frequently, these interviews would involve listening to a composer's works or performance of their works on the keyboard. During the course of fieldwork I determined that interviews are a natural form of interaction for

the participants due to the fact that formal discourse is prevalent in these university settings. I made every effort to maintain a relaxed atmosphere in the interviews, aided by listening to the composers' compositions.

The generations presented in this thesis are defined by the participants themselves and through professor/student roles in the universities. Current students (the fourth generation) study, or recently studied, composition with professors at these universities (the second and third generations). Composers within each of these generations range in terms of where they studied (in Ghana or abroad), what kinds of formal music training they received, different ethnic groups, languages spoken and country of birth. The only member of the second generation of composers in Ghana whom I was able to interview, J. H. Kwabena Nketia, is also still an important figure in these university settings.

Profiles of composers who participated in this research project will be included in Chapter Four. Table One shows the ages, generations, locations of birth and locations of post-secondary education. Further details about the composers' education and degrees can be found in Chapter Four. Figure Four, a map of Ghana, depicts the locations of research, hometowns of research participants and other locations mentioned throughout this thesis. These tables and images serve as an overview of my data sample and can serve as a point of reference for comparing composers' backgrounds and influences. Composers interviewed in Cape Coast include Pascal Zabana Kongo, a current professor of music at the University of Ghana and University

of Cape Coast and his recently graduated music students Alfred Patrick Addaquay and Mark Obosu. I will also present data from interviews with Kenn Kafui, a professor of music at the University of Ghana, Legon and Senyo Adzei, a graduate of the University of Ghana who recently returned from further music studies in Helsinki, Finland. Finally, I will also analyze interviews with Cosmas Mereku, a Senior Lecturer of Music at the University of Education, Winneba.

Beyond speaking with composers, I regularly attended church services at the Evangelical Presbyterian (E.P.) Church in Madina as well as rehearsals with the Good News Choir at the same church. Observations of these rehearsals and the worship service allowed me to understand the roll of African art music in this church. During my time at the church, I also had the opportunity to interview Mawuli Adzroe, the choirmaster of the Good News Choir, and John Nutekpor, an organist and music leader at the church. These interviews allowed me to learn about their perspectives on the church and art music. Attending three rehearsals with a small selection of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra (the full orchestra usually does not meet during the spring and summer months when I was in Ghana), as well as their performance in Cape Coast, helped me to understand the activities of the orchestra about five decades after it's founding. Informal conversations with members of the orchestra and an interview with the director, Isaac Annoh, led to insight on the role of the orchestra in contemporary Ghana.

I was unable to include interviews with female research participants for this study. During the course of research in 2010, I was able to briefly meet with a graduating female student. She seemed hesitant to speak with me for a lengthy period of time, likely as a result of my status as a foreign white male. She was the only female that I met or have heard of in the African art music scene in Ghana. With more time, I would have liked to speak further with her about her music and her perceptions of being a female art music composer in Ghana.

African art music composition in Ghana seems to be a predominantly male-dominated profession. I find it likely that this is due to the cultural norms surrounding gender, work and education in Ghana. According to the 2008 "Ghana Living Standards Survey," six out of ten Ghanaian men and only four out of ten women are literate (Ghana Statistical Service 2008, iv). The relative lack of women in African art music, a career focused on higher education in a university setting, can be partially explained by these literacy rates. I hypothesize that these numbers are a result of traditional ideas that Ghanaian women should focus on domestic duties and jobs such as vending in local markets as opposed to the career work of men. Such approaches to gender roles are likely decreased in urban centers and in Christian communities with their predominant emphasis on individualism. I suspect that just as gender inequalities in the workplace are a common topic of discussion in North America today, such gender roles likely manifest themselves in urban Ghanaian cultures as well.

The lack of women in this profession could also be due to traditional ideas about gender roles in music performance. It is generally the case that men exclusively perform on drums and other percussion instruments. During my time in Ghana in 2008 and 2010, I never witnessed a woman playing a drum. I have heard reports of women playing drums in a traditional shrine in rural Ghana, but such instances appear to be rare. I was unable to sufficiently explore the role of gender in African art music composition in Ghana in this project, and further research is necessary in order to understand the role of females in this music community.

Composer	Generation	Dates	Place of Birth	Post-Secondary Education
J. H. Kwabena Nketia	2	b. 1921	Mampong, Ashanti Region, Ghana	University of London (School of Oriental and African Studies); Birkbeck College; Trinity College of Music; Columbia University; Juilliard School of Music; Northwestern University.
Pascal Zabana Kongo	3	b. 1947	Zaire/Democratic Republic of Congo	National Institute of Arts (Kinshasa); University of Paris X-Nanterre; Northwestern University.
Kenneth Kafui	3	b. 1951	Volta Region, Ghana	University of Ghana.
Cosmas Worlanyo Kofi Mereku	3	b. 1957	Kpando, Volta Region, Ghana	National Academy of Music, Winneba; University of Michigan; University of Leeds (England).
Senyo Adzei	4	b. 1978	Tchito, Volta Region, Ghana	University of Ghana; Sibelius Academy (Helsinki, Finland).
Mark Obosu	4	b. 1980	Saltpond, Central Region, Ghana	University of Cape Coast.
Alfred Patrick Addaquay	4	b. 1985	Kumasi, Ashanti Region, Ghana	University of Cape Coast.

Table 1. Basic information on research sample. (Compiled by author, 2010).

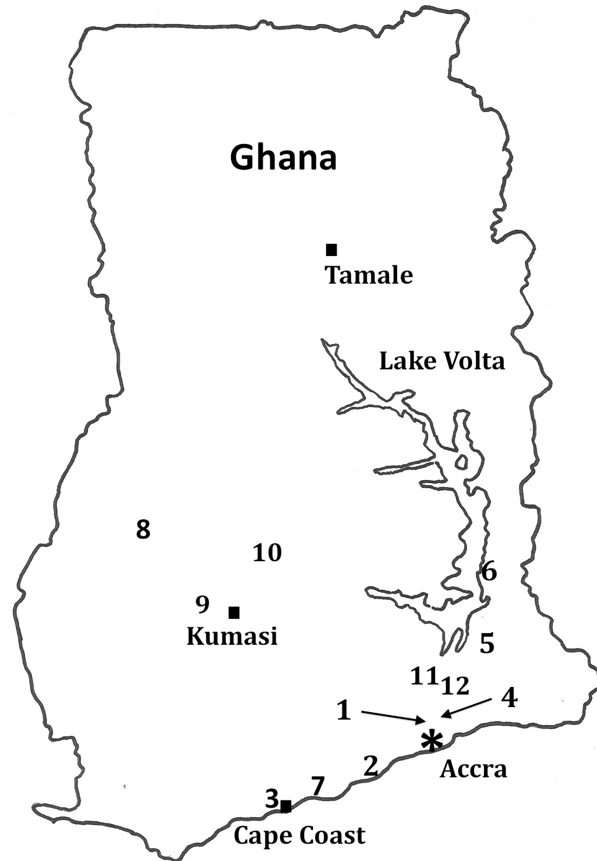

Figure 4. Map of Ghana with major cities, locations of research, composer birthplaces, current places of residence and other important locations.

Figure 4 Key

*** Capitol city of Accra**

- Location of Ghana National Symphony Orchestra

1- Legon

- University of Ghana- previously attended by Adzei and Kenn Kafui
- Current residence of Kenn Kafui

2- University of Education, Winneba

- Current residence of Cosmas Worlanyo Kofi Mereku

3- Cape Coast

- Current residence of Pascal Zabana Kongo
- University of Cape Coast- previously attended by Mark Obosu and Alfred Patrick Addaquay

4- Madina

- Current residence of J. H. Kwabena Nketia and Senyo Adzei
- Location of Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Madina

5- Tchito

- Birthplace of Senyo Adzei

6- Kpando

- Birthplace of Cosmas Worlanyo Kofi Mereku and Kenn Kafui

7- Saltpond

- Birthplace of Mark Obosu

8- Sunyani

- Current residence of Mark Obosu

9- Kumasi

- Birthplace of Alfred Addaquay

10- Mampong

- Birthplace of J.H. Kwabena Nketia

11- Akropong

- Presbyterian Training College, Akropong- attended by Nketia

12- Koforidua

- Seventh Day Adventist Teacher's Training College- attended by Mark Obosu

Chapter Two: The Historical, Social and Musical Context of African Art Music in Ghana

Prior to further discussing such terms as "art music" and "African art music," it is necessary to present a brief history of the origins of African art music in Ghana. As many scholars note, the origin of African art music composition in Ghana is intimately tied to missionary churches and schools in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and today, composers in Ghana continue involvement with their respective churches. Changes in church approaches to music and the progression of institutions such as the University of Ghana and the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra have been tremendously influential in the lives of African art music composers in Ghana over the past century.

Historical Background

African art music in Ghana developed towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century as a result of Ghanaian interaction with European missionaries, churches and Christian schools. It is necessary to look at the longer history of missionary activity in this region in order to gain an understanding of the important role that the church has had throughout the history of African art music in Ghana. Many of the composers whom I met in 2010 told me that when they were first introduced to the music of European composers in seminary schools or the church they were

not aware that the music that they were hearing or performing was from somewhere else, created by those of another musical culture. This is not surprising considering the enduring presence of missionaries in Ghana over the past five to six centuries

Ghana, referred to as the Gold Coast prior to independence in 1957, is an ex-British colony but has a long history of involvement with other European colonial powers. The Portuguese, Dutch, Swedes and Danes also traded and fought for control of coastal areas in the region, then called the Gold Coast, starting in the fifteenth century. Today, numerous forts along the coast such as the Cape Coast Castle and Elmina Castle serve as reminders of this enduring colonial history. Christian missionaries first came to Ghana towards the end of the fifteenth century, but at first they were only able to work amongst those who were directly involved in the activities of the forts on the coast (Wyllie 1980, 5). "Large-scale conversions were not achieved until the second half of the nineteenth century" when British colonizers established control throughout much of the interior of the region (Wyllie 1980, 5). In his 1978 book *The Missionary Factor in Ghana's Development up to the 1880's,* Ghanaian historian S. K. Odamtten explains that prior to the nineteenth century "the missionary enterprise… was undertaken against a general background of a disturbed country, disorder in the towns and unsuitable conditions in the castles which were intended to be the launching pad for missionary operations" (quoted in Kwami 1994, 545).

Once possible in the nineteenth century, the implementation of educational institutions by the missionaries was a primary means of ensuring a lasting impact in Ghana. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, missionaries within the Basel and Methodist missions set up some of the first "mission stations" and began working to build infrastructure and schools as well as translate the New Testament into indigenous languages including *Twi and Ga* (Beckmann 1975, 18). However, it wasn't until the mid-nineteenth century that the Basel and Bremen Missions, German Protestant missionary organizations, as well as the British Methodists, firmly established themselves in Ghana. This is particularly evident in the prevalence of boarding schools run by Christian missionaries during the mid to late-nineteenth century. Ghanaian historian Robert Addo-Fenning notes that boarding schools run by the Basel Mission were founded in the late 1850s in order to "insulate the young fledgling Christians from Pagan influences" (Addo-Fenning 2003, 198).

Seminaries run by churches, such as the Presbyterian Church of Ghana and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and other institutions, such as the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong (founded in 1848 by the Basel Mission), later served as key centers for the training of musicians and teachers (Agordoh 2004a, 20). These missionary-founded institutions are key to understanding the development of African art music in Ghana, as many composers were influenced by graduates of these institutions or studied there themselves. For instance, Nketia was greatly influenced by

graduates of the Presbyterian Training College, Akropong , and he studied and taught music there in later years (Akrofi 2002, 4–15).

Early church leaders immediately saw the importance of education in their missionary goals. Naturally, Western music was a key element of the education provided at many of these institutions. The singing of Western hymns (sometimes translated into the local language) was common in churches and Christian schools, and this is also where students were first exposed to instruments such as the harmonium, keyboard and organ. During the mid-nineteenth century, a boarding school set up by the Basel Mission in Christiansborg, outside of what is now the capital city of Accra, included instruction in "reading, writing, grammar, the elements of arithmetic, the Outlines of Geography, Bible stories and Bible reading, the learning by heart of Scripture passages and of Hymns, and Singing" (Schott 1879, 32). John Collins also explains that in the early 1900s these educational institutions included the singing of hymns, instruction on the piano, harmonium and "western harmonic progressions" (Collins 2004, 407). It was within such an environment that Ghana's first African art music composer Amu first developed his passion for music. While at the Peki Blengo central middle boarding school (founded by the Bremen Mission) from 1912 to 1915, Amu became particularly interested in his music teacher's organ playing, with whom he took his first organ lessons (Agyemang 1988, 15). Later, at the Abetifi Basel Mission Seminary, Amu enjoyed singing choral works by German composers such as Bach and Mozart that had been simplified and

translated into the *Twi* language in the books “Seminary Tunes” and “Twi and Ga Tunes” (Agyemang 1988, 19–20).

Noting the impact that these schools had on the lives of early composers such as Amu, it is necessary to understand the tedious relationship that missionary institutions had with indigenous music. Schools in the major missionary institutions, including the Basel and Bremen Missions, were strictly opposed to traditional instruments, including drums, regarded as pagan and contrary to the goals of the Christian church. Church leaders perceived indigenous music as connected with specific traditional religious practices. In describing the origins of music in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Agordoh explains that Christian converts were excommunicated from the church if it was discovered that they had been involved with traditional music (Agordoh 2004a, 12). This was due to the fact that

> African drumming, dancing and music, with their captivating harmony and rhythm, to those who guided thought in the Church, were not easy to dissociate from the body of customs which had permitted human sacrifice and other ‘heathen’ practices (Bartels 1965, 234).

Evidently, church leaders had a profound distrust of traditional music and culture. Nketia explains, “In some areas the converts were not only prohibited from performing traditional African music, but even from watching it” (Nketia 1974, 15).

However, towards the middle of the nineteenth century, some church leaders also recognized indigenous African music in terms of its evangelical potential. Once again, as in the early educational institutions, the focus was

upon the youth of the church. In the *District Minutes* from the 1885 Jubilee Synod (a meeting of a ruling body in the church), a member of the Methodist Synod encouraging the use of a vernacular singing band (an amateur choir that performs popular music) in a local church said,

> Let the brethren endeavour to make this institution (i.e. the Sunday school) as interesting as possible so as to attract the young. For it is certain that the Sunday school is the nursery of the Church (quoted in Bartels 1965, 134–135).

It seems that in this particular case only the vernacular language was incorporated into the church; no indigenous instruments were allowed. The singing band was incorporated as an evangelistic means to attract the youth. From this perspective, it becomes clear that an important element of church music was its ability to relate to the congregation through the vernacular language. Churches were beginning to move towards incorporation of indigenous language and music in the worship experience.

However, the tedious relationship between missionaries and indigenous music continued into the twentieth century. Syncretic music was also suspect, though it seems to have been more favorable than traditional instruments in some missionary churches. For instance, in the 1920s and 1930s, missionaries in southern Ghana became concerned that popular Ghanaian brass band music, "created in the 1880s by *Fante* musicians trained in the British colonial regimental bands of Cape Coast," would lead members of their congregations to "forget their souls" (Collins 2004, 409). Other churches allowed brass band music, but still frowned on traditional music. Agordoh explains that within the Bremen Mission (established in Ghana in

1847) "hymns; brass band music [and] English anthems" were allowed by the missionaries, but "any traditional musical instrument or musical activity was regarded as 'pagan'" (Agordoh 2004a, 12). Missionary churches varied in the degree with which they allowed traditional, popular and syncretic music to be performed by Ghanaian Christians. However, it is evident that early missionary churches were skeptical with music that was not of European origin.

Early church leaders strove to maintain focus on Christian teachings and the biblical text. As a result, many church musical practices during this time resembled those of the West. Cultural anthropologist Birgit Meyer describes a scene in the mid-twentieth century: a Sunday morning worship service in a Christian *Ewe* village in which members of the congregation "remained seated, listening to prayers and the sermon from the pastor, and sang *Ewe* hymns in Western style (written both by missionaries and *Ewe* Christians) from the *Ewe* hymn book" (Meyer 1999, 21). In the context of worship, emphasis was upon listening to the service and focusing on the messages of the biblical text and the pastor. However, over time, church leaders began to signal acceptance of elements of indigenous culture such as local languages. In 1927 Synod Minutes from the Ghana Presbyterian Church, a pastor of a congregation explained,

> Songs in the vernacular are far better and more edifying than songs in any other language... The words and the spirit from which they flow must be the chief thing. Perhaps it would be good to suggest that some of our men endowed with musical gifts should prepare the Psalms to be sung in the vernacular (quoted in Parsons 1963, 112).

Such openness to local languages, while maintaining the message and "spirit" of the songs, signals a movement towards greater acceptance of indigenous culture. However, it is important to note that when music was used in this context, there is no indication that indigenous musical traditions and instruments were used as well.

It is also necessary to understand the degree of control that missionaries had over indigenous culture in order to appreciate the significance of the musical response that soon followed in some churches. Antonio Gramsci explains, "the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as 'domination' and as 'intellectual and moral leadership'" (Gramsci 2006, 85). Christian missionaries in Ghana maintained control over Ghanaians in both of these ways. The Basel Mission in Ghana provided moral direction through biblical teachings and became directly involved in technical and agricultural education, providing economic opportunities for Africans devastated by the impacts of colonialism (Miller 2003, 27). In addition to this power over Ghanaians, evident in teachings in biblical morality and in highly influential educational and economic institutions, missionaries also introduced European musical traditions, most evident in hymnbooks and other worship music.

However, it is out of this environment, that which favored Western music while recognizing the evangelical potential of indigenous vernacular music, that the first art music composers in Ghana began their careers of influence. Nketia points out,

> The exclusion of those who were systematically exposed to Western culture from participation in traditional music led to the emergence of new 'communities of taste,' identified with varieties of Western music. These communities still exist in independent Africa, for the legacy of Europe is inextricably bound in with the cultures of contemporary Africa (Nketia 1974, 16).

Nketia illuminates one of the influential forces behind the maintenance of a community of African art music composers in Ghana. While missionary exclusion of those involved in traditional music certainly led many to gravitate towards Western music, it is also critical to recognize that today, members of these communities that identify with this music are also often proficient with or at least knowledgeable of traditional Ghanaian music. As will be shown, the incorporation of traditional music within an art music composition, is frequently emphasized by composers of African art music. However, for now, it can be seen that the manner in which Ghanaians in the church began to write music in a Western style paved the way for future composers to incorporate indigenous music in their compositions. Ghanaian composer and ethnomusicologist George Dor explains,

> Nevertheless, the valorization of Western music by missionaries in the church and school provided Africans with the opportunity to learn a style that later became crucial in the developmental history of African art music. While a number of gifted indigenous Africans acquired their skills of reading and writing music from parochial schools and academic institutions founded by colonial governments, the autodidacts drew on their experiences of long-term engagement with church music to compose part-songs that were Western in style (Dor 2005, 443).

John Collins points out that the employment of vernacular hymnody in the missionary church also came about through other avenues outside of an art music context. Here we see the development of a type of church that

characterizes much of the Ghanaian Christian scene today. Collins explains that the colonial British policy of "indirect rule," allowing Ghanaian chiefs to carry out the ruling functions of the British traders and officials, and the death of many missionaries from malaria fostered vernacular hymnody known as Ebibi-ndwom (Collins 2004, 408). Adolphus Turkson descibes Ebibindwom as consisting of biblical texts set to traditional melodies without any influences from "Western choral music also heard in worship" (Turkson 1982, 42). African art music developed in a similar manner in the church, in that it was an attempt to increase congregational involvement and participation in worship. However, the Western influences in the music are key to the roles and identities associated with African art music in Ghana.

Collins also notes that the churches that broke away in the nineteenth century, the "separatist 'spiritual' churches," were followed by a similar trend of church separation in the 1920s with churches characterized by "features of an African type such as spiritual healing, exorcism, divination (i.e., prophecy) and possession (by the Holy Ghost)" (Collins 2004, 410). These new popular spiritual churches employed drumming, dancing, Highlife influences and "dance band instruments (such as bongos, double bass, and guitar) in their worship services" (Collins 2004, 410–411). Over time, the churches that did not break away from the missionary organizations began to incorporate traditional instruments such as drums as well. A perfect example of this is the experimentation with drums and dancing in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in the 1970s (Agordoh 2004a, 21–22).

However, this is distinctly different from the incorporation of these instruments in the break away spiritual churches, as the focus of the churches more closely aligned with the original missionary organizations was still on the hymn, not on popular or dance music.

Today, Ghanaian churches can be divided into those that maintained a connection with Protestant missionary organizations from the nineteenth century and those that didn't. Churches that broke off from missionary churches are a product of the twentieth century and contrast with Protestant churches in both their history and worship style. Ghanaian religious scholar Cephas Omenyo groups denominations such as the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, the Methodist Church Ghana, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the Baptist Church and the Anglican Church under the umbrella of "Mainline Protestant Churches" that came out of Protestant missions such as the Basel and Bremen Missions in the nineteenth century (Omenyo 2006, 6–7). Omenyo also broadly describes "Pentecostal/Charismatic" churches as being a product of the twentieth century, and points out that some originated in the United States. (Omenyo 2006, 7). This makes sense, considering the rapid growth of similar Charismatic churches in North America over the past century. In 2008, I attended part of such a "Pentecostal/Charismatic" worship service in Kumasi and was amazed to find the congregation dancing to the popular music band at the front of the church for well over an hour. This contrasts greatly with the service at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church that I will describe next. It

is also important to locate the Catholic Church within such broad categories of churches in Ghana. While by definition the Catholic Church is not Protestant, in my experience the context of worship is very similar to the "Mainline Protestant" churches described above and is distinctly less oriented towards popular dance music than the "Pentecostal/Charismatic" churches.

Performance and the context of worship are also very important in understanding the difference between these churches. It is not surprising that African art music composers in Ghana are not associated with churches that employ popular music such as highlife and instruments such as guitars. Considering the importance of the hymn and hymnal in the protestant tradition, it makes sense that African art music composers would grow up in and continue to be involved in "Mainline Protestant" churches later in life. It is necessary to mention this here in order to distinguish between "Pentecostal/Charismatic" churches and mainline churches that continued through the twentieth century and continue to be a force in African art music composition in Ghana. Today, the connection between university based composers and mainline churches is still very strong and is key to understanding the careers of many composers in Ghana today. All of my research participants who identify as Christians attend mainline churches such as these.

Christian Culture in Ghana

Composers in Ghana are consistently surrounded by popular church culture, and most of the composers that I will discuss are still intimately involved with their respective churches. Therefore, to understand how composers are involved with the church, it is necessary to observe the dominant culture of the church throughout Ghana. Using data from the 2000 census, the CIA World Factbook lists Ghana's population as 68.8% Christian (Pentecostal/Charismatic 24.1%, Protestant 18.6%, Catholic 15.1%, other 11%), Muslim 15.9%, traditional 8.5%, other 0.7%, none 6.1% (Central Intelligence Agency 2012). However, the hegemony of Ghanaian Christian culture is evident in more than statistics. One needs only ride in a tro-tro (a privately-owned van used for public transport) anywhere in Ghana to note this inescapable Christian culture. On any day of the week, gospel music blares from the tro-tro's radio or cassette player, and signs with Christian imagery and Bible verses cover the back and side windows of many vehicles. The imagery and inescapable gospel music continues on Sundays as bellowing amplified voices of preachers and church choirs can be heard on many street corners in cities such as Madina, Legon and Cape Coast. Meyer notes the significance of Christianity in southern Ghana today by pointing out,

> This Christian popular culture has quite successfully colonized public space, most certainly in the South of Ghana where Christianity reigns supreme, and where Christian signs— spread via posters, songs, and radio, TV and film programs, and victorious mottos on shops… create an all pervasive Christian environment (Meyer 2008, 84).

Choirs in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana

During the course of my fieldwork in Ghana in 2010, I regularly attended Sunday services at the Evangelical Presbyterian (E.P.) Church in Madina, a suburb of the capital Accra and my home base while in Ghana (Figure Five). The Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana was initially founded by the Bremen Mission in the 1840s amongst the *Ewe* people of what is now the neighboring country of Togo (Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana 2011). I am not able to provide a complete comparative analysis of the worship styles in different denominations of mainline churches in Ghana in the context of this thesis. However, at several points in 2008 and 2010 I was able to attend Anglican, Methodist and Catholic church services, and I found that the general style and layout of worship is relatively consistent with what I will describe below.

The church has a vibrant community of about ten different choirs that take turns presenting one or two short choral works during worship each Sunday. The choirs range from singing bands, amateur choirs that frequently employ traditional *Ewe* drums (the ethnicity commonly associated with this church), brass instruments and a Western drum set, to choirs of more experienced singers that focus on complicated and challenging compositions. These more experienced choirs such as the Good News Choir (a title shared by certain choirs at numerous E.P. Churches) meet on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday throughout the week to rehearse for choral competitions as well as performances in upcoming worship services. Like the other "amateur" choirs

(a term used by John Nutekpor, a musician in the congregation), choirs such as the Good News Choir frequently use traditional drums, bells and rattles during rehearsal and worship.

Figure 5. Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Madina, Ghana. 2010. (Photo by author).

The choirs serve as a source of community for members of the congregation, and nearly every member of the congregation (approximately two hundred people) is a member of a choir. In my experience, the prevalence of choirs in congregations such as this is a distinct contrast with similar churches in North America where only a very small percentage of the congregation sings in the choir.

The three rehearsals throughout the week bring choir members together to prepare for worship, choral competitions and professional recordings (Goodnews Choir, n.d.) which are distributed throughout the church community on CD. Over the course of my stay in Ghana, I attended

several rehearsals of the Good News Choir at the E.P. Madina Church. The around twenty members of the Good News Choir are regular attendees at the church and sit together near the front of the worship space during the single Sunday worship service. The group is composed of students, roadside food vendors and working professionals. Mawuli Adzroe, the choirmaster, is an accountant at the University of Ghana when he is not working with the choir (Adzroe 2010, interview).

Due to my relatively short time in Ghana, I decided to spend most of my time with the Good News Choir instead of spreading my time between numerous choirs. My goal was to understand what role the choir plays in the church community, as well as how choirs such as this relate, if at all, to African art music composers and compositions. Other groups, including the large Church Choir, singing bands (focusing more on popular music), and a brass band also rehearse at various places on the church property, which is located on a quiet side street in Madina. The Good News Choir rehearses at 7:00 PM under the canopy of a small building in the Southwest corner of the church courtyard where drums, various percussion instruments and other supplies are stored. However, it is not uncommon for the rehearsals to actually start at around 8:00 PM when most of the members arrive after battling traffic on the way from work to the church. As people arrive, they sit on several wooden benches that are stored in the building attached to the canopy.

Each rehearsal that I attended began with ten to fifteen minutes of prayer in the *Ewe* language. Many members of the choir prayed out loud and the "chairman," one of the male singers, led throughout the group prayer or closed after everyone had simultaneously prayed aloud for several minutes. Immediately afterwards, Adzroe sang the beginning of a well-known *Ewe* hymn or anthem and many people kept their eyes closed as the entire choir joined in for four or five minutes. They then started the main part of the rehearsal. Mawuli and one of the women then handed the men the clapping sticks, *axatse* (rattle) and bell. The leader of the choir sang the melody line and then the rest of the choir and percussion came in following a bar of rests. They sang songs back to back with a small pause in between while the drums and rhythm instruments continued playing *agbadza* rhythms. At times, several women stood up to dance. Prior to each choir entrance or new verse, the person with the clapping sticks played a short rhythm to signal the entrance. People stared into the distance while they sang and at times the men would switch instruments or hand an instrument to another man who had previously only been singing.

The Good News Choir sings a variety of styles of music. Hymns from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Hymnbook, a combination of translated hymns by European composers and Ghanaian composers including Kenn Kafui and George Dor, formed the bulk of the rehearsals. Adzroe also led the choir in one of his own compositions during one of their rehearsals. However, he emphasized that he doesn't frequently compose and often asks

for the help of university-based composers such as Kenn Kafui (Adzroe 2010, interview). Near the middle of the hour-long rehearsal, Adzroe often led the group in a more difficult composition. During my visit, the choir was preparing a challenging piece written by Ghanaian composer Nicholas Z. Nayo (1922–1993) for a competition with choirs from other nearby congregations. Works such Nayo's, which had not already been memorized, were taught and learned by rote. While attending these rehearsals, I got the impression that none of the choir members, except for Adzroe, read music notation. He walked around during the rehearsal, often singing the bass line, as everyone else sat down on the benches singing their respective parts. He and members of the choir slowly worked through the new composition until the lyrics and harmonies had been learned. For newer pieces of music such as this, Adzroe picked small sections and sang through individual lines until everybody had memorized the music. At a couple of points, it seemed that some people were not sure when to come in, and one of the stronger singers in the choir would look around and make eye contact with certain people to show them where to come in. The rehearsal ended after a closing prayer, collection of donations and discussion of upcoming events. While spending time with the Good News Choir, I was struck by the close-knit nature of the group and its central role in the community and musical-life of the church. The importance of such choirs in the life of the church was evident in both rehearsals, as well as the Sunday worship services.

Musical Context in Sunday Worship Services

Services at the E.P. Madina Church begin when the Church Choir processes down the center of the congregation singing a hymn accompanied by traditional *Ewe* drums playing the *Ewe agbadza* rhythm. During the first hour of Sunday worship, the pastor often calls on the choirs one-by-one to present their performance in worship.

Figure 6. Good News Choir (in gray) and Church Choir (in black) singing in worship at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Madina. Perspective of photo is facing congregation. 2010. (Still image of video by author).

During these short performances, members of the performing choirs and those listening may stand up to dance. At certain points in the service, the entire congregation sings a hymn accompanied by drumming. Services often last upwards of three hours and incorporate two separate offerings in which all members of the congregation dance to the front of the church to place money in any number of donation boxes for various organizations and causes in the church. Dancing is frequent during the course of the service, and

music creates the order and structure of the service. In Chapters Four and Five, I will discuss two distinct trends within African art music composers whose musical education began in the church: those who continue musical involvement with the church and those who strive to move into music scenes outside of the church. Such an environment as described above presents some of the key elements of the worship experience that modern composers both gravitate towards and push away from in Ghana today.

"Founding Fathers" of African art music in Ghana

The beginning of African art music composition is intimately tied to several key personalities in West Africa. Composers throughout British West Africa, such as Fela Sowande (1905–1987) of Nigeria, took the initiative to pursue further study of Western music introduced through hymns and other worship music (Omojola and Sowande 1998, 456–467), leading to a career in art music composition. Similarly, in Ghana, the story of the early Ghanaian art music composer Amu and those who followed him demonstrates how African art music composition originated in missionary institutions.

Amu was trained as a catechist by missionaries and began composing using indigenous resources in order to make music and hymns in church more approachable for Ghanaian congregations. He began to write indigenous African tunes for his congregation when he noticed that a majority of churchgoers were illiterate and could not sing selections from the hymnbook, unlike their proficiency in singing indigenous songs outside of

church (Agyemang 1988, 67–68). As Amu explained, "I wanted to compose a song with a melody and words very close to the indigenous lyrics, which the illiterate Christians could easily understand, enjoy singing and relate to" (Agyemang 1988, 68). Amu notes that he was fired from his post in the Presbyterian Church after wearing African clothing and performing some of his earliest compositions with indigenous influences, perceived as "pagan" by church authorities (Agawu and Amu 1987, 52–53), launching a career in composition using indigenous resources in secular and religious settings. Amu used African art music as a tool to counter European influence in the region and to make worship a more meaningful experience for Ghanaians in the missionary church. During his compositional career, Amu composed many vocal works in Ghanaian languages, an outgrowth of his time spent studying "traditional Ghanaian songs" and also wrote for both traditional and Western instruments (Omojola 1995, 153). Today, many Ghanaians, especially composers, view Amu as one of the founding fathers of African art music composition in Ghana.

The composers who followed him also had key roles in developing African art music composition in Ghana. In a short discussion of art music in Ghana in his book *Nigerian Art Music: With an Introductory Study of Ghanaian Art Music,* Nigerian musicologist Olabode Omojola notes that "many of these composers are trained within a predominantly European system of music education and are musicologists or ethnomusicologists who have combined a career in composition with a strong academic interest in music" (Omojola

1995, 155–156). This is true of many of the composers discussed here and in the chapters to come.

One such key figure in the fields of composition and ethnomusicology in Africa is Kwabena Nketia (b. 1921). Still active in the International Centre for African Music and Dance at the University of Ghana, Legon, Nketia has regular contact with other composers, young and old, in Ghana today. He is also a highly respected figure throughout Ghana and in academic circles throughout the world.

Nketia has had an extensive career throughout Ghana and universities around the world. Beginning in 1944, Nketia studied linguistics and social anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London and later continued his studies in music at the Trinity College of Music, also in London (Omojola 1995, 156; Wiggins and Nketia 2005, 57). After returning to Ghana in 1949, he held teaching and research positions at the Presbyterian Training College in Akropong and the University of Ghana (1963) (Wiggins and Nketia 2005, 57). Nketia continued his studies abroad in 1958 after receiving a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship (Akrofi 2002, 29), allowing him to study composition and musicology at schools including the Juilliard School of Music, Columbia University, and Northwestern University (Omojola 1995, 156; Akrofi 2002, 29–30). During this time, he met and studied with numerous scholars and composers such as Henry Cowell, Carl Sachs, Alan Merriam and Melville Herskovits (Omojola 1995, 156). In the years to come, his connections and studies abroad led to

teaching appointments at the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of Pittsburgh and many other universities in the US, Asia and Australia (Wiggins and Nketia 2005, 58). In 1965, he was appointed Director of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana and continues to be intimately involved with students and professors today.

Paraphrasing a personal interview with Nketia, Omojola explains that "it was because of his desire to compose works culturally relevant to Africa that he developed an interest in ethnomusicology, with a view to understanding the principles of African music" (Omojola 1995, 156). Composing in such a way that Africans can connect to his music is a common theme in Nketia's writings. Throughout his career, Nketia wrote numerous works for piano and other instruments, such as the violin and cello, and composed many vernacular choral works as well. Works such as his "Volta Fantasy" for piano demonstrate his use of traditional Ghanaian music, but he also incorporates influences from east Africa (Agordoh 2005, 142–143). Amu and Nketia are the two most commonly well-known and frequently discussed art music composers in Ghana today, and their writings and works continue to influence composers today.

African art music in Ghana cannot be characterized by a single style of music. Composers freely explore such contrasting musical elements as dissonance, chromaticism, traditional folk melodies, traditional rhythms and tonal harmonies in choral works. A complete survey of Ghanaian composers, their musical backgrounds and compositional styles is not possible in the

context of this thesis project. However, it is necessary to highlight several other key figures prior to focusing on specific composers in Chapters Four and Five.

Nicholas Z. Nayo (1922–1993) studied with Amu and is noted as an important composer of choral music for the church. However, he also wrote instrumental chamber music for both Western and traditional instruments and orchestral works for the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra, which he conducted starting in 1987. Nayo is characterized by his use of "exciting" rhythm and "frequent key changes" and is sometimes presented as writing music that is very difficult for choirs to perform (Agordoh 1994, 153).

Another composer, Gyami Labi, is often noted for his use of "chromaticism" and "asymmetric rhythmic phrases" (Omojola 1995, 158) and is regularly referenced in discussions of art music in Ghana today. Similar to the atonal explorations of Nayo and Labi, Adolphous A.R. Turkson incorporated microtones and atonality as well as "folk materials" into his works (Agordoh 1994, 163). While there have been many other key figures in African art music composition in Ghana over the past century, the works of Nayo, Labi, and Turkson demonstrate the wide variety of compositional styles within this art music tradition.

Institutions, Nationalism and Pan-Africanism

The development of African art music in Ghana must also be viewed through the history of several key organizations that were founded relatively

soon after the country gained independence in 1957. The School of Music, Dance and Drama (later renamed the School of Performing Arts), a part of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, was founded in 1962, and Nketia was its first director (Akrofi 2002, 32). Institutions such as these furthered the development of art music in Ghana during the post-colonial nationalistic era. From the beginning, the School of Music, Dance and Drama included the study of Western and African music, a trend that continues today, and several notable musicologists came out of the organization and eventually ended up studying music in the United States (Akrofi 2002, 32). At the request of Nkrumah, the school also invited several scholars and musicians from the "western world" including American ethnomusicologist Mantle Hood who acted as visiting Professor from 1963 to 1964 (Akrofi 2002, 39–40). The School of Music, Dance and Drama is primarily centered around the performance of the diverse range of music and dance styles in Ghana. However, it is also evident that interactions with Western scholars and musicians were also made possible by the existence of the school.

This involvement should be viewed within the greater context of Pan-Africanism and nationalism that was prevalent throughout Africa during the post-colonial years. In 1957, Ghana was the first Sub-Saharan African country to attain independence from colonial rule, and it therefore served as an example for other African countries struggling towards independence from their colonial rulers. Ghana's first president, Nkrumah, was a prominent Pan-African leader at several of the earliest Pan-African

organizations such as the All African Peoples' Conference in Ghana in 1958 and the formation of the Organization of African Unity in 1963 (Shillington 1989, 422). A key part of Nkrumah's Pan-African ideals was the idea that complete freedom from colonial powers could be achieved through cooperation between all nations across the African continent (Shillington 1989, 422). As a result, Nkrumah was frequently aligned with Pan-African leaders of other African countries such as Ahmed Sékou Touré of Guinea and Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt.

Nkrumah was intimately involved in the creation of the School of Music, Dance and Drama as a part of the Institute of African Studies during this post-independence time period. Cultural policy became an emphasis of the newly independent government from this time to present times. During the rule of Nkrumah and under a grant from the Ministry of Culture, the Institute of African Studies promoted the performance of music and dance traditions from all parts of the new country (Wiggins and Nketia 2005, 58). The 1980s and 1990s in particular were characterized by Ghanaian government cultural policy emphasizing in part "self-reliance" and "cultural autonomy" (Dor 2003, 50–52). In 1992 and 1993, the International Centre for African Music and Dance was set up under the direction of Nketia at the University of Ghana with grants from the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations (Akrofi 2002, 56–57). This key institution, which is still integral to the existence of African art music in Ghana, originated in a time noted for its

nationalistic and Pan-African ideals as well as engagement with the world economy.

The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra was also founded in 1965 during this period of independence at the request of Nkrumah. Philip Gbeho (composer of Ghana's national anthem) was its first director (Dor 2003, 51). This organization still exists in Ghana today despite inadequate funding from the government and serves as a center for the development of African art music in Ghana. However, George Dor points out that the orchestra has gone through several phases since its founding in 1965 during the rule of President Kwame Nkrumah. Dor explains that a period of "indigenization" of the orchestra took place during the 1980s whereby cultural officers acted as if "it was possible to completely eliminate all the foreign elements within modern Ghanaian cultural practices" (Dor 2003, 52). It is evident that the orchestra was caught up in issues of identity at its founding shortly after independence and in the following years, when foreign elements were shunned by members of the government in the 1980s. A central part of these foreign elements was the existence of Western instruments in the orchestra, and starting in the 1980s government officials attempted to "replace the symphony orchestra with the Pan-African orchestra," an orchestra that only incorporates "indigenous African instruments" (Dor 2003, 52). George Dor points out that it is interesting that government leaders did not shun the Western brass instruments of military brass bands as well and hypothesizes that these brass bands may have been more in tune with the "ideological

frameworks" of the government (Dor 2003, 52–53). This is not surprising considering the common perceived connection between government rule and military music. However, it is also telling as to the perception of Western influences in Ghana during this time.

George Dor speaks extensively on the "marginalization" of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra during the 1980s and 1990s and points to such examples as lack of financial support from the Commission on Culture for the director of the orchestra and a lack of grants for young musicians to study music and conducting abroad (Dor 2003, 55). In speaking with the current director and conductor of the orchestra, Isaac Annoh, in 2010, I learned that financial troubles still plague the symphony and limit its ability to perform regular concerts and maintain instruments (Annoh 2010, interview). Nevertheless, as I will describe in Chapter Five, despite cultural policies resulting in financial difficulties, the orchestra still plays an important role in African art music performance in Ghana.

It is clear that the "marginalization" of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra has had severe consequences for African art music in Ghana, limiting the proficiency of performers of instrumental art music in the years to come, contributing to the prevalence of choral art music in Ghana and establishing the centrality of universities in the art music scene. Throughout their history, educational institutions such as the School of Music, Dance and Drama at the University of Ghana have been and continue to be key locales for the composition of art music by professors and students alike.

African Art Music and Education

In presenting a discussion of art music in Ghana, it is first necessary to understand what art music is and how it can be defined in relation to other types of music such as traditional and popular music. Ethnomusicologists and scholars of African music frequently use the phrase "art music". In what many think of as the "Western world," art music is often associated with highly recognizable composer names in the European canon such as Mozart and Wagner, notated sheet music, the concert hall performance context involving an audience that exclusively listens to the music presented by trained musicians on a stage, and the conservatory of music where musicians study to become professional musicians in a highly rigorous environment.

As mentioned before, Nigerian composer, violinist and scholar Paul Konye explains that art music can be defined as "a category of composed music, written or otherwise, which takes into consideration tonal, traditional, structural, and stylistic concerns in its synthesis" (Konye 2007, 45). The emphasis upon the internal "structural" and "stylistic" characteristics of art music is a common theme in definitions of art music, as notation and structure are key elements of this type of music. Similar to Konye, Nketia takes this definition further and considers the musical background of the composers involved in a definition of art music. Here the emphasis is on both the music producers and the music produced. He explains that a key element of art music composition in Africa is a Western musical education (Nketia 1964, 37). Similarly, my research participant Adzei explains, "What makes an

art music an art music it is the formal training that we always talk about, irrespective of where formal training is received, either in the classroom or outside the classroom" (Adzei 2010, interview). Authors on the subject of art music in Africa have often noted that a common theme in art music composition circles in Africa is the draw to study abroad in a Western context.

In this thesis, I would like to consider the educational background of the composer in defining art music. I focus on university-trained art music composers, as a key element of the careers of many of these composers is the location and content of their studies in Ghana and abroad. In places such as Europe and North America, a composer's education has an important impact on his or her career and future professional networks. Similarly, the location of a Ghanaian composer's studies plays an important role in the music that he or she will produce later in life. Therefore, a definition of African art music that takes into consideration both the internal structures of the music as well as the backgrounds of the composers is necessary. Frequently, in discourse around the topic of African art music in Ghana, composers will reference the combination of Western and African musical elements in the works. However, considering the lengthy involvement of Western art music in Africa and the manners in which composers have claimed this music for themselves, it becomes difficult to objectively and exclusively define nuggets of Western and African music in these works. Therefore, the educational background of the composer and the ways in which musical values perceived

as Western and African are attained becomes the primary focus of such a definition.

Traditional Music, Popular Music and African Art Music

African art music is often presented by African scholars as being distinct from the other two types of music often discussed in the context of music in Africa: popular music and traditional music (Konye 2007, 52; Agordoh 1994, 21–27). Commonly, discussion compares traditional or indigenous music prior to the arrival and influence of European colonizers and missionaries with European influenced forms of music that came out of the interaction between Africans and Europeans during the colonial era. African art music is often presented as being something new, a relatively recent innovation by African composers coming out of the colonial period.

In discussing Nigerian art music, Omojola explains,

> Perhaps the most far reaching of [musical changes in Africa] is the introduction of European classical music which is characterized by musical performances by a group of professional musicians playing from written scores, to a listening, non-participating audience (Omojola 1995, 2).

However, Omojola also notes that traditional music is not something static but has itself been through processes of change. He points out, "music is an important aspect of a people's culture and since culture is dynamic, it can be assumed that Nigerian traditional music as we know it today is different from what it was several hundred years ago" (Omojola 1995, 1).

It is useful to see how "tradition" has been discussed in the context of the church due to the fact that the missionary church is commonly discussed as the point of origin for African art music composition. Traditional music is a useful construct through which to perceive music that exists outside of the influence of colonial institutions and missionary work. Birgit Meyer notes that missionaries asserted themselves as different and in opposition to indigenous culture and religion (Meyer 2004, 456–457), even though traditional religion and Christianity ultimately ended up becoming interrelated, as I will describe. Christianity initially claimed an identity through the assertion of difference. In using the term "tradition," it is important to note this initial emphasis upon difference but also to recognize Meyer's next point that tradition in the context of modern churches is not a return to an authentic past, but instead serves as a "cultural style" (Meyer 2004, 457). Tradition acts as a vessel in which to store elements of culture and is therefore a necessary construct that contextualizes modern Ghanaian churches and non-religious art music composition in relation to its origins in missionary institutions.

Nketia provides a useful model for categorizing traditional African music. He explains that in a traditional context "music is organized as part of the process of living together" and that "the formal structure and contexts of use often interact" (Nketia 2005, 27). Omojola explains that before the arrival of European missionaries in Nigeria, "music was regarded as an integral part of social or ritual events," and the coming of contemplative art

music brought by Europeans was an important musical change (Omojola 1995, 5). The phrase "traditional music" invokes a complex web of meanings in modern Africa by referencing music that is untouched by foreign influences. However, as Omojola notes, traditional music in Africa itself has been a part of change throughout history prior to the arrival of Europeans in Africa. Therefore, I will focus on traditional or indigenous music as the music that is used as a "cultural style" in order to connote a context-oriented musical system. This "cultural style" is re-presented in a contemplative medium in the context of African art music.

As Agordoh previously explained, twentieth century Africa is characterized by increased interaction with Western culture and Western music, bringing about the contemporary forms of art music and popular music (Agordoh 2005, 18–21). He characterizes this as coming about as a result of the trend of movement from rural towards urban centers, places where traditional music is often not a regular part of life (Agordoh 2005, 18). Agordoh seems to see these contemporary forms of music as partially resulting from twentieth century Africans not having access to and understanding their own traditional music. These contemporary forms are a reality in countries such as Ghana, and Africans readily partake in these types of music on a daily basis.

African popular music genres are an important element of contemporary music in Ghana. In his book *West African Pop Roots*, British popular music scholar John Collins traces the origins and developments of a

number of genres of popular music such as brass band music, palm wine music, Afrobeat, Afro-Rock, Reggae and other types of music that come out of interactions between music from Africa and that of other cultures (Collins 1992). As is the case with much of music in Africa, popular music blends with and is influenced by other types of music. Collins also writes on the relationships between Christianity and popular music in Ghana, describing the ways in which music of various churches and popular entertainment have influenced each other over the past century (Collins 2004). While a detailed description of popular music in Ghana is not possible here, it is important to understand the perpetual interactions between various types of music in the country.

Perspectives on African Art Music

Since African art music is often described as combining elements of both Western and traditional musical culture, a discussion of their relationship is necessary. Konye presents art music in the Nigerian context as an extension of traditional music. He goes on to explain, "Although twenty-first century Nigerian art music derives in part from Western influences, it is essentially a modified version of traditional Nigerian art music which existed long before the advent of missionaries in Nigeria" (Konye 2007, 52). As described earlier, art music in West Africa emerged out of colonial and missionary interactions with Africans. However, Konye seems to move away from the idea that art music in Africa is a Western

idiom. He sees it as an extension of traditional music. Similarly, Nketia insists that art music in Africa should be an extension of tradition. He explains,

> It would seem, therefore, that for the musician who operates in contexts such as the foregoing, the challenge that tradition poses is not the problem of *originality* but that of *authenticity* - in particular how he may respond to and express his creative inclinations and remain at the same time true to the norms of a musical culture by maintaining reasonable margins of the expectancies that musical performance generates (Nketia 1982, 83).

Nketia strives to move away from the predominant tendency in contemporary music scenes where the emphasis is on creating something new, something that has not been done before, irrespective of the background and desires of the audience. He focuses on the creation of music that connects with the audience through the use of tradition. It is also important to note here that Nketia speaks of composing for a local audience that recognizes and appreciates the traditional elements in the composition presented.

Central to these discussions of African art music is the idea that this type of music consists of elements from traditional African and Western musical cultures. Considering the historic origins of art music in Africa, a definition focusing on the intercultural elements of this type of music certainly holds weight. Nigerian scholar and composer Akin Euba discusses "neo-African art music" in terms of its intercultural elements and the manners in which it balances Western and African influences. Once again,

the emphasis is on the dichotomy between Western and traditional African music. He explains,

> Neo-African art music may be broadly divided into four categories, namely:
>
> Music based entirely on Western models and in which the composer has not consciously introduced any African elements.
>
> Music whose thematic material is borrowed from African sources but which is otherwise Western in idiom and instrumentation.
>
> Music in which African elements form an integral part of the idiom (though the use of African instruments, or texts, or stylistic concepts and so forth) but which also introduces non-African ideas.
>
> Music whose idiom is derived from African traditional culture, which employs African instruments, and in which the composer has not consciously introduced non-African ideas (Euba 1993, 6).

Euba presents a four-point range of compositions whereby the African composer incorporates African traditional culture in varying degrees. Central to these categories is the constant negotiation of African and Western musical ideas included in a composition. In Euba's first two categories, Western music appears as the foundation and traditional music is "flavor" added to the music. Contrastingly, the third and fourth categories give more emphasis on the African elements of the music. Euba's fourth category is particularly interesting in that he mentions the conscious introduction of non-African ideas (one can surmise that he is referring to Western ideas), as if it is possible to unconsciously include these musical ideas in a composition. This raises the questions: are African art music composers a part of a conscious compositional process whereby African and Western elements are

used in a work? Is the unconscious use of non-African (Western) musical ideas any less meaningful? These are questions that will be further discussed in the discussion in Chapters Four and Five.

Frequently, African scholars focus on the debate between the African and Western or European nature of African art music, as if its significance lies in its purely African or Western elements. In speaking about art music in Africa, Nigerian scholar Abiola Irele asserts, "The argument about the foreign character of Western art music is manifestly absurd, at least on logical grounds" and notes African emotional connections to "high art" such as Shakespeare (Irele 1993, 58). However, he also notes the difficulty with which this type of music is disassociated from Europe. Irele explains,

> It needs to be recognized, too, that Western art music is tied to specific conventions and does make peculiar demands on the listener, demands which are more closely related to Western values (in the restrictive sense of the term) than is the case with other forms, such that it becomes especially difficult to dissociate this music from its specific attachment to European culture so that it can be accepted on its own terms as an aesthetic phenomenon (Irele 1993, 58).

Irele points out a common tension in discussing art music in Africa that continues to this day. Perhaps it is necessary to move beyond discussions searching for the relative degree with which Western and African music may exist in African art music.

Since art music in Africa is often thought of as a combination of Western and traditional musical forms, African scholars often raise the question of how these seemingly incompatible types of music can coexist. At times, the intercultural elements of the music are emphasized, and the focus

is on the ways in which composers negotiate both their origins as well as the fact that they are a part of the twentieth century, a period characterized by increased ease of communication. For instance, Nketia explains,

> It is generally agreed that contemporary music embodies not just one but a number of trends in music whose common bond is their radical break with some vital aspects of the traditions of the past - a break encouraged by the belief that the contemporary composer must live in his own twentieth century world of ideas and developments in science, and respond, in some measure, to trends in intercultural communication (Nketia 1982, 81).

This focus on intercultural communication" will be further discussed in the chapters to come.

African Art Music and Identity

As described in Chapter One, music is a key medium through which to situate and reflect identity (Stokes 1994). Furthermore, it is often noted that, due to its combination of Western and indigenous elements, African art music is an important vessel for modern African identity. During the present time in which contact between Africans and non-Africans is frequent and recurring, identities are further complicated. African art music scholars and composers such as Akin Euba insist on expressing an African identity in modern African art music compositions. Akin Euba asserts,

> I basically agree with the idea that African composers need to write music that is relevant to Africans and persons of African descent who, to my mind, constitute their primary audience. This idea may contradict the principle of artistic freedom, but my argument is that there is a paradox when an African composes music that communicates with non- Africans but not with Africans (Euba 2001, 119).

Euba goes on to explain, ”An African identity in music is different from the national identities found in Europe, for it has to do with a whole continent rather than with nation states. It is more comparable to a European identity than to a German, Norwegian, Polish, or Czech identity” (Euba 2001, 120). Such a Pan-African stance arises out of the post-independence period characterized by the desire to bring together the economic and artistic strength of the entire African continent. However, he also asserts that an African identity in African art music will eventually lead to “international acceptance of the works” (Euba 2001, 120). This is an interesting point, indicating that an African identity is not only incorporated in Western-inspired art music in Ghana in order to gain a local audience but also to achieve “international acceptance” of compositions.

However, how is this “acceptance” gained? This is often accomplished through the referencing of an “authentic” and traditional past. Nketia asserts that modern African composers must use the “authentic” resources of traditional music. Composers must “respond to and express [their] creative inclinations and remain at the same time true to the norms of a musical culture by maintaining reasonable margins of expectancies that musical performance generates” (Nketia 1982, 83). Nketia points to the idea that traditional African music is meaningful to modern African audiences and that these resources are key in art music practices in the region. The creative act of composing must be contained within the bounds of authentic tradition, in a sense making these modern compositions extensions of the past. Being a

composer himself, his ultimate goal is to make the music meaningful to African audiences. In doing so, he creates a distinction between traditional and contemporary music, but insists that traditional music can maintain its meaningfulness in modern situations.

Within discussions of identity in relation to art music in Africa, a key point of debate is the Western or international relevance of the music. Central to this debate is the issue of identity with regards to the music and the composers, including the degree with which compositions appeal to audiences in local and international spheres. Such discussions will be central in the chapters to come.

Chapter Three: Egyptian Composers of Western-Inspired Art Music: An "International Musical Language?"

As I have shown, African art music in Ghana emerges from interactions between Western and traditional musical elements. The colonial encounter with Western art music is a common theme throughout countries in Africa, Asia and South America. To better understand African art music in Ghana, it is helpful to make comparisons with Western-inspired art music in other countries. A brief overview of the case of composition of Western-inspired art music in Egypt serves as a comparison for the case of African art music composition in Ghana. Similar to the Ghanaian case, modern Egyptian art music composers are caught up in international flows of compositional practices. However, amidst these global flows are elements of nationalism and Pan-Africanism, as Egyptian composers such as Halim El-Dabh (b. 1921) are sometimes presented as being African composers. Prior to looking specifically at Western-inspired art music in Egypt, I will observe the ways in which composers from Ghana and Egypt are commonly grouped together as intercultural composers in organizations presented on the Internet. The fact that these composers of different nationalities are grouped together on the websites to be discussed below necessitates an analysis of similarities and contrasts between their compositional output and background. This analysis serves as a starting point for understanding the commonalities and differences between art music composition in both of these countries.

Interculturality and the Internet

Further illustrating the existence of these "ethnoscapes" (Appadurai 1996) of composers, websites such as Global Interplay and the Intercultural Composers Initiative group together composers who were born in various places throughout the world. The Global Interplay project is "an intercultural exchange between young composers from five cities," including Beijing and Shanghai, Cairo, Berlin, Accra and New York City (Global Interplay Project 2012). The project is coordinated by the German performing ensemble Musik Der Jahrhunderte. Composers discussed in this thesis, including Egyptians Mohamed Daoud (b. 1954) and Nahla Mattar, as well as my Ghanaian research participant Adzei, all took part in this project and are listed on the project's website. The website explains,

> Beginning in May 2005, the project includes a series of workshops, concerts and conferences in five cities. Participating composers are getting to know each other's work and concerns in an email discussion forum.
>
> Each city has a group of up to eight composers moderated by [five mentors]...These mentors are all "border walkers" between different cultures: the Nigerian composer Nkeiru Okoye lives and teaches in the USA; Walter Zimmermann, a German composer from Berlin, has worked for years with material drawn from diverse cultures; the Egyptian composer Amr Okba lives and studies in Italy and Austria; the Argentine composer Marcelo Toledo works in New York; the two Chinese composers Wenchen Qin and Shirui Zhu have each studied for several years in Germany.
>
> The goal of Global Interplay is to challenge artists to a conscious position within their culture and their society; to provoke a discourse on contemporary composition and artistic activity; and to enable this discourse to take place between different cultures of the world (Global Interplay Project 2012).

Also founded by Musik der Jahrhunderte, the Intercultural Composers Initiative is an outgrowth of Global Interplay and features eight composers, including Senyo Adzei and Nahla Mattar.

> The overall aspiration of the ICI is to incorporate fresh intercultural music making concepts while extending, expanding and developing previous pioneering concepts of Global Interplay. A central aspect of the ICI is the reflection, expression, documentation and application of how global changes and rapid exposure to vast cultures and schools of thoughts influence and shape musical works by member composers, all who engage in intensive and extensive thought-provoking discussions deriving from and leading to multi-dimensional artistic interpretation and execution. The ICI serves as a platform where member composers can continue their individual musical cultivations, as well as share their nurtured ideas with fellow musicians, artists, academics and most importantly, their audience (Intercultural Composers Initiative 2011b).

Websites such as these place intercultural composers on the global stage, and both of these organizations emphasize their role in providing a central means for communication between composers online and in person through visits and workshops (Global Interplay Project 2012; Intercultural Composers Initiative 2011c). The existence of such global efforts necessitates a look at the history of Western-inspired art music in a country besides Ghana. Other scholars have presented scholarly works on Nigerian art music and made comparisons with the situation in Ghana (Omojola 1995). However, Egypt and Ghana are rarely compared. Egypt is a logical choice for this project, as it is also an African country that has been profoundly impacted by Western art music coming out of the colonial era.

A discussion of "intercultural music" as presented by Euba (Euba 1993) is relevant in this case, as the qualification for a composer to be

included in the Global Interplay and Intercultural Composers Initiative websites seems to be origination in a country that is often perceived as being non-Western. This classification could perhaps be seen as an attempt to label all composers who incorporate Western-inspired music along with musical influences from their respective home country as being homogenous. It remains to be seen if the non-Ghanaian composers who are included in such websites as Global Interplay indeed perceive themselves as composing in the same vein as those in Ghana or any of the other countries discussed. However, the fact that they are grouped together is at least revealing of the manner in which audiences around the world perceive "intercultural" composers of Western-inspired art music.

Origins of Western-Inspired Art Music in Egypt

The reality of Western-inspired music in Egypt provides a perfect example of a contrasting musical culture in the colonial world. Throughout Egypt's long domination by colonial powers, Egyptians have been exposed to European art music. As a result of education institutions established by Westernized Egyptian governments, Egyptian musicians were exposed to Western music theory, and composers were trained in instruments such as the violin and the piano. Four generations of Western-inspired Egyptian art music composers have practiced art music composition since the establishment of these educational institutions, and I find it likely that a fifth generation is practicing their art in Egypt today. I do not discuss this

hypothetical generation here, as very little seems to be written about Egyptian composers who are younger than the fourth generation. Their compositions, as well as discourse surrounding their compositions and respective performances, illuminate the negotiation of a multiplicity of identities and clear distinctions between the different generations of composers. The widespread use of the Internet by contemporary musicians, composers and critics as a means to reflect upon this type of music, as well as critique it, provides a view into perceptions of what Western-inspired Egyptian art music means to people in Egypt today.

Western-inspired Egyptian art music can be perceived as a unique strand of art music in the Arab world and African continent due to trends in the composers' training and background, as well as the resulting forms of the music. The general concept of art music is well ingrained in the musical culture of the Arab world. Scholars frequently note a distinct strain of urban art music centered around the *takht* ensemble (Marcus 2007), often associated with the concept of *tarab* or the heightened "emotional state aroused in listeners as a result of the dynamic interplay between the performer, the music, song lyrics, the audience, and certain other factors" (Shannon 2008, 75) such as the movement within the Arab system of modes, the *maqam.*

The trend of art music composition that I am describing here is distinctly different from more common strands of art music present throughout the Arab world, despite the fact that many of the composers that

I will discuss here grew up with the knowledge of the *maqam* and *tarab*-inducing art music alongside knowledge of Western music. Similar to the case of Ghana, the primary difference in the case of Western-inspired art music is the Western music training of these composers.

The training of Egyptian musicians in Western music began during the mid-nineteenth century. Initially, the demand for Western art music in Egypt came from the large number of Europeans living in the country. The initial founding of music schools came about during the reign of Muhammad Ali in the first half of the nineteenth century during a governmental movement towards Westernization and "modernization" (El-Shawan 1985, 143–144). In Egypt, initial Western musical institutions primarily provided instrumentalists for military bands, but over time musicians began to leave the military bands and join symphonies throughout the urban musical centers of Cairo and Alexandria (El-Shawan 1985, 144). This differs from the situation in Ghana, in that Christian churches did not serve as a primary training ground for musicians in Egypt. Institutions such as the Cairo Opera House (established in 1869), the Cairo Symphony Orchestra (established in 1934, initially as a part of Egyptian State Radio) and numerous conservatories such as the Cairo National Conservatory served as the training grounds for the first generation of art music composers (El-Shawan 1985, 144–145). Further actions by the government throughout the twentieth century further ingrained Western music into major Egyptian urban centers.

In 1932, the Committee on Musical Education emphasized the importance of an equal division in training of Western and Arab music in Egyptian public schools. This is very similar to the case of the School of Performing Arts at the University of Ghana, which also focused on studies in both Western and African music. Egypt differs from Ghana in that it does not have numerous ethnic groups such as the *Ewe* or *Akan*. In a sense, the study of Arab music in these institutions is very similar to the study of African traditional music in Ghana. This Egyptian committee also took part in the founding of a number of different music teacher training institutes particularly designed to produce Egyptian music teachers who could replace the current prevalence of Europeans in music institutes and conservatory positions (El-Shawan 1980, 99–100). The Egyptian government was fundamental in establishing Western art music as a central part of Egyptian life. The establishment of the Ministry of Culture in 1958 brought about continued openness to music and culture from outside of Egypt. This is most evident in the ministry's support of Egyptian students in studies of Western art music in European countries (El-Shawan 1980, 103–104).

From this historical progression, it becomes evident that Western musical education initially became prevalent in Egypt through governmental desires for progress and Westernization. In Ghana, initial exposure to Western art music is generally in the church, but, as in Egypt, more formalized study takes place in institutions focusing on Westernization. The continuing prevalence of this Western music education emphasis created an

environment that exposed many young Egyptians to Western art music, resulting in the first generations of art music composers. Furthermore, the government in Egypt played an instrumental role in the development of conservatories and other institutions in support of Western-inspired art music. This development is in line with Nkrumah's founding of institutions such as the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra and the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana immediately following the country's independence in 1957. The founding of such Ghanaian institutions took place in an era in which Pan-African ideas of strength through African unity were at their height. Such Pan-African mentalities certainly existed in Egypt as well, especially under the reign of Gamal Abdel Nasser who was Egypt's president from 1956 until 1970. However, it is interesting to note that the founding of Western-oriented schools and performance organizations happened much before Pan-African ideals became popular in Egypt. Egyptian governmental support of Western art music happened much earlier than in Ghana and in an era in which openness to progress and modernization were common, not during a period characterized by Pan-Africanism.

Four Generations of Egyptian Composers

Trends can be noted within the four generations of Egyptian art music composers as well as in those with similar university training and musical backgrounds. El-Shawan describes trends within the first generation of

composers who originated in the educational environment described above. She notes that the first generation, including Yusif Greis (1899–1961) and Abu Bakr Khairat (1910–1963), are linked together by their private Western musical training with European teachers in Cairo as well as living primarily on their independent wealth due to the lack of an Egyptian audience for their music (El-Shawan 1985, 145–146). This description makes it evident how significant a role the presence of European teachers and musicians had in the lives of these composers. The manner in which this generation employs musical materials that can be traced to Egypt differs greatly between the composers. El-Kholy presents Khairat as being a nationalistic composer due to the ways in which he employs folk and modal material in his compositions (El-Kholy 2010b). In contrast, she explains that Greiss didn't use folk material in his compositions but is still perceived as being patriotic due to the ways in which he commemorates the 1919 Revolution in his symphonic poem *Maṣr* as well as his "spontaneous expression of his oriental feeling and background" (El-Kholy 2010c). El-Kholy presents members of this first generation of composers as nationalistic. Nationalistic presentations by scholars of Arab Music as described above should be recognized in terms of their subjective interpretive nature. However, they illuminate one way of perceiving the compositions by this generation of composers. In addition, references to nationalism are not uncommon when composers are perceived as using traditional or folk material. Such interpretations can be aligned with European composers such as Bartok who is sometimes presented as being a

"patriotic" Hungarian composer (Dreisziger 2005, 284). However, it remains open to questioning whether or not these Egyptian composers actually perceived *themselves* as being nationalistic.

There seems to be a significant amount of disagreement concerning the role of the music of this generation. In a 1952 article titled "*Hal Hundk Musiqa Shariqiyyah wa Gharbiyyah?*" ("Is There an Oriental and a Western Music?"), an anonymous music critic said about music during this period, "Those who describe music as being oriental at times and Western at other times are mistaken. Music is the language which is known by all peoples without any differentiation between East and West" (quoted in El-Shawan 1985, 146). This emphasis upon music as an international language continues in future discussions of Egyptian art music as well. This is in distinct disagreement with El-Kholy, who seems to present the music of the first generation of composers as nationalistic. However, it is possible that El-Kholy's perception of Egypt does not necessarily involve a distinction between "East and West."

In discussing the second generation of composers, including Gamal Al-Rahim (1924–1988) and Aziz El-Shawan (1916–1993) (Salwa El-Shawan's father), Salwa El-Shawan notes similar trends such as receiving private musical training in Cairo and coming from middle class backgrounds, a contrast with the first generation of independently wealthy composers (El-Shawan 1985, 149–150). The musical trends within this generation of composers demonstrate the important role of studying abroad in places such

as Europe in the ways in which an individual's composition style is developed. El-Kholy explains that El-Shawan studied with Khachaturian in the USSR after extensive involvement with other Soviet composers during a previous trip and that his compositions therefore became "richly chromatic" (El-Kholy 2010d). This can be contrasted with Gamal Abdel-Rahim who studied in Germany with one of Hindemith's students and returned to teach and compose at various musical institutions in Cairo. Abdel-Rahim's music is often characterized as being distinctly Egyptian due to his frequent use of Arab modes incorporating quarter-tones (Sadoh 2004, 656; El-Kholy 2010a) and the portrayal of a number of aspects of Egyptian life including the Pharaonic era in his ballet *Osiris* and urban life in some of his orchestral works (El-Kholy 2010a). From these two examples, it becomes evident that Egyptian composers of this generation vary greatly in terms of the musical elements that are included in their works.

Trends such as these seem to be summed up in El-Shawan's own description of Western music, "not as an alien element, but rather as an international musical language" (El-Kholy 2010d). He seems to not demonstrate concerns pertaining to the specific identity or geo-cultural origins of elements in his music. Instead, El-Shawan can be seen as perceiving his exposure to music in Egypt as well as the USSR as all a part of "the international musical language" unconnected to particular locations. However, similar to Abdel-Rahim, El-Shawan has also incorporated "Pharaonic subjects" into his works (El-Dabh 1981, 17), demonstrating a

continuing desire to include elements of historical Egypt in contemporary compositions. Such trends in referencing historic Egypt in compositions of art music continue in the following generations of composers as well. Such an analysis points to a variety of composition styles and subjects in the second generation that situate topics of Egyptian identity next to claims of an "international musical language." One can hypothesize that the time spent abroad in the instances described above influenced the ways in which the composers perceived their music. The trend of studying composition abroad and learning new composition styles is also common in Ghana, as particularly evidenced in the cases of my research participants Kafui and Mereku. Both of these composers note how their compositions became more dissonant after studying or interacting with other composers abroad (Kafui 2010, interview; Mereku 2010, interview).

The unique life of Halim El-Dabh (b. 1921) further demonstrates trends of engaging with musical trends from outside Egypt within this second generation of composers. El-Dabh began his studies in Cairo, but his further university education also included numerous prominent music schools and conservatories in the United States as well as Ethiopia. His extensive ethnomusicological research throughout Africa and interactions around the world are evident in explorations of African pianism and in compositions such as his "Symphony for 1000 Drums" that "invokes the goddesses of ancient Egypt and Yorubaland" (The Official Website of Halim El-Dabh and Halim El-Dabh Music 2010). Such compositions are significant

for the ways that they draw together influences from around Africa, not just from Egypt and the Arab World. In this particular case, the *Yoruba* of Nigeria (West Africa) and elements of Egyptian religious history are grouped together into a single composition. Despite his Egyptian origins, El-Dabh is sometimes grouped in with other African composers (Sadoh 2004) bringing up potential Pan-African associations with his music.

It is important to point out that Pan-Africanism was an important part of Egyptian politics during the second half of the twentieth century. This is most notable in the rule of Gamal Abdel Nasser from 1952 to 1970. El-Dabh's association with composers outside of Egypt also goes to show how well-known and socially connected he is outside of Egypt and the degree with which Egyptian composers such as himself engage with musical trends from around Africa and other parts of the world. El-Dabh (currently a professor of ethnomusicology at Kent State University in Ohio) has numerous personal connections with composers and scholars around the world, showing the coming of a new era in Egyptian art music composition characterized by increased engagement with international musical resources and compositional trends.

Members of the third generation of Egyptian art music composers were born in the 1940s and 50s and have continued this trend of engaging with "international music." This can perhaps be related to the fact that each of them went overseas for university studies at some point during their careers, a commonality with many composers in Ghana. Many of these

composers devote much of their time towards writing for films. In discussing the fluid boundaries and interactions between different domains of music in Cairo, Racy notes the importance of media such as films in the careers of nearly all of the major musicians in the country (Racy 1981, 6). By analyzing the lives of these younger generations, it becomes apparent that this trend has extended into the realm of art music composition as well. Mauna Ghoneim (b. 1955), Gamal Salama (b. 1945) and Rageh Daoud (b. 1954) have all composed scores for numerous films including Mauna Ghoneim's award winning composition for the documentary film *An Evening's Fishing* in 1991 (Kerim 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). The emphasis on compositions for films seems to be especially significant considering online accounts that the audience for Egyptian art music in Egypt is fairly limited aside from specific festivals emphasizing this music (Catta 2003). One can speculate that film music is a major source of employment for this third generation of composers.

The same is true of certain composers in Ghana, such as Professor Willie Anku (1949-2010), who have composed for films. However, none of the composers that I spoke with during my field research in Ghana in 2010 had composed music for the film industry. I hypothesize that this is partially due to the prevalence of popular music genres such as Highlife in these films and the expense of hiring musicians to perform such music.

The fourth and youngest generation of art music composers, generally born in the 1970s, in Egypt is beginning to engage with global trends in contemporary music composition more than other generations have.

According to online accounts of their lives and works, many of these composers are students of the third generation (particularly Rageh Daoud), as described above. Very little has been written on this youngest generation, possibly due to the fact that they seem to be more involved with contemporary flows of composition than with the indigenization of European inspired music in Egypt, but their names and life stories are contained in numerous online blogs and intercultural composition and networking websites. Here I will discuss three members of this youngest generation, Nahla Mattar, Wael Sami and Bassam Nour-Eddien, according to their online presentations. The website Intercultural Composers Initiative provides short life backgrounds and lists of compositions for these composers as well as other composers from around the world (Intercultural Composers Initiative 2011a). Perhaps most significantly, it lists them together with a total of eight composers from various places around the world including Senyo Adzei, a member of the fourth generation of composers in Ghana. As explained earlier in this chapter, associations such as this seem to group these young composers from around the world into the single category of being "intercultural" composers. This website seems to act as a connection between composers from a variety of backgrounds, emphasizing their international networks alongside their local origins.

According to this website, this youngest generation of Egyptian composers can be characterized by extensive associations with countries around the Middle East and other parts of the world. Both Nour-Eddien and

Sami were respectively born in Kuwait and Dubai but studied under Rageh Daoud, an Egyptian composer of the third generation as discussed above, and received part of their education from musical institutes or conservatories in Cairo (Intercultural Composers Initiative 2011a). This is significant since it seems that these non-native Egyptians received at least part of their musical training in Cairo, not in their respective countries. Such information reinforces the idea that Egypt continues to be a center for Western-inspired art music education in the Arab World. This also challenges the concept of a monolithic view of Egyptian art music composition, since it seems that the composers who have taken part in education at Egyptian conservatories are not entirely Egyptian. This is a distinct contrast with Ghana where all of the student research participants who took part in this study were born and raised in Ghana. However, it is interesting to note that Kongo, professor at the University of Cape Coast, is a citizen of the Democratic Republic of Congo. His presence and important role in education in Ghana can be seen as reflecting the African over the Ghanaian identity of African art music composers in Ghana.

Perspectives from Egyptian composers in reflecting upon the larger art music composition scene in Egypt are also illustrative of discourse pertaining to identities surrounding this type of music. On her blog, Nahla Mattar, a member of the most recent generation, explains the results of sending Egyptians to study composition abroad in Europe. She explains:

> The result was a combination, of at least two musical cultures; the western and the local. This combination succeeded at times, and fails

> at others; yet, the common interest in all focused around the fascination with the sound as an independent entity, far from the well-ornamented melodies, or even the sensual sequences of the rhythmic cycles known in the tradition of these local cultures. Accordingly, music is the organization of sound over time, regardless of the sound identity used (Mattar 2009).

Mattar, who received her doctorate from Arizona State University, reflects upon the situation of composers in the post-colonial world who employ compositional techniques that first existed in the West and combined them with the "local" or their respective cultural origins. However, she goes beyond this to look at composition as detached from its "sound identity," from its cultural origins, to look at sound as something in and of itself, without any identity or cultural background. Despite this, at other times, she presents other composers within the third generation such as Mauna Ghoneim as exhibiting the "assimilation of both Western and Egyptian elements" (Mattar 2006). Discourse such as this demonstrates a tendency to continue to identify the socio-cultural origins of elements in Egyptian art music compositions while asserting the independence of sound from certain identities.

Mattar's C.V., available through her website, provides a view into her eclectic interests as a professor, researcher and composer in Egypt, describing her research and experimentation with music technology and sound programming as well as teaching "Music Composition Inspired by the Ancient Egyptian Heritage" as a part of the National Project for the Revival of Ancient Egyptian Music (Mattar 2010). The project was founded in 2006 by Dr. El-Malt, a professor of musicology and violin at Helwan University,

"aiming at reviving, protecting and spreading the heritage of ancient Egyptian music, dance, song and performance" (Montasser 2011). Her involvement with this project on ancient Egyptian music can be related to similar interests in members of the second generation of composers in exploring Pharaonic subjects through composition. It is interesting to note that Dr. El-Malt insists that the project focuses on "'Pharaonic music'…to differentiate it from 'Ancient Egyptian Music,' which refers to Arabic music that used to be called the 'Ancient Music'" (Montasser 2011). It seems that trends in employing themes from Egyptian history is common in at least these two generations of composers. Further research would be necessary to understand the ways in which Mattar perceives herself amidst this trend towards researching ancient Egyptian music. However, it becomes clear that her interests are not entirely in the realm of indigenizing Western forms of art music composition, as presented by other art music composers in the colonial world.

Reactions of Egyptian Audiences and Critics

Critical music discourse surrounding live performances of Egyptian art music reveals public attitudes towards this type of music and specific composers. Analysis of concert programs and concert reviews of ensembles such as the Cairo Symphony Orchestra reveal these attitudes as well.

Online portrayals and discussions around the Arab Perspectives Music Festival, founded in 2002 by former conductor and director of the symphony

Ahmed El-Saedi (Catta 2006), are revealing about the attitudes towards Egyptian composers today. The Cairo Symphony Orchestra website explains, "The Cairo Symphony Orchestra has played a crucial role in the development of Egyptian contemporary music and in the inspiration of Egyptian musicians-soloists and conductors alike" (Cairo Symphony Orchestra 2010). This self-advertisement is placed next to long lists of Egyptian and world-renowned soloists as well as the repertoire of the orchestra featuring composers from the traditional Western art music canon. It is evident that the orchestra is not only focused on the promotion of Egyptian composers but is also involved in the presentation of works and performers from the West. Similarly, an online review of the 2006 Arab Perspectives Festival explains that the event was initially created in order to provide an audience for contemporary Egyptian composers but that over time foreign composers from other Arab countries and places around the world such as China have been included as well (Catta 2006). Evidently, within the history of the Arab Perspectives Festival, there is a trend of including composers from outside of Egypt in this festival. Catta seems to express distaste with the inclusion of composers from around the Arab world at the expense of certain other composers. In addition, he seems to express frustration at the inclusion of composers who emphasize "folkloric songs" over symphonic works. (Catta 2003). Considering the fact, as discussed previously, that some of these Egyptian composers incorporate elements of Egyptian and Arab music in their works, this comment points to the idea that a certain adherence to

common forms of Western art music composition is viewed in a positive manner by some members of the audience for this music.

The analysis of reviews of performances and interpretations of compositions serve as a means to understand the meaning of these works for the contemporary Egyptian public. A review of a performance incorporating the works of Rageh Daoud illuminates the reviewer's perception of these compositions:

> The concert took a decided turn for the better when they gave four pieces for orchestra by the Egyptian composer Ragueh Daoud. He is a composer who, having listened to what is going on outside Egypt, weighing and sifting the results with conditions here, has come to a sound system of his own which is contemporary and in touch with musical composition on the international circuit, but relevant to the special needs of public performances existing in Egypt (Blake 1998).

This review of a performance by the Cairo Opera Orchestra is significant because the author presents Daoud as a composer who is in touch with "contemporary" trends in the "international" composition circuit. In this instance, the author does not bring up the dichotomy of "Western" and "local" that is sometimes presented in describing music in post-colonial societies. Instead, he explains how Daoud balances flows of compositional practices on the "international circuit" with the special situation of the performance of this type of music in Egypt.

However, what are these "special needs of public performances existing in Egypt?" In discussing "intercultural" African art music, Nketia speaks of the need for creative contemporary composers to use "traditional" elements from the past to focus upon the needs of the audience, to "[develop]

channels of communication and musical codes that can be understood by the receptors of music…" (Nketia 1982, 83). Nketia is discussing elements of the past that can be reused in contemporary contexts, but his focus is primarily on intercultural music and the ways in which past "tradition" is made relevant to the audience at a performance. Similarly, Nigerian composer and scholar Akin Euba asserts the need for African composers to develop a voice that "speaks to Africans" (Euba 2001, 119). Comparisons such as this bring light to trends within art music composition within ex-colonies around the world, trends in composing in a manner that relates with the audience connected to the composer's origins. This certainly applies to Egyptian concert reviews, as presented above, since the author of this review, David Blake, goes on to explain what makes the music relevant to Egypt. Blake explains that Daoud's pieces performed at this concert "beat along, dark and often dusty meditations with metallic light flashes -- very Cairo. There is buzz and crowded frustration. Something is out there to get you -- and it's not a car" (Blake 1998). It seems that in this example, musical imagery of Cairo with its "buzz and crowded frustration" is something that audiences can appreciate and relate to in the music. As presented in this review, the Egyptian element in these works takes the form of familiar Cairo sounds, imagery and story lines as opposed to the employment of certain notably Arab/Egyptian musical elements such as the *maqam.* It becomes apparent that elements of Egypt are perceived as incorporated into compositions

beyond the mere inclusion of purely musical features such as rhythm and melody.

From this study, trends within the conglomeration of problematic identities associated with Western-inspired Egyptian art music become evident. Ideas such as the situation of this music in between terms such as "East and West" and "local and global" persist amidst discourse pertaining to this subject. In addition, associating works with Egyptian elements such as a perceived connection with a historical past have persisted throughout many generations of composers. However, throughout the history of this art music tradition, many composers have leaned towards describing their music in global terms such as "international." This movement towards thinking of this type of music as "international" is particularly evident in composer discourse and websites such as the Intercultural Composers Initiative. This is an important connection with the case of African art music education in Ghana, as Kongo frequently encourages his students to learn the "international techniques" of composition (Kongo 2010, interview). Such ideas will be discussed in the following two chapters.

Further research on this topic would benefit from interviews with the fourth generation of Egyptian composers in order to understand how they present themselves and their music in their own words. This would allow for a more in depth understanding of why they compose and what they hope to achieve through their compositions. However, in this instance, an online perspective as presented in this paper in the case of the fourth generation of

composers provides an overview of their backgrounds as well as the ways that they are presented themselves through various online communication mediums.

Chapter Four: Profiles of Six African Art Music Composers in Ghana

In Chapter Two, I focused on the numerous ways that African scholars have discussed art music in Africa, and more narrowly in Ghana. Typically in these writings, the voices of the composers being presented are neglected and an analytical approach to their music is exclusively presented instead. While such treatments illuminate the manner in which elements from traditional African and Western music are integrated in a composition, other perspectives are necessary as well. It is important to understand not only the music that a composer produces but also the ways that their musical and educational background and personal interests influence their music. An ethnography of art music composers is a relatively untried approach to studying this type of music, charting the complex web of meanings and identities that arise out of dialogue on composers' compositions and musical backgrounds.

In this chapter, I focus on my interactions and interviews with specific Ghanaian art music composers from three different generations of this composing tradition in Ghana. My goal is to present profiles of each composer with whom I interacted during my time in Ghana, providing an overview of common issues such as musical background; the self-perceived impact of their post-secondary education in Ghana, North America or Europe; the manner in which they perceive art music in Ghana; the manner

in which they perceive their compositions in relation to other composers in Ghana; and their hopes and goals for the future. Other composers are referenced throughout the course of this thesis, but I would like to focus on the individuals presented here, as they raise key points of contrast that I will discuss further in Chapter Five.

This chapter summarizes over forty hours of interviews, among countless other interactions with these individuals during the spring and summer of 2010. While I strove to raise similar issues in each interview for the purpose of comparison, the composers' own concerns and interests regarding their music largely determine the content included here. My goal is to use these profiles as a basis for comparison and discussion in the following chapter, but also to present these individuals in a manner that does justice to their unique perspectives on art music and their roles as composers in Ghana.

It is also important at this point to note the control of the interviewer and the writer over the content of the interview and the resulting profiles as presented here. These profiles should not be seen as all-encompassing objective presentations of a composer's background and musical perceptions. Rather, they are the subjective product of the interactions between myself, a white Westerner holding a microphone, and individuals who may desire to present themselves in particular manners for particular reasons. Due to my outsider status, made obvious racially and linguistically, composers may have at times attempted to defend their music as African and

non-Western or vice versa, perceiving that this was what I was looking for in their music and through my research. Many noted that oftentimes Westerners come to Ghana to study traditional music and explained that they were surprised to see someone focusing on art music in Ghana. Due to this fact, it is possible that at times certain composers felt a need to present themselves as being traditional or more Western due to the tendency of ethnomusicologists in Ghana to study music that is perceived as being traditional or untouched by Western influences.

Pierre Bourdieu speaks of the relationship between the anthropologist and the person being studied, noting the difference between the "learned construction of the native world and the native experience of that world, an experience which finds expression only in the silences, ellipses, and lacunae of the language of familiarity" (Bourdieu 1977, 18). He explains that those being studied produce "native theories" in order to display their "symbolic mastery of [their] practice," theories that are "*learned ignorance*… a mode of practical knowledge not comprising knowledge of its own principles" (Bourdieu 1977, 19). Bourdieu highlights the important point that the dialogue presented by my research participants is only a subjective presentation of what is really happening within the entire African art music communities in Ghana. This is not to say that my research participants are "ignorant" about their lives or the African art music scene in Ghana. It merely brings up the point that this is a subjective presentation. After several interactions and interviews with each composer, I feel that

what is presented here at least partially represents the composers' approaches to composition and unique perspectives on art music in Ghana. Further studies in the future can supplement that which is presented here in order to come to a fuller understanding of the individuals and their communities.

Alfred Patrick Addaquay

I conducted interviews with Addaquay on two separate occasions. My first interaction with him in Cape Coast was set up by Professor Kongo, his composition instructor, and took place at Kongo's house in the evening. Our second interaction took place several weeks later in Addaquay's dorm room immediately following the final examination concert for Kongo's students who were graduating from the University of Cape Coast. I was very pleased to be able to speak with Addaquay due to the fact that he is a proficient keyboardist and frequently played examples of his works for me during the course of our interviews.

Addaquay (b. 1985) is originally from Kumasi. When I spoke with him in Cape Coast in the summer of 2010, he had just completed his final examination for his bachelor's degree in music at Cape Coast University. He explained to me that he is a piano major at the university. However, he was a student in Professor Zabana Kongo's composition class during the two previous years and is well known in Kumasi and Accra for many of his choral

compositions, including a recent acclaimed performance of his oratorio "The Laudate" in Cape Coast (Frimpong 2012).

Figure 7. Alfred Addaquay with the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra, Cape Coast. 2010. (Photo by author).

Addaquay grew up in the church and was mostly self-taught on the keyboard. However, he also noted that a keyboardist at Prempeh College, a boarding school for boys originally founded by Protestant missionaries, gave him considerable direction with his playing. Addaquay explained that he started performing music in the church and often composed church music before coming to the University of Cape Coast to learn more about composition (Addaquay 2010, interview). Today, Addaquay continues to perform with many church choirs and often directs performances of his works throughout Southern and Central Ghana.

Addaquay identified himself as a member of the youngest generation (fourth generation) of art music composers in Ghana. When asked about his greatest musical influences, he initially pointed to Amu, often viewed as

Ghana's first art music composer. However, later, Addaquay explained that over time Nayo became a greater influence in his compositions due to the difficulties in his works, including his use of chromatics and the challenge and growth that this brings to instrumentalists and orchestras in Ghana (Addaquay 2010, interview).

Similarly, Addaquay often made a point to distance himself from the idea that contemporary Ghanaian composers simply harmonize traditional melodies, as some of the early Ghanaian composers such as Nketia and Amu did. He explained,

> With Ghanaian art music we don't really [blend our folk songs with our art music]… Our kind of composition is quite different from the folk songs that people write… Because I'm a Ghanaian I can be bold and really talk about Ghanaian art music as not just the rhythm (Addaquay 2010, interview).

Addaquay also described several characteristics of art music in Ghana, some of which he frequently employs. He pointed to certain harmonic cadences as being distinctly Ghanaian and similarly noted the trend of composing in 2/4 and 6/8 time signatures.

Addaquay also noted the personal influence of several Baroque composers such as Bach and Handel, and particularly emphasized the genre of the oratorio. He seems to gravitate towards compositions in the Baroque style and noted that Ghanaian audiences seem to particularly enjoy this style of music, likely as a result of the prevalence of choral church music throughout much of Ghana. He explained that he enjoys this type of music

due to the fact that he comes from a church music background. When asked about what makes his compositions unique Addaquay explained,

> I'm a very difficult thinker… sometimes I try to write things so rigid or so challenging. My compositions are different from the other students. Most people in the country also fear to learn my compositions. Other people insult me that I should come down to other people's level. When people see my name they associate it with being difficult (Addaquay 2010, interview).

Addaquay explained to me that he composes a number of different styles of music. "I am a musician in the world…I have not limited myself to Ghanaian art music alone," he said. (Addaquay 2010, interview). He also pointed out the varieties within Ghanaian art music and frequently demonstrated various styles of Ghanaian art music composition that have developed over the past century. In our second interview, he further emphasized the importance of composing with variety, using prominent European Baroque composers to illustrate his point. He said,

> When I talk about someone being a great composer, I'm not talking about picking one style, that this is my style of composing, so that's all; it is not true. You know Mozart and all those great masters, they became very great composers because of the variety in their music. Mozart could compose choral works so well that choirs liked to sing his music. He could compose symphonies so well that you know when you compare his symphonies to his choruses I don't think you will see any similarities in them… When you compare the two you can see that they are different styles... You know, those varieties in his compositions make him a great master… Even when you are a Ghanaian composer if you want to compose in a Ghanaian style I think your variety must vary. When you are writing for an instrument, when you are composing for drums, it must be so nice that drummers want to perform. Before I can call you a great master, I want to see those varieties (Addaquay 2010, interview).

When asked about his goals as a composer, Addaquay often explained that he wants his works to be accepted by theorists around the world. He insisted,

> I want to be one of the greatest composers in the whole of the world, not only in Ghana. That is why I forced myself to come to the university to learn even the other techniques, twenty-first and twentieth century. I want to compose for the world to speak about me one day. I'm still working on that. I know that things will work for me with hard work (Addaquay 2010, interview).

However, he also noted that as of now he has not yet contributed anything to the music community in Ghana. He explained,

> Actually, because I'm still young I haven't finished what exactly I want to contribute… You know mostly people think that you've contributed something when you're so popular. People have also done wonderful things without them being performed. Just because people haven't performed it doesn't mean that I haven't contributed something… Because I'm young I haven't finished accomplishing my mission. In the future it will come. As young as I am, it could be like I am Nketia. I don't really want to talk about the contributions that I have made (Addaquay 2010, interview).

Addaquay identified himself as being a member of the youngest generation of composers who has not completely solidified his role in the music community in Ghana. In the process, he described his frustration that academic art music in Ghana is performed much less than more popular musical types often associated with the church. During the course of my interactions with Addaquay, he regularly associated himself with "academic music" as opposed to the "music of society" (Addaquay 2010, interview). As he learned that I was focusing my thesis on Ghanaian art music composers, he vehemently encouraged me to focus on composers with an academic

music background, not those who are defined by their popularity in Ghana or the frequency with which their compositions are performed in church.

Mark Obosu

I came to know Mark Obosu through his professor, Professor Kongo. I was very fortunate to hear his instrumental music performed at the final exam concert for graduating students who had studied composition. The following is a summary of my interactions with Obosu at this concert and an interview, several weeks later, at a restaurant in Cape Coast.

Figure 8. Mark Obosu, Cape Coast. 2010. (Photo by author).

Obosu, 30 years old, recently graduated from the University of Cape Coast with a Bachelor of Music degree. He was born in Saltpond on the coast in the Central Region of Ghana, attended the Seventh Day Adventist Teacher's Training College in Koforidua in Ghana's Eastern Region and taught music at the junior high level for three years prior to coming to Cape Coast. When I met him in 2010, he had studied composition for the past two years under Professor Kongo. His plans at the time were to return to teaching his youth choir in Sunyani where his family now lives. He expected to be asked to compose a work for the choir in Sunyani to perform in an upcoming competition (Obosu 2010, interview).

Obosu explained to me that one of his greatest influences in his musical career was his father, a musician and composer in the Catholic Church in Sunyani. He learned how to project his singing voice and how to play the accordion and *atenteben*, a traditional *Akan* flute, from his father. Obosu noted that initially he wasn't interested in learning music at all, despite his father's attempts to get him to learn the keyboard. However, after meeting a friend in senior high school who was playing for the school choir, he began to study the keyboard and synthesizer seriously. Obosu also explained that he is interested in several Ghanaian church composers such as Newlove Annan and their ability to compose in a number of different styles for church choirs (Obosu 2010, interview).

In describing his style of composition, Obosu noted the importance of composing for those in the church who will sing his music. He composes so that the words in the music can be understood. He explained,

> In this country we prefer a particular style. Not too many people want Handel's style of composition… So people want the music all right but mostly classical pieces have too many melisma. In my music in particular I don't make use of too much melisma. Also, we don't have more experienced choirs. [With] illiterate choirs and you get just some few people who are literate and that one wouldn't even be literate. You compose based on the level (Obosu 2010, interview).

His emphasis on non-melismatic choral music with sacred texts allows him to compose for choirs in Ghana that may not be able to sing complicated, florid passages that hide the text and meaning of the music. Obosu is evidently primarily interested in composing choral music, though he says that he may compose more instrumental pieces in the future and also spoke of composing patriotic works. He recently composed a serial instrumental work for the final examination concert of his music degree.

Obosu pointed out that many of the influences in his music come from life experience, stories and proverbs. He provided one such example of how his prayers were answered. He explained,

> Maybe you are in need of something, and you are not getting it, so all of the sudden something comes across and you get it. You requested something from God and the prayer has been answered. Based on that you can write using the text from the Bible (Obosu 2010, interview).

Obosu's primary focus is on writing music for his church in order to create a spiritual space that brings the congregation closer to God. His emphasis on

the church points to his personal religious convictions and passion for his youth choir and church community.

Cosmas Worlanyo Kofi Mereku

Cosmas Worlanyo Kofi Mereku (b. 1957) is currently a resident of Winneba, Ghana, a moderate sized city on the coast between Accra and Cape Coast. I had one opportunity to meet with Mereku at his home several kilometers away from the University of Education where he is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Music Department. Mereku is originally from Kpando Agudzi in the Volta Region of Ghana, but received most of his post-secondary education outside of Ghana. He acted as choirmaster and organist in the Presbyterian Church in Agona Abodom and Agona Swedru, Ghana during the 1970s. Mereku has been highly involved in music education policy making in the country over the past several decades. From the mid 1970s to the 1990s, he held various positions in the Ghana Education Service, including the position of Principal Superintendent of Education in 1991. Mereku was a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Ghana, Legon and the University of Cape Coast, but most recently, he taught undergraduate and post-graduate music courses (including courses in twentieth century composition and orchestration) in the Music and Performing Arts Education Department. In recent years, he has also acted as co-supervisor to several students completing their M.Phil theses on the topic of musical composition. He currently holds the position of Dean of Student Affairs at the University of

Education, Winneba (Mereku, n.d. "Curriculum Vitae 2010," unpublished document).

Figure 9. Cosmas Worlanyo Kofi Mereku, Winneba, Ghana. 2010. (Photo by John Nutekpor).

Mereku's post-secondary education took place at numerous institutions in Ghana, Europe and the United States. He was awarded Distinction in Mathematics as a part of his Teacher's Certification at the Ada Training College in 1975 and later completed his Teacher's Diploma in Music Education at the National Academy of Music in Winneba. Mereku attained his Masters of Music degree in Music Education from the University of Michigan and later completed his Ph.D. in Musical Composition at the

University of Leeds in Leeds, England (Mereku, n.d. "Curriculum Vitae 2010," unpublished document).

Mereku noted two very distinct periods in his compositional career: one that took place prior to his studies at the University of Leeds and one that took place after these studies. He explained that prior to his studies at Leeds, his works were mainly choral works, sometimes including orchestra and African percussion, similar to those of his contemporaries such as Amu, Nketia and Nayo with their emphasis on tonality. He also pointed to several instrumental works such as his "Atentenata" (a combination of the words *atenteben*, a traditional *Akan* flute that Amu developed and often composed for, and "sonata"), a sonata for *atenteben* and piano, a work that he described as one of his earlier compositions in the style of Amu. Mereku explained that during his time in Britain and after returning to Ghana his music became more dissonant. During this period, he explained that he used electronic music to "get ahead" with regards to his peers and other composers and also experimented with bird songs (Mereku 2010, interview).

His 1995 Leeds composition Piano Trio "Pivicafrique" on the Theme of Jack Berry's "Sasabonsam's Match," based upon an Ashanti story about a forest vampire and hunter, is one example of his atonal compositions that incorporates "Western twentieth-century contemporary musical ideas" along with "African traditional musical idioms" (Mereku, n.d. "Twentieth-First Century," working paper, 1). In an unpublished paper providing an analysis on the piece he explains,

> the outcomes of this particular composition and the other works in my 1997 portfolio, demonstrate how musical composition as an art can provide a way to express and reveal new knowledge and perspectives. Pivicafrique an African classical piece speaks for itself. From the innovations in notation to the resulting sound effects that gives it the African cultural ownership, I am satisfied to have used a method that has provided new knowledge to others and I in ways, which words alone could not have done (Mereku, n.d. "Twenty-First Century," working paper, 1).

Mereku explained that he composed this work while in Britain, but also points out that the bird songs are African. In making this claim in his analysis of the work, he points to "philosopher-ecologist" David Rothenburg's 2005 book *Why Birds Sing: A Journey into the Mystery of Bird Song* and his description of "one bird that picks up African bird songs on its migratory route, and sing them plain at day in the marshes of Europe." (quoted in Mereku, n.d. "Twenty-First Century," working paper, 15). In this way, he asserts that his use of bird songs recorded while in Britain contributes to the work's African qualities. In addition, Mereku explained to me that along with standard Western instrumentation, he also composed a work for *atumpan* drums (traditional *Asante* "talking" drums) and recorded sound track while at Leeds along with his "Afro-Drumnietta (Yaa Asentewaa)" for "piano circus, 12 hands" (Mereku, n.d. "Curriculum Vitae 2010," unpublished document; Mereku 2010, interview).

In speaking about his choral works, Mereku explained,

> It's important to sound African, so what you use the Western idiom but use the African texts, the lyrics. The texts, if you use the vernacular. Then it changes the rhythm. But if you don't use the vernacular and you use English it doesn't change it at all. Then it's like you've plagiarized. It's like you've copied somebody's work in their Western world (Mereku 2010, interview).

Mereku makes a point to sound African in his compositions through the use of story lines, bird songs and traditional dance material. He described his compositions as "eclectic," pulling influences and ideas from a number of different sources (Mereku 2010, interview). Mereku positions himself as coming from a tonal harmony background despite his employment of atonal compositional techniques during his time at Leeds University. However, he noted that if he studies atonal works and composers further, he will figure out how to recreate them in an African manner (Mereku 2010, interview).

As a music educator and administrator in Ghana, Mereku is passionate about the future of art music in Ghana. Speaking about art music, he explained, "If it leaves, we have a problem. We have a duty to fulfill as people who are educated in this country. Whether we like it or not, the Western tradition is part of our tradition" (Mereku 2010, interview).

Kenn Kafui

Kenn Kafui (b. 1951) is a well-known composer of art music in academic and church settings in Ghana. I was able to meet Kafui a number of times in his office at the University of Ghana and attended several of his choir rehearsals and church services at the Accra New Town Evangelical Presbyterian Church, one of several churches that he is intimately involved with as a musician and church leader. Currently, Kafui is a lecturer in music at the School of Performing Arts at the University of Ghana, Legon. Originally from Kpando in the Volta Region of Ghana, Kafui was first exposed to formal

music theory and composition by his father at Kpando Secondary School. He received his Diploma of Music and Masters of Philosophy from the University of Ghana and has regularly attended international composers workshops in Europe and Asia in recent years. From 1979 to 1982 and 1972 to 2006 respectively, he was the Music Master and Head of Music School at Achimota School and also taught composition and orchestration at the Ghana National Academy of Music in Winneba. While traveling abroad, he collaborated with composers including Makoto Shonohara from Japan, Marlos Nobre from Brazil and Karlheinz Stockhausen from Germany (Kafui, n.d. "Profile of Kenn Kafui," unpublished document). Kafui explained to me that interactions with these composers inspired him to explore twentieth century compositional techniques including serialism and aleatoricism (chance music) in his works such as "Black Visitation" for piano (Kafui 2010, interview).

Today, Kafui is frequently involved with choirs at several Evangelical Presbyterian Churches in Legon, Madina and Accra. Several of his choral works are included in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church hymnal and others are performed by church choirs throughout Ghana on a regular basis. During the time that I spent with him, Kafui was frequently attending choir rehearsals and teaching various choirs some of his works for performance in upcoming church services and competitions.

Figure 10. Kenn Kafui and the author at the Accra New Town Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Ghana. 2010. (Photo credit unknown).

Many of Kafui's works are based on sacred texts and are frequently performed in church or sacred music settings. However, he has also been involved in non-sacred settings. Kafui acted as the conductor and director of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra during the African Composers Series within that institution and has had his works performed in the Ghana National Theatre, the British Council Hall and other venues in Ghana.

Kafui often incorporates indigenous influences in his music and explained that most of the time he writes using rhythmic, melodic and vernacular language material from the *Ewe* people. He also pointed out that his knowledge of traditional music allows him to use traditional instruments with voices in his art music in a culturally appropriate way. For instance, Kafui explained that women are always accompanied by the *axatse* rattle

when singing his art music and that this instrument would never be used along with men's voices in a traditional or art music context (Kafui 2010, interview). Kafui asserted that his knowledge of traditional music and social contexts comes out in his compositions. He explained,

> I grew up as an *Ewe*. When I compose music, I use what is particular to the *Ewes*. Even in Ghana I haven't used *Akan* music in my musical structures at all. What we have at our place is so much that I didn't reach out for others… As you grow up in the environment you learn these things unconsciously and they become part and parcel of you. If you start to compose a piece you don't need to think of which tradition to go to but it just flows naturally through you. That is how I feel (Kafui 2010, interview).

Kafui also noted that his decision to include African material in his works is a "conscious decision" that allows him to add "flavor" to his compositions. Kafui noted, "My personal mission is to approach my composition and make it more African than Western. You see, the Western factor you cannot avoid because when we went to school right from childhood it was purely what we were taught" (Kafui 2010, interview). However, he explained that he has also composed several "Western" works, particularly several hymns that are included in the Ghana Evangelical Presbyterian Church Hymnal.

Senyo Adzei

Senyo Adzei (b. 1978) is originally from Tchito, a village in the Southern Volta Region of Ghana, a three-hour drive from Accra. Adzei often jokes that Tchito is his village but that it is actually larger than Helsinki, Finland where he recently attended school for his Masters of Music. When I

met with him in Ghana in 2010, Adzei had just returned to Ghana after spending two years abroad in Finland. He was in the process of determining his next steps for himself and his family and was considering attending a school in Ghana for his PhD, likely either the University of Ghana or the University of Cape Coast. He hoped to study music and national politics in order to "break through the music cultures here" (cultures that primarily focus on choral, traditional and popular music) and build a larger audience for instrumental art music in Ghana. Adzei readily identified himself as a composer and "creative ethnomusicologist" and insisted that he did not have any plans to stop composing despite his intention to continue studies outside of composition (Adzei 2010, interview).

Figure 11. Senyo Adzei, University of Ghana, Legon. 2012. (Photo credit unknown).

Adzei identified himself as a member of the fourth generation of art music composers in Ghana, despite being one of the older members of that generation. However, he also noted that members of this generation have not yet found a unified compositional identity as the older generations have. He explained, "We are doing individual works and there is nothing unique. We need to make it a Romantic period of art music in Africa. It should look like breaking of rules. Break Western theory and see the result" (Adzei 2010, interview). Adzei envisions a vibrant future for art music in Ghana, and on a larger scale Africa, and insists that the resources that African composers have in the continent will pave the way for a new types of music not founded on Western theory.

Adzei charted the beginning of his interest in art music to his involvement in the school choir during primary school in Tchito. He explained that he became curious about the various hymns by composers such as Bach and Handel in the Methodist Hymnal during his time leading the choir. Adzei also traced his interest in art music to his grandfather who was once a trumpet player in a Ghanaian police band. During several late night car trips on which I accompanied him to Tchito to visit his family, Adzei would play me a cassette of some of his grandfather's compositions, choral and traditional *Ewe* drum works. As we sped around unlit corners and though small villages that only recently received electricity on the way to see his family in the Volta Region, he explained that as a child he often listened to music of his grandfather, who also gave him formal music lessons. During

secondary school his grandfather would often call Adzei, his brother Moses and another child from a nearby family together for music lessons. In the evening in Tchito, his grandfather would teach the three young men the rudiments of staff notation and theory. Adzei explained that this was his first exposure to the formal rules of Western musical notation (Adzei 2010, interview).

According to Adzei, he originally went to the music school in Legon to study piano. However, the late Professor Willie Anku (1949-2010) encouraged Adzei to stick to African music, since he would never likely be able to compete with pianists from abroad. As a result, Adzei began to focus more on learning drumming. As he was focusing on drums, he realized that the rhythms could also be "replicated in writing Western music" (Adzei 2010, interview). Today, several of Adzei's works focus on drumming patterns, as well as their social context in his home village.

When asked to describe the types of music that he composes, Adzei shared a story with me that took place during the third year of his Bachelor of Music Diploma at the University of Ghana. He explained,

> We were given an assignment in class and we were supposed to do a composition, and I decided to do a hymn tune. So that was the very first thing that I did. So after that the professor of composition at the time said that I should try as much as possible to avoid writing for choirs and four-part harmony, I should try to venture into twentieth century compositions. Just after that I realized he has given me an idea. So I started experimenting on new music, I want to use the term new music. Instead of saying twentieth century or twenty-first century I want to say new music. I started experimenting on new music so I discovered that I was a better composer for new music, which is for instruments rather than voice. So basically I write more or less for instruments (Adzei 2010, interview).

Adzei later explained to me that this professor, Pascal Zabana Kongo, taught him how to be unpredictable with his compositions, to compose in a manner in which listeners would not be able to guess what was coming next. For the young composer this was a defining moment in his composing life, and to this day he primarily composes for instruments despite the overwhelming predominance of choral music in Ghana.

Adzei used a comment from one of his professors in Finland to further describe his music. He explained,

> I think that Africa, as much as we are endowed with musical resources, I should be able to use these resources to create a new kind of music, a new kind of composition. So it's not necessarily a symphony or sonata form or a fugue. There could be a feeling of a fugue, but I'm not directly doing a fugue. So I try to develop and write the music so that it will not follow any of the Western models. If you talked, the first thing the professor in the Sibelius Academy listened to my music he said it's a fascinating rhythmic pulse or a fascinating rhythmic push. He means that I try to toy with the rhythms and throw the rhythms on the staff as my own way. My understanding of composition is that whatever I feel inside should be put on the paper for people to perform. That is my idea of what a composition is. So when I say new music, the new music is that I am developing my own way that African music should be written like this (Adzei 2010, interview).

Adzei described himself as a "creative ethnomusicologist" and explained that before composing a work he goes to do research about the social meaning of a type of traditional music. He explained,

> I try to know a little bit of ethnographical… do a little bit of ethnographical research about the people whose music is that particular one. And then I try to look at the composers, traditional composers. Of course where there are some of them and traditional drummers. And then I interview them. I try to find out their concept and the way they perform or play music, traditional music. So I look at the compositional techniques that are used by these traditional

> drummers. And then I based my composition after all on that. Normally using the rhythms. I don't change the rhythms. I transcribe the rhythms as they exist in the tradition. And then I use that the very rhythms I use for Western music and Western instruments (Adzei 2010, interview).

Adzei has a specific concern for the future of the art music audience in Ghana, but insisted that the desired audience for his music is all over the world. He described a concert that recently featured some of his music in Finland and noted that the audience seemed to enjoy it and was particularly interesting in the rhythmic elements.

> They were fascinated by the rhythm. My target is not just Ghanaians. Western instruments are very difficult to play here. I'm trying to be intercultural… My audience target is for all over the world (Adzei 2010, interview).

In speaking about the role of his music in the world, he also noted his connections with composers in Europe and in Shanghai. Adzei told me that he is a member of the Intercultural Composers Initiative, which provides biographies of young composers from places such as Ghana, Egypt and the United States and coordinates meetings and communication between composers around the world (Intercultural Composers Initiative 2011a). He also makes his international connections evident through his desire to bring musicians from Finland to Ghana to give concerts.

Pascal Zabana Kongo

Pascal Zabana Kongo, a professor in composition at several universities in Ghana, currently resides in Cape Coast. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Kongo (previously known as Zaire), Professor Kongo

is a central figure in several music programs in Ghanaian universities and has been a key force in the development of theory and composition programs in Ghana since 1996. From 1996 to 2004, he was a Senior Research Fellow at the International Centre for African Music and Dance and a Lecturer at the School of Performing Arts at the University of Ghana. In 2004, he became a Senior Lecturer at the University of Ghana, a position he still holds today. From 2005 to 2007, Kongo was the Head of the Music Department (School of Performing Arts) at the same university. From 2007 to 2010, he was the Chairman of music theory and composition at the University of Ghana in Legon, the University of Education in Winneba and the University of Cape Coast (African Art, Traditional and Popular Music 2011). Today he continues to teach students at all three of these institutions.

While growing up in Kinshasa, Zaire, Professor Kongo was highly involved in the country's popular music scene, as well as research activities undertaken as part of the National Museum Institute of Zaire. He explained that he was first exposed to classical music through the seminary. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Kongo regularly performed on the synthesizer with leading names in the Kinshasa music scene, including the Yss-Boys and the Sosolisso Madjesi Trio (African Art, Traditional and Popular Music 2011). Kongo emphasizes that at this time he did not see the boundaries between different musical styles. He says, "I didn't know that there were doors, that this music is not mine. I didn't know the boundaries. I didn't know that

everything, some come from 20 km, some come from 2000 km. But I liked it" (Kongo 2010, interview).

Figure 12. Pascal Zabana Kongo in his home in Cape Coast, Ghana. 2010. (Photo credit unknown).

In 1979, he received his diploma in music from the National Institute of Arts in Kinshasa and later worked in the city as a piano instructor and a resident member of the National Ballet of Zaire, where he composed music for several musicals presented by the organization. In the 1980s, he worked as Assistant to the Music Curator of the National Museums Institute of Zaire and later became the Head of the Department of Musicology for the same institute. During this time, he took part in numerous fieldwork and

transcription projects through the National Museums Institute (African Art, Traditional and Popular Music 2011).

Kongo attended the University of Paris from 1986 to 1994, where he attained his Master of Ethnomusicology, a Post-Graduate Certificate in Ethnomusicology and a PhD in Ethnomusicology under Professors Bernard Lortat-Jacob and Simha Arom. In 2000, he attended Northwestern University where he studied composition and electronic music. Kongo has also attended numerous conferences and workshops throughout the world as a composer, theorist and music educator (African Art, Traditional and Popular Music 2011).

Kongo's role in Ghana is unique as a result of his Congolese nationality. Unlike Ghanaian composers, he doesn't feel a need to use merely harmonized traditional Ghanaian musical material in his compositions and perceives himself as separate from the art music composer community in Ghana. He instead focuses on the use and teaching of "international techniques" of composition.

However, Kongo does use traditional material from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Central Africa (Kongo 2010, interview). His point of view is that using this material is something that comes naturally as a result of his life history, as opposed to using the material in a conscious manner to actively portray something about himself and his music. Kongo always strives to "digest" the "rough traditional material" within the piece of music to the point where it is hardly recognizable by the listener (Kongo 2010,

interview). He desires to move away from the tendency of art music composers in Ghana over the past century to merely add musical pitches to the traditional rhythms.

As a professor of music in Ghana, Kongo has unique perspectives on the role of art music in Ghana and throughout Africa. He encourages his students in Cape Coast, Winneba and Legon to systematize their thinking and to be able to compose in three manners, "common practice tonality," "twentieth century" and "intercultural." With regards to intercultural music he explained, "You need to know how to blend elements from your traditions and international skills" (Kongo 2010, interview). As an educator, Kongo insists that his students learn new "international" compositional skills so that they can compose works using numerous different techniques that may sometimes—but not always—incorporate Ghanaian or African traditional music. In sharing a piece of Steve Reich's music with me he explained,

> These are minimalist procedures with an African rhythmic pattern. Currently Africans cannot do that. They should be able to do that! They have to go through that systematization. Then they are free to go into abstraction. This is African. If you don't pass through this mode of thinking you don't produce it… They have to systematize their thinking (Kongo 2010, interview).

Kongo approaches music composition with the attitude that what you know as a musician in the world, the genres of music that you have lived with and grown up with, will come out naturally in the composition process. From his perspective, composers should use techniques from the "Western" world and use these various means for composition to communicate what they know as musicians. According to him, the use of local or indigenous

material in a work is something that happens naturally, not something that should be intentionally included in the work. Kongo insisted,

> Techniques in all the disciplines should not be national, they should be international. Somewhere, by all means, you will reveal your identity. They will see where you come from. You don't need to do it intentionally. What you speak is something that is rooted in the present [from] the past. From my infancy I have always disputed the idea of compartmentalizing music: this is Japanese, this is European, this is African, this is Grieg. I loved it. You don't need to tell me no don't like it, it's not for you. It doesn't make sense. It was later when I learned the history of music that I learned that I learned oh Grieg is from over there. But its music… I don't need to know if this is from my village or a little bit further (Kongo 2010, interview).

Kongo points out that he does not necessarily need to employ traditional materials when composing. He also bases his compositions on story lines, and environmental and mood impressions that inspire him near his home in Cape Coast. Kongo strives to portray moods in his compositions, bringing in stories of slavery and young love that relate to Cape Coast and its dark past as well as sounds of the sea and crashing waves near his home.

Chapter Five: Ethnography of African Art Music in Ghanaian Universities

"We need to create an audience for art music in Ghana," Senyo Adzei mentioned as we were walking along the main road in Gbadzeme, a rural town resting at the base of Mt. Gemi in the Volta Region of Ghana, several hours from the capital city of Accra. I was with Adzei in May 2010, along with busloads of people from the University of Ghana and other universities, to celebrate the life of scholar and composer Professor Willie Anku. Rough dirt roads had not kept the hundreds of people attending the funeral away from Gbadzeme, a tribute to the far-reaching impact of Anku's work. They came from as far away as the United States to pay respects to this influential figure, a professor at the University of Ghana and African music theorist and composer. Anku had passed away in a tragic car accident several months before and was being buried in his hometown. The funeral weekend had begun with a viewing at the University of Ghana the day before and continued in Gbadzeme with speeches from renowned Ghanaian scholars, brass band performances and presentations of his choral compositions, well known to many Ghanaians. Adzei explained to me that Willie Anku had been a key figure who encouraged him in his academic studies of traditional music and composition.

Adzei's statement about creating an audience for art music in Ghana reflects a primary concern in the lives of many composers in Ghana today:

concern that the audience for art music in Ghana is simply too small, as many are unaccustomed to its associated performance context involving a clear distinction between audience and performers. The statement also shows an interest in developing a local audience in Ghana, not in exclusively sending Ghanaian art music compositions abroad for performances in places such as North America and Europe. I became curious if other composers express similar concerns in writing music to develop a Ghanaian audience or if they instead desire to reach out for international acceptance and recognition of their works? My goal in this chapter is to answer some of these questions about the current state of African art music in Ghana.

Figure 13. Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Gbadzeme, Ghana. 2010. (Photo by author).

In Chapter Four, I presented profiles of the key figures in composition that I discuss in this thesis. In this chapter I will review my fieldwork in Ghana during the summer of 2010. My goal is to discuss connections and

contrasts between composers' backgrounds and approaches to composing in order to better understand the contemporary direction and trend of African art music composition in Ghana. Emerging out of this analysis is the idea that composers young and old in Ghana today seek a balance between wanting to engage with composers, musicians and audiences around the world and wanting to maintain a local focus in Ghana. These two contrasting pulls are evident throughout the lives of the composers and in the music they compose. An understanding of the complexities of desires such as these arises from the analysis of the beginnings of a career in composition, frequent university studies and conference attendance abroad, relations to the church, locations of performances, and the actual music that is produced.

The Protestant Church: Inspiration, Training and Limitations

As noted by authors on the subject of African art music in Africa, many composers in Ghana trace their interest in composition to involvement in church congregations (Agordoh 1994, 144–169). The genesis of African art music composition in Ghana took place in the church at the beginning of the twentieth century. This trend is perhaps most notable in the story of Amu and his decision to start composing music for his Presbyterian congregation using indigenous musical resources. As explained in Chapter Two, Amu began to incorporate indigenous music into hymns for his church once he realized that members of the congregation could not sing the translated

European hymns that were commonly used in worship (Agawu and Amu 1987, 52).

Today, the church continues to provide a training ground for young composers and musicians and persists as a vital force throughout their careers. All of the composers that I interacted with during my fieldwork in Ghana traced the beginning of their interaction with and interest in art music to their early involvement with the church. As I will show, modern African art music composers in Ghana negotiate their involvement in the church alongside the draw to compose non-liturgical music which engages with a non-church audience. Frequently, the church is a location where youth first come into contact with Western musical instruments such as the keyboard and trumpet and join choral groups. For example, several churches in and around Madina, a suburb of the capital Accra, have vibrant youth music programs led by members of the congregation.

An example of these musical beginnings in the church is Addaquay, a recent graduate of the University of Cape Coast where he studied theory and composition with Professor Kongo. Addaquay explained that his initial interest in art music came about during his time as a youth in the church when he played keyboard for the choir. Addaquay noted that he was first exposed to art music and composition in the church and learned how to play keyboard when he was only seven years old. As he told me, "I was a choir boy. Before I came to [the University of Cape Coast] I used to compose a lot of church music. I wrote an oratorio before coming to [the University of Cape

Coast]" (Addaquay 2010, interview). Clearly, students such as Addaquay were well-versed in music theory and composition prior to attending university to study composition. This speaks to the depth and degree of education that some composers receive in the church.

John Nutekpor is one of the musical directors of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Madina and is frequently involved with other Protestant churches in the area. His role in the church helps to illustrate the role that certain individuals have in music education in such churches. Nutekpor plays keyboard and organ during worship at this church every Sunday and also directs traditional and art music education programs at several other churches and schools in the area.

On several occasions, I accompanied him on trips to other churches where he taught formal music lessons to students on the keyboard and trumpet. In weekly lessons at a church in a town near Madina, Nutekpor teaches children and teenagers technique and scales on their respective instruments and also begins to introduce them to repertoire including simple melodies. In a small room behind the worship hall of the church, I observed one of these lessons, as he gave fifteen-minute lessons to students on electronic keyboards. One by one, three teenage girls were asked to play short pieces that had been assigned to them the previous week for homework. After the students played their studies and melodies he critiqued them and gave pointers on rhythm, posture and tempo. At the time, I was surprised to find musically literate musicians outside of a university

setting. This goes to emphasize the important place of such churches in the art music scene in Ghana. Nutekpor emphasizes his role in maintaining culture that he perceives as being lost in an era of easily produced poor quality popular music. He explains, “Our present generation and also maybe the generation to come will lose our culture, will lose the rudiment of music. So I want to help young kids to play music, read music professionally” (Nutekpor 2010, interview). Not only is the church a location where students are exposed to music performance in the context of worship, it is also a location for the study of music in a formal setting and the acquisition of skills such as the ability to read music and understand music theory. It is important to note that Nutekpor speaks of culture in terms of both traditional *Ewe* music and Western-inspired art music. Beyond Western-inspired music, he also teaches the kids in the church how to play the *atenteben* and dance traditional *Ewe* dances. It seems that he views both of these types of music as important for future generations to learn. Nutekpor is only in his thirties, and it is therefore not yet possible to observe where his students take their skills in music literacy and instrument proficiency later in life. It will be interesting to see if some of his students end up studying music in the university in the years to come.

The Protestant church is a vibrant and important location for the learning of skills that can lead to interest in a career in art music. However, certain African art music composers seem to take these skills elsewhere once they leave to attend a university. It is important to note that composers are

divided in terms of their involvement with the church later in life. Addaquay explained, “But you know later on more can go into music than just the church music and the liturgy” (Addaquay 2010, interview). He notes that a majority of the art musicians in Ghana are church musicians who predominantly focus on choral music. He insists that he doesn’t want to focus only on choral music, but is interested in composing in a broad range of styles, including contemporary styles of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. “So I will say that I am connected to the church but that is not where I want to stay. I want to move outside of the church,” he explained (Addaquay 2010, interview). For Addaquay, the move outside of the church comes as a result of the limitations that being a church composer would have on his compositional career. He is more interested in composing music that incorporates instruments such as the violin and cello, whereas aside from organ or keyboards, instruments are rarely incorporated in Protestant churches in Ghana in an art music performance context.

He also insists that he is not only composing for an audience in Ghana. He explains, “My main aim, to be frank, is not just people in Ghana. I want theorists to accept my work” (Addaquay 2010, interview). In making such a statement, Addaquay aligns himself with a performance setting outside of the church. Composing for choirs in the church limits the type of music that he can compose, as well as his audience. He desires for his music to be heard in a performance context in which the members of the audience are involved in analysis and interpretation of his compositions, not a worship environment

in which group participation and dancing are key parts of the experience. It is interesting to note that when he speaks of theorists accepting his work he associates them with an audience outside of Ghana.

Performance in a worship setting in Ghana rarely involves a musically literate audience familiar with how to read a musical score. Choir members are often taught music by rote as the choirmaster helps individuals learn their parts line-by-line and note-by-note. Hymnbooks in many of the churches in Ghana such as the Evangelical Presbyterian Church only include the written text of the hymns instead of incorporating the text and notated music alongside each other, as is the case with many hymnbooks in North America. Musical literacy is rare in Ghanaian church congregations (despite the ironic fact that this is where many young composers learn how to read music), and composers such as Addaquay therefore chart paths away from this environment. He most poignantly describes this situation when he insists, "Ghanaians are not ready to analyze the music yet…the church is not really creating anything new… In Ghana, don't concentrate on popularity. The fact that [a composer] is popular doesn't make him great" (Addaquay 2010, interview). He sees the type of composition that he wants to pursue as something completely different from the music that is prevalent in the church. Often times he speaks of music in the church as "music for society" (music that is popular in Ghanaian society, particularly the church) and makes the point that he composes "academic music" that many in Ghana may not appreciate (Addaquay 2010, interview).

The degree with which university-trained art music composers stay involved with the church later in life seems to vary depending on individual ambitions and perceptions of the music scene in Ghana. Many university-based composers and professors such as Kenn Kafui and Joshua Amuah are intimately involved with their church communities as music leaders and composers. Kafui has composed numerous popular choral works, many of which are often included in Sunday worship services in mainline churches such as the Evangelical Presbyterian Church throughout Ghana. Like Addaquay, Obosu, a recent graduate of the University of Cape Coast and a student of Professor Kongo, was initially exposed to the keyboard and synthesizer through his father, a leader in the Catholic Church in Sunyani in northern Ghana. However, unlike Addaquay, Obosu is planning a career in which his compositional energies are indeed primarily directed towards music for the church. As a result of this early exposure and later study in high school, Obosu was encouraged to enroll as a piano major at the university. While at the University of Cape Coast he was exposed to many new styles of composition under the direction of his professor, Pascal Zabana Kongo. This was a distinct change for him, as previously he had primarily composed choral music for his youth choir in Sunyani and had never experimented with instrumental music. He noted that he particularly enjoyed composing minimalistic instrumental works incorporating serialism. However, his emphasis and passion is in composing choral music. He explained that he had plans to compose several choral works for his youth

choir for upcoming choir competitions in Sunyani. Much of his interest in composing for the church seems to come from his own personal religious convictions. Similar to Kafui, who is frequently involved with evangelistic trips to his hometown, Obosu has profound personal connections to the church. In describing his primary concerns for his music, Obosu says,

> For now it helps in the development of the church. Not fiscally but spiritually. Anytime I want to compose I always want a text, or I want the music to be in a mood in which when the song is sung you feel that you are drawing near to God. Helping in the spiritual growth of the church and in the individual as well (Obosu 2010, interview).

Composers such as Obosu value staying involved with their church choirs instead of continuing composition in an academic setting. This contrast between Obosu and Addaquay is a key element of African art music composition in Ghana. Considering the relative lack of art music composition careers outside of the church, it seems that many young composers will continue to stay musically involved with their churches in the future. Instances in which composers demonstrate a desire to focus their compositional energies in a more academic setting situates them as constructing an identity in opposition to that of a church composer.

Like Obosu, many other recently graduated composers feed back into the same church establishments they trained in initially, irrespective of whether their primary interests are in composing for their church or for an academic setting. This situation appears to result from the dominant culture of the Christian church in Ghana, and perhaps from the need for employment. While I was in Ghana, Addaquay was preparing for a performance of one of

his religiously themed choral works in Kumasi and spoke of performances that took place in the Kumasi area in years past as well. Despite his interest in not limiting his compositional energy to the church scene, Addaquay continues to direct performances of his oratorios and choral works with church choirs in cities such as Kumasi and Cape Coast. Similarly, when I spoke with him in 2010, Obosu planned to return to Sunyani and continue his involvement with his youth choir in the Catholic Church and a music academy that was being founded by his father, Paul Vitus Obosu, as a part of the church. The Gilberto Music Academy teaches both Western and African instruments along with music theory, composition and music technology (Graphic 2010). In a news article published by the Ghanaian news organization the *Graphic*, Bishop Gyamfi, affiliated with a Catholic church just outside of Sunyani, explained,

> That is not to say that Gilbert Academy is meant for only Christians or for Catholics. No, we have intended it for all who love music and want to improve on their skills or want to learn music of one kind or the other. It is meant for all music lovers to come and learn and even make a living out of music; such as gospel, traditional, pop and secular, among other genres (Graphic 2010).

Clearly, the church continues to be a center for music education in Ghana, both formal and informal, and students such as Obosu and Addaquay feed back into the church scene after completing their academic studies in music.

However, like Addaquay, many younger composers today are primarily interested in moving beyond the choral music emphasis in Ghanaian art music. Adzei, an older member of the youngest generation of

Ghanaian art music composers and a Methodist, explains that he sees his future in composing art music outside of the church. He explained,

> I have been a church choir conductor for ten years but I stopped it, because at the end of the day I don't have that job that I want. I need to focus on academic music and see how we can take art music, classical music to another level in Ghana… fulfilling to me is basically is that at the end of the day I have written my music for orchestra, instruments, not only Western instruments, a combination or whatever. Then I saw it played to my taste and at the end of it all you have a monetary reward as well (Adzei 2010, interview).

Adzei makes the point that there are very few jobs for composers of African art music in Ghana. He desires to move towards the "academic" realm of art music instead of focusing exclusively on church music compositions and sees this move as bringing about an audience and, as a result, a "monetary reward." It is interesting to note that both Adzei and Addaquay draw a distinction between Ghanaian church music and "academic" music. Evidently, this distinct category of music is meaningful to some Ghanaian composers, and an interest in composing this type of music has very real consequences for composers' careers. Adzei readily identifies himself as a composer of instrumental music and positions himself as trying to find a way to make a living in composition, something that cannot be done working exclusively in a church environment. The prevalence of choral music in the church necessitates moving out of the church if one desires to compose instrumental music in Ghana. His interest in instrumental composition outside of the church is a distinct break from the Christian culture with its emphasis on choral music so prevalent in Ghana. Adzei and Addaquay seem to be moving towards a career in a university setting, as composition jobs

outside of the church in Ghana are predominantly located in universities such as the University of Cape Coast and the University of Ghana.

Comparisons to the status of composers in North America are revealing here. In my own experience, composers in North America are frequently located within universities, as these institutions provide venues for performance, a steady salary and a stable environment in which to compose. However, it is also common for composers in North America to be associated with professional orchestras as "artists in residence." One can hypothesize that such a career would also be appealing to young Ghanaian composers such as Adzei and Addaquay. However, the lack of funding for the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra makes the possibility of hiring composers in residence an unrealistic dream for at least the near future. Speaking of his composer friends who have graduated from university, Adzei sums up the career options for composers in Ghana by saying, "One is teaching in teacher training college. The rest, they go back to the classroom. They teach in the primary schools…Those who are not teachers, most of them end up being a musician in the church" (Adzei 2010, interview).

Another means of employment for composers in the past has been in the video film industry. Professor Willie Anku was well known for his compositions in several popular films over the past several decades. However, I am not aware of any Ghanaian composers who go this route today. As mentioned before, this could potentially be due to the prevalence

of popular and gospel music, as well as the expense of hiring professional musicians to make such recordings.

As I have shown, art music composition in Ghana is intimately tied to the church, as this is a key training ground for art music composers as they learn to read music and become familiar with art music. However, in Ghana the art music scene is split between those who desire to stay involved with their church communities and those such as Adzei who perceive their careers as taking place outside of the church. At times, the movement of some composers away from the church is due to the context of performance in worship services, an issue to be discussed next.

Context of African Art Music Performances Inside and Outside of the Church

Composers such as Adzei and Addaquay plan to move outside of the church in their compositional careers. However, art music composition and performance outside of the church is a considerable challenge in Ghana. In his 2001 chapter "Analytical Issues Raised by Contemporary African Art Music" in *Intercultural Music* Vol. 3 edited by Cynthia Tse Kimberlin and Akin Euba, Kofi Agawu highlights this problem by explaining,

> There is no patronage for composers of 'art' music, few competent performers, few good performing venues, and practically no support of radio or television. Add to this the paucity of written music and – perhaps most significant for a composing tradition based on European models- the general unavailability of- perhaps even a lack of interest in- twentieth-century European music and you can see the formidable problems facing the post-colonial African composer (quoted in Scherzinger 2004, 603).

In this statement, Agawu perfectly summarizes the problems facing many composers of African art music in Ghana, implying that the future for art music in Ghana and throughout Africa is rather bleak. However, it is essential to note that art music *is* performed in Ghana today, perhaps just not to the extent that composers would like it to be.

This brings up the question of where performances of African art music take place in Ghana today. Foreign councils and missions are common venues for such performances, and composers including Adzei and Kafui spoke of these locations as being central. However, these performances tend to happen only occasionally due to the funds and organization required to find a performance space and arrange performers.

During the course of one of my interviews with Adzei, he expressed frustration that the audience for art music in Ghana is so small, and that as a result, it is very difficult to make a living as an African art music composer in Ghana. He explained,

> Yes, it is frustrating so much. I strongly believe that we should be able to make a living out of music. If I am attached to an institution [I can help] people who are not part of the institution to help them to begin marketing their music. We will start on a very low key level. I will send these compositions to some friends. And then we will write a proposal to some foreign missions. In doing this concert we will take something little that will go to these composers. We will be able to build a very big audience for art music. At the moment that is not happening. It is very frustrating. That is why people always write for choirs, for church choirs. Nobody plays instruments (Adzei 2010, interview).

By making such a statement Adzei points out a key dilemma for many composers of African art music: Much music that is not composed for the church runs the risk of never being performed for a Ghanaian audience.

Nevertheless, Adzei insists that the future of art music in Ghana is through the church. As he explained, "We can start creating an audience for art music in the church… People don't desert the church here. Church is the only place that you can gather people, by writing good music" (Adzei 2010, interview). This is an important statement, considering the fact that he doesn't desire to compose choral music for the church in the future. In this assertion, however, he focuses on the church as an institution and a community, rather than the context of worship.

The performance of African art music in the church is a contentious issue for some. Kenn Kafui, who composes choral music that is often performed in Sunday worship services at many churches throughout Ghana as well as instrumental music for other non-church settings, explained, "The church itself does not organize art music performances but the musicians in the church use the church as a platform for the performance of African art music" (Kafui 2010, interview). From his perspective, Kafui sees his own involvement in the church as presenting an opportunity for his works to be performed.

However, he told me that he occasionally became frustrated when people would dance to his art music in a church setting. While sitting with Kafui at the front of the Accra New Town Evangelical Presbyterian Church

during a Sunday worship service, he explained to me that the music that was being performed by the organ and choir was not art music because people were dancing to it. He explained that in a more contemplative context the same music would be considered art music. Kafui insists,

> I want to look at art music as music that is not accompanied by dancing, that is appreciated while sitting down and listening to the performer. I look to it as music that does not attract any other person apart from the performer and the attention is focused only on the music that is being performed (Kafui 2010, interview).

The ambivalence concerning art music compositions in the church is also expressed by other composers who found that too often, Ghanaian congregations desired to dance to their music.

Adzei also expressed concern with the lack of a contemplative setting in some churches. In several instances, Adzei has had his choral works performed in the church. In describing how he desires the audience to behave when his works are performed he says, "Nobody should move no matter the circumstance… people must remain quiet!" He goes on to say, "I am very proud as a Methodist because that is a very disciplined church. I will be the last person to die a Methodist. I think that my church is very disciplined" (Adzei 2010, interview). Adzei seems to readily identify himself as a Methodist due to the fact that he perceives this church as having a disciplined worship environment. It is interesting to note that he speaks of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church when he speaks of less disciplined worship styles. As described in Chapter Two, in other churches such as the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, worship involves dancing to music in the

pews and to the front of the church to put money in the donation trays. Adzei instead prides himself in his Methodist roots due his perception that members of the congregation "remain silent" and act in a manner better suited for the performance of art music.

However, composers also become frustrated with performances outside of the church due to audience reactions to their music. Composers such as Kenn Kafui often pride themselves in the ways in which they use indigenous materials. Kafui often speaks of his music in terms of its African qualities and the traditional music that gives it its "Africanness." In several instances, he proudly spoke of Ghanaians who listened to his work for solo piano, "Pentanata," and couldn't help but dance when they were able to identify a traditional *Asafo* (warrior dance association) rhythm in the music (Kafui 2010, interview). It is important to point out that the dancing described here took place outside of the context of a live performance with an audience.

Kafui prefers that people not dance or clap to his music in a performance context. This became evident when I attended a live broadcast of TV3's show "Talented Kidz" in 2010, a competition talent show featuring various performances by children and young teens. During the second to last broadcast of the season, a young pianist performed a piano arrangement of Kafui's choral work "Mida Akpe na Mawu," a popular anthem in Ghana. During the live television performance, the audience began to clap and hum along to the music, as many listeners were very familiar with the melody. At

one point, an audience-wide roar of approval drowned the young pianist out. The following week the pianist ended up winning that season of the show. Kafui told me that he was very excited that somebody who had performed one of his works had won. However, several days after the live broadcast, he told me that he couldn't believe that the people in the audience had clapped and sung to the music during the performance (Kafui 2010, interview). Instead, he desired a contemplative setting allowing for an aesthetic appreciation of the music presented. Kafui seems to enjoy the fact that some people desire to dance to his music out of the context of a live performance, as in the case described in the case of his "Pentanata." However, I got the impression that within the context of performance he desires an audience that is still and only listens to the music presented on stage.

This begs the question of where performances of art music in Ghana can be performed in a contemplative setting. Voicing his frustration regarding the predicament of art music in Ghana, Addaquay says, "The music by our great masters is unfortunately not performed because there are no concert halls. Their work has not been accepted yet" (Addaquay 2010, interview). In making such a statement, he speaks of those academic art music composers who he doesn't classify as "church composers for society" (Addaquay 2010, interview). However, despite the lack of concert halls, Kenn Kafui vividly described several concerts that he has put together in recent years. Analysis of the location of these concerts, the music included in

the performances, and the imagery used in Figure Fourteen is revealing as to the current condition of African art music in Ghana.

Kafui described two of his recent concerts, a performance at the British Council Hall "under the distinguished patronage of Ambassador Victor Gbeho" (Kafui, n.d. "The School of Performing Arts," concert flyer) and a performance at the National Theatre in Accra called "An Evening with Kenn Kafui," a concert put on by Salt and Light Music Ministries, at which a recording was made that is now available in Ghana on CD (Kafui [2009?]).

Figure 14. Concert flyer for 2009 performance of works by Kenn Kafui. Courtesy of Kenn Kafui. (Kafui, n.d. "The School of Performing Arts," concert flyer).

In both instances, choirs from various churches took part in the performances, and the CD of the concert at the National Theatre lists thirteen tracks, all of which have Christian titles such as "Jesus My Protector" (Kafui

[2009?]). Merely considering the performance venue in both of these instances is revealing. A concert at the National Theatre is a significant achievement for a composer of art music such as Kenn Kafui and demonstrates respect for his works on a large, if not nationwide, scale. Concerts such as these depict Kafui's enduring connection to the church as well as his engagement with national and international venues.

In my experience, neither venue would generally be accessible to members of the general public. In the concert advertisement presented above, performers are shown dressed in nice clothing including elaborate cloth and suits. Of equal importance is the announcement in Figure Fourteen, which displays a "7:00 PM prompt" starting time and "Attire: Strictly formal or Traditional". The imagery and wording of printed material relating to these two concerts is in a sense an advertisement for how the featured composer Kenn Kafui desires his audience to behave properly in performances of his works. Central to such advertisements is the emphasis upon dressing in formal clothes, connoting an aura of discipline and attention to the music presented on stage. In many traditional and popular music settings it is common for members of the audience to constantly walk around the performance area and at times join in or interact with those who are performing, and it seems that most Ghanaians would not be comfortable with such a disciplined performance context.

One can guess that performances frequently occur in nationalistic venues such as the National Theatre and international diplomatic venues

such as the British Council Hall due to the fact that these are some of the only self-contained large performance halls in Ghana outside of churches. However, performances of art music in Ghana take place in a number of different venues and locations throughout urban centers. The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra has also performed in upper-class hotels in Accra that often cater to foreigners in Ghana for vacation and business. Concerts in such venues are both a reflection of the disciplined and formal performance contexts desired by many African art music composers in Ghana as well as the need for need for a large performing space for musicians and an audience.

The university is also an important location for the performance of African art music in Ghana. I had the opportunity to attend a performance of works composed by students graduating from the University of Cape Coast in May 2010. Performances such as this demonstrate the central importance of universities in the art music scene in Ghana. The "performance" was in reality a daylong examination for students from several disciplines within the university to present their final graduating projects in front of an audience of students and faculty members and a panel of examiners. Ten to fifteen musicians from the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra performed the works of the six graduating students during the final examinations. According to many musicians and the director of the symphony, this was the first time that the group had travelled to Cape Coast to perform for such an

event, but students and musicians showed an interest in organizing such events in the future.

The performance lasted for several hours, and each student presented two pieces of different styles for the orchestra to perform. Prior to the performance of each work, the composer gave a short introduction to what was about to be played, explaining the influences that had contributed to their compositions. As Professor Kongo later explained to me, he requires his students to compose music in three veins: "Twentieth Century," "Common Practice Tonality" and "Intercultural" (combining elements of Western and traditional music) (Kongo 2010, interview).

The concert included works for full orchestra as well as smaller ensembles such as a duet for piano and violin. Student compositions represented a wide range of styles including minimalistic and atonal works as well as traditional melodies harmonized and arranged for orchestra and traditional percussion instruments such as the *axatse* and *Ewe* drums, a reflection of Kongo's emphasis on learning to compose using a number of different "international techniques." Speaking to me after the performance, Addaquay noted that he chose to have the orchestra perform his "Joyful Symphony" for full orchestra, including keyboard and timpani. He and other students described this work as in the Baroque style of Handel. The energetic composition drew a thunderous applause from the audience, something that Addaquay later attributed to Ghanaians' love of Baroque music, which is frequently performed in churches during the holiday season.

While he does not situate this work as being an African art music composition, it is necessary to recognize the popularity of Baroque works in Ghana, as works such as Handel's "Messiah" are often performed in churches around Christmas time. Also pointing to the enduring presence of Western art music in Ghana, performances such as Kafui's concert at the British Council Hall included both African art music and works by European composers.

Figure 15. A small selection of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra performing at the University of Cape Coast. 2010. (Photo by author).

The context and location of African art music performances in Ghana is revealing as to the identities reflected in this type of music. Frequent performances in nationalistic institutions such as the Ghana National Theatre highlight the Ghanaian identity of composers such as Kafui who have their works performed there. At the same time, performances in other venues including the British Council Hall, reveal the Western and cosmopolitan

identities of the composers and their music. Along with Western harmony and a disciplined performance context, the elite status of some of these African art music performances is a product of interactions with the Western world. It can be argued that these are the only quiet locations in Ghana that have a stage and a seating area for the audience. However, I was surprised to hear little talk of performances in other contexts such as a park or other outdoor venue. It is interesting to note that many large orchestras in the United States and Canada frequently have summer festivals in casual outdoor locations. As many Ghanaian composers are concerned about the lack of an audience for their music in Ghana, it seems reasonable to think that a casual environment would allow a wider swath of Ghanaians to enjoy performances of African art music. However, due to the small amount of time that I spent in the country and my awareness of only a selection of performances, it is possible that composers and performers have already considered such ideas.

Performance in an academic setting at a university seems to attract a less elite audience, as universities in Ghana generally bring together students from a wide range of backgrounds and ethnicities. University settings are also interesting in that they are reflective of Western education environments. However, within this environment is the academic study of Western, African and popular music. The performance that I attended at the University of Cape Coast also featured a theatre performance set to popular music, illuminating the openness to traditional music as well as syncretic

music incorporating Western influences. Performances in such a context reveal both Western and African markers of identity.

Composition for churches by composers such as Obosu reflect the origins of African art music in the church. However, at the same time, the choice to maintain musical involvement with the church also reveals the personal religious commitments of such composers. Of all of the performance contexts spoken of above, choosing to compose for a church is perhaps the most personal and revealing as to the individual identity of the composer. The church is certainly a place where a composer can get a job as a choirmaster or worship music leader. Nevertheless, speaking with those who work in these settings, it becomes clear that payment for such jobs is minimal and likely not enough to live on.

Performances and Audiences Outside of Ghana

African art music performances in Ghana are difficult due to the lack of proficient performers of Western instruments in the country and the lack of an audience. The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra is certainly still a functioning organization, despite currently receiving very few funds from the government. However, lack of funds to train musicians and organize regular concerts has resulted in the "marginalization" of the orchestra over the course of the past several decades (Dor 2003). As a result, composers seem to constantly negotiate the values of having an audience in Ghana versus developing one elsewhere. Adzei explains,

> My target is not just Ghanaians. Western instruments are very difficult to play here. I'm trying to be intercultural. Not only pleasing Ghanaians, also Europeans. My audience target is for all over the world. I should also write for Asia, a friend composer in Shanghai. We are trying to do some works together (Adzei 2010, interview).

One may speculate that Adzei's time in Finland particularly encouraged him to engage with musicians from around the world. He also often spoke of his involvement with composers abroad through the Intercultural Composer's Initiative, a project that grew out of Global Interplay, (Global Interplay Project 2012; Intercultural Composers Initiative 2011c). Websites such as this provide information on composers presented as intercultural and serve as an important means of communication between composers around the world. Adzei speaks of these organizations highly and emphasizes his connections with other members. The same desire to connect with composers and audiences abroad also appears in other members of the younger generation who have not traveled abroad. Addaquay, another fourth generation composer, has never studied music abroad in a formal manner. However, he expresses an interest in building connections with musicians and critics around the world. Describing his goal of having theorists speaking about his compositions in the future, he explains,

> I want to be one of the greatest composers in the whole of the world, not only in Ghana. That is why I forced myself to come to the university to learn even the other techniques. Twenty-first, twentieth century. I want to compose for the world to speak about me one day. I'm still working on that. I know that things will work for me with hard work (Addaquay 2010, interview).

In making such a statement Addaquay points to musical style as a key means of accessing audiences beyond Ghana. He believes that coming to the university and learning new twentieth and twenty-first century techniques of composition is a key step towards developing a broader audience around the world.

An emphasis on learning many techniques of composition is likely partially related to the fact that Addaquay studied composition with Professor Kongo who emphasizes learning many "international techniques" of composition. To an extent it is also telling of his generation. Prior generations of African art music composers are rarely known in art music communities in Europe and North America. Part of this may be the result of an emphasis on composing for African audiences. Kafui, a member of the third generation of composers in Ghana, also frequently speaks of having his works performed abroad and even names several instances where this happened in the past. In particular, he commonly proudly mentions videos of his compositions on YouTube. With increased capabilities of communication abroad via the Internet and the existence of international composition organizations such as Global Interplay and the Intercultural Composers Initiative, the possibility of international exposure and development of an audience in places outside of Ghana is now more of a possibility than it was with previous generations. It will remain to be seen if these new means of communication will result in a wider audience for young composers who want to have their works performed abroad.

However, like many composers such as Kafui, Adzei also desires to develop an art music audience in Ghana. During the summer of 2008, he spoke of plans to raise money to hold performances in foreign missions in Ghana, though he also brought up the possibility of inviting some of his musician friends from places such as Germany and Finland due to the fact that there are few proficient performers of Western instruments in Ghana. His primary focus seems to be on developing a local audience. Adzei explained, "I am writing within this context and I need to find people to appreciate the music first. So, the first thing is to get the people aware. Then people will begin to appreciate it" (Adzei 2010, interview). He insists that the incorporation of traditional elements in his works will bring about engagement with a local audience.

Adzei also notes that his "target audience is for all over the world," but he also ties this to difficulties in finding instrumentalists to perform his works in Ghana" (Adzei 2010, interview). Frustration with Ghanaian musicians and audience members is something that Addaquay, a member of the youngest generation, also expressed. This is particularly an issue for composers of instrumental music or those who identify themselves as instrumental composers. He explains,

> Most of the art musicians in Ghana are church musicians. We don't have concert halls for concerts. Ghanaians too are not really used to instrumental music… They always want to hear you sing. Even when you are playing instrumental music they want to hear the melody, something they can sing along with the melody, something they can sing about. They are so used to singing (Addaquay 2010, interview).

The issue of instrumental versus choral music relates to the church, as the focus of much of the instrumental music performance and composition in Ghana takes place outside of the church. Composers including Adzei and Addaquay desire to move out of the culture emphasizing choral singing that dominates much of Ghana.

The Draw Abroad

Travel abroad to study music performance and composition defines the lives of many Ghanaian composers. Composers such as Mereku, Kafui and Kongo developed new styles of composition while studying abroad. While many indicate that they were first exposed to Western music in Ghanaian institutions such as the university and the church, education abroad seems to be a key factor in the development of composers throughout the history of art music in Ghana. Writing in 1964, J. H. Kwabena Nketia notes,

> In addition to popular music, one would find here and there the beginnings of a new fine art tradition of music inspired largely by the fine art tradition of Western music. This music is the product of Western education and finds its place in the church, educational institutions and the concert hall (Nketia 1964, 37).

In saying "Western education" Nketia is likely referring to the Ghanaian post-secondary educational system, which has been established along Western models. However, many art music composers in Ghana *do* study abroad, and these periods of study are often mentioned as key to their compositional careers.

Study abroad had a profound influence on Nketia himself, a member of the second generation of art music composers in Ghana. In 1944 he won a two-year scholarship to study linguistics at the University of London, in the Africa Department of the School of Oriental and African Studies. In Kojo T. Vieta's 1999 book, *The Flagbearers of Ghana: Profiles of One Hundred Distinguished Ghanaians,* Nketia explains,

> I wanted to learn as much Western music as possible so that I would be able to enjoy the best of two worlds. I, however, refused to be overwhelmed by Western music, for my first obligation and loyalty was to the music of my own people (quoted in Akrofi 2002, 11).

During a one year "study tour" in 1958 in the United States at Julliard, Columbia University and UCLA, Nketia met and studied with notable scholars and composers such as Milton Babbitt and Mantle Hood (Akrofi 2002, 29–30). In Nketia, DjeDje and Carter's 1989 work, *African Musicology: Current Trends: A Festschrift Presented to J. H. Kwabena Nketia,* Nketia notes that these scholars had "a strong commitment to studies that integrate music, society and culture from different conceptual and analytical perspectives…" (quoted in Akrofi 2002, 30). Evidently, studies abroad had a two-fold influence on Nketia, both strengthening his interest in maintaining a musical connection to his "own people" while developing an interest in studies in "music, society and culture." Other authors on the subject of art music in Ghana have noticed this trend and pointed out that this is a significant rite of passage for many composers in the country. In discussing African art music as a type of music that has its foundations in the incorporation of musical elements that are often associated with the West along with indigenous

Ghanaian musical elements, it is important to understand how studies abroad have impacted composers.

Several Ghanaian composers explained to me that time abroad was a defining moment in their compositional career. The case of Mereku illustrates this well. In my interviews, Mereku explains that prior to his studies abroad most of his works were choral, many in the tonal style of some of the founders of art music in Ghana such as Amu and Nketia, several of which he describes as "patriotic" (Mereku 2010, interview). Many of these were composed and presented for various national conferences and choral competitions, and he only has two purely instrumental works from this period listed in his C.V. (Mereku, n.d. "Curriculum Vitae 2010," unpublished document). The two instrumental works listed in his CV from this period are composed for *atenteben*, one of which is an adaptation of Nketia's Quartet No. 1. He points to his tonal work "Atentenata" to illustrate his instrumental compositions during this period and describes it as being in the style of Amu (Mereku 2010, interview).

However, his studies in Leeds, England, which were completed in 1997, were a turning point. Mereku's subsequent works include compositions for what are commonly thought of as Western instruments and ensembles such as piano trio. Mereku also explained to me that during his studies abroad his works became more dissonant (Mereku 2010, interview). This trend is most evident in his work "Privafrique" which incorporates

microtones along with aleatoric notation and free rhythms (Mereku, n.d. "Twenty-First Century," working paper, 7).

Further illustrating the idea that Ghanaian composers develop significantly new manners of composition while studying abroad is the case of Kenn Kafui. Kafui is an interesting case due to the fact that he completed all of his secondary and post-secondary education in Ghana and never attended formal educational institutions outside the country. However, in describing his musical influences, Kafui is quick to point out that over the years he has attended numerous composers' workshops and conferences abroad. In describing one of his atonal works for piano, "Black Visitation," Kafui explains that the work was influenced by Schoenberg whose works he studied at the International Composers Workshop, a conference in the Netherlands (Kafui 2010, interview). Regarding the title of the piece, he points out that he is using influences from outside of his own environment but insists that it still has African qualities in it in rhythmic ways (Kafui 2010, interview). Most importantly, Kafui points out that a significant part of his compositional career has been spent outside of his own environment in order to learn new compositional techniques. He explains that he uses techniques including serialism even though it was not created by Africans (Kafui 2010, interview). Kafui's perspective seems to be very similar to that of Mereku who notes that he started using new compositional techniques such as the inclusion of bird song and electronic music while studying abroad in Leeds. From these perspectives it becomes clear that interactions with

composers abroad, whether in a formal educational environment or not, provide an important rite of passage for many composers in Ghana.

However, studying abroad does not typically imply a dismissal of African musical elements or earlier compositions. Nketia points out,

> These new idioms of music are, of course, not meant to replace traditional music which we believe has still a vital place in social life, but to supplement it-to co-exist with it as different forms of music for different kinds of situations. By reason of the type of musical upbringing to which many of those now involved in this process have been subjected, however, the starting point of the new kind of development seems to be from Western music to African music rather than the reverse. That is to say, it is the outcome of the effort of Africans with Western upbringing trying to proceed from here to their own heritage rather than that of Africans steeped in their own traditions reaching out into Western music for new musical resources (Nketia 1964, 36).

It seems that a Western music education is a starting point for many composers and that composers then direct their compositions towards African elements, something that is still occurring today.

This trend also applies to the case of Nigerian art music composer Akin Euba. Omojola notes that Euba "experimented with atonality" in orchestral and string quartet works while studying at Trinity College of Music in London (Omojola 2001, 155). This seems to link up with Kafui's situation explained previously whereby exposure to musicians abroad brought about increased experimentation with and interest in contemporary compositional techniques such as atonality and aleatoricism. However, studies abroad and interactions with composers abroad also brought about a renewed sense of his home culture or country. Omojola explains that "many of Euba's post-UCLA works maintain stronger links with traditional Nigerian,

in particular Yoruba, musical procedures" (Omojola 2001, 155). From this perspective it seems that in some instances, experiences by African composers abroad leads to further compositional creativity using indigenous resources from one's home country.

Discussions with my research participant Adzei also seem to point to the idea that foreign studies lead to experimentation with non-Western musical ideas. In understanding the significance of studying abroad, it is also important and necessary to analyze a composer's personal interpretations of audience reactions to their music abroad. Adzei explained to me that he had a very positive response from the audience the first time that his music was played in Finland. According to him, "They were fascinated by the rhythm" (Adzei 2010, interview). In making such an observation, Adzei points to the rhythm as the element of the performance that the audience in Finland highlighted and responded to. Adzei explained to me that several of his compositions incorporate rhythmic elements from his home village of Tchito. One can hypothesize that interactions with audiences and composers abroad brought Adzei towards a greater awareness of that which is often characterized as the indigenous influences in his music. In this sense, audiences abroad took part in his African identity formation. He often speaks of the rhythmic elements in his works as the primary characteristic that audiences abroad focused on in performances of his works. This response can be seen as related to Euba's experimentation with non-Western

influences in his music while in the United States. Later, Adzei goes on to explain,

> I think that Africa, as much as we are endowed with musical resources, I should be able to use these resources to create a new kind of music, a new kind of composition… So I try to develop and write the music so that it will not follow any of the Western models. If you talked [to], the first [time] the professor in the Sibelius Academy listened to my music, he said it's a fascinating rhythmic pulse or a fascinating rhythmic push. He means that I try to toy with the rhythms and throw the rhythms on the staff as my own way. My understanding of composition is that whatever I feel inside should be put on the paper for people to perform (Adzei 2010, interview).

Adzei reflects on his professor's reaction to his music while at the Sibelius Academy in Finland and connects this to not following standard Western compositional models such as the symphony or the fugue. His studies abroad brought him to a greater awareness of the rhythmic elements that many abroad see as being foundational to his works and allowed him to see this as a new kind of African composition.

Compositions, Compositional Process and Identity

Previously, it was pointed out that Adzei desires to "build an audience for African art music in Ghana" (Adzei 2010, interview). How are Adzei and other composers trying to achieve this, and what are the consequences for the music being produced by these composers? How can this be achieved in Ghana if composers travel abroad and learn contemporary compositional styles incorporating dissonance and aleatoricism (chance music)? Considering the fact that modern Ghanaian culture is so intimately tied to the culture of four-part choral compositions, how can Ghanaian audiences

appreciate this music? Finally, how does the employment of contemporary compositional styles relate to the common practice of incorporating indigenous musical elements in compositions today?

Frequently, the Ghanaian composers that I spoke with emphasized the importance of incorporating indigenous musical elements into their works. As I will show, in numerous instances this is the first issue that composers speak of when they characterize and summarize their compositional style. Oftentimes, indigenous elements are presented as a means to gain a wider audience in Ghana. Is the inclusion of indigenous materials an active attempt to gain an audience in Ghana, a natural inclusion of musical elements that composers grew up with, or a reaction to Western preoccupations with indigenous music? Similarly, is the use of indigenous materials the result of a sincere connection to indigenous music or is it a means through which to build an audience for Western-inspired art music either in Ghana or around the world. As I will show, the Ghanaian composers whom I interviewed differ in some respects in this regard.

Compositional differences between Kongo, Kafui and Nketia highlight two different trends in African art music composition in Ghana. Kafui told me that the use of African materials in his works is a conscious decision (Kafui 2010, interview). He emphasized numerous times that the traditional rhythm is the most important aspect of his art music compositions. Kafui explained, "There has been this campaign for a return to tradition. People have been encouraged to use the elements… as a result my personal mission

is to approach my composition and make it more African than Western" (Kafui 2010, interview). Similarly, in an interview Nketia noted,

> For me, my African identity, whatever I do, my aim is to use the African material in traditional forms in a new kind of way because of my feelings and so forth. It wasn't meant to replace the traditional things but you know to take them a little further (Nketia 2010, interview).

While listening to Kafui's first and second "Pentanatas" (a combination of the words Sonata and Pentatonic) for solo piano he exclaimed, "They are an African art music. Purely. [There is] more use of African elements in it. An African hears this, he feels more comfortable with this" (Kafui 2010, interview). Later on, while playing a Finale score of one of his solo piano sonatas for me, he explained that the music includes an *Asafo* (traditional warrior groups that originated in *Akan* culture but that are now present in other ethnicities such including the *Fantes* and *Ewes*) dance rhythm in the development section. "When an Asafo man from my area is here, he hears this he starts to [dance]" (Kafui 2010, interview). Both Kafui and another man in the office stood up to imitate the Asafo dance for me. However, Kafui insists that he uses traditional music in his compositions for their musical quality, disassociated from their cultural context. He described one instance in a televised performance of one of his orchestral compositions that incorporates traditional drumming by the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra.

> Everybody was in black and white in bowtie playing. Only one person was in cloth and jumper [for the first performance]. At the second performance I asked the talking drummer to also wear bow tie. Some journalists came up… They criticized me, for [it was] the first time

> they had seen a talking drummer wearing a bow tie. I explained to the nation that I had used the talking drum for music and not for appellations for the chief. I was not using the talking drum for the chief but for music (Kafui 2010, interview).

Kenn Kafui demonstrates an approach to art music composition whereby elements of traditional music are consciously added to his works as a marker of his "African" identity. It is evident that audiences react both positively and negatively to the use of such music in an art music performance context.

Pascal Zabana Kongo emphasizes the importance of learning to compose using a number of different techniques and styles. However, he demonstrates a very different approach to composing African art music in Ghana. He explains, "Composing on the basis of African is not just pitching rhythmic patterns" (Kongo 2010, interview). He insists that his students no longer use "rough traditional material" in the form of easily identifiable rhythms and harmonized traditional melodies but also explains that it is natural for Ghanaians to use these influences in their music since this is the environment that they grew up in (Kongo 2010, interview). He views the direct use of traditional material as a thing of the past even though many composers in Ghana still practice this technique. Kongo describes a system of six levels of composition whereby the "rough traditional material" is digested from level to level until in the sixth level, the end product, the traditional material is no longer recognizable. He explains,

> My distance from Ghana… I don't feel like a missionary where everything I compose has to come from *Ewe*. I'm not *Ewe*. It has to come from *Akan*, I'm not *Akan*. I study all these so they help me, but I'm not here to show how the *Ewe* people do that. It's not necessary. I

> try always to digest from the tradition. Always. They never come at the first level (Kongo 2010, interview).

Kongo's approach can be given perspective by considering the fact that he was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo and attended schools in Paris and France before ending up in Ghana as a composer and professor. He often presents himself and is presented by others as an outsider to the composition scene in Ghana. Kongo finds inspiration in the environment around him but does not necessarily strive to exclusively use specific elements of traditional music as his inspiration.

On my second visit to Cape Coast to conduct interviews with Professor Kongo and some of his students, Kongo told me that he would like to drive me to a beach down the road from his house to show me something. We drove about five minutes away down a dark road to a turnout on the main road next to the beach. We got out of the car and stood next to each other while looking out at the crashing waves past a line of palm trees that separated us from the beach. He told me to listen to the sound of the waves and directed my attention to the deepest part of the crashing waves. Kongo explained that this sound was like the sound of an airplane and demonstrated by making a low rumbling noise. He then told me to listen closer in to the shore to the first line of crashing waves and demonstrated a still low and rumbling but more urgent and harsh crashing sound. Next, he directed my attention to the waves closer to the shore and made a higher pitched crashing sound. Finally, he motioned with his hands to demonstrate the movement of the final line of waves reaching the shore and made a

"wooooosh" sound. Then he made a movement to point out the return of the waves out to sea and the crashing sound as they met the incoming waves.

After we returned home he showed me the Finale score that he was currently working on and explained that he was planning on adding it to a collection of short movements that he had already composed. The first movement was inspired by the sounds of the waves at the beach, a place that he often goes to during the day with his two sons. On top of the wave-like drone, Kongo incorporated bird songs played by a violin. When the Finale score came to an end, he pointed out the bird song coming through the window, as if to show the connection between the piece and the songs coming from the palm tree outside his office window.

In an increasingly interconnected world, compositional ideas and techniques are not always exclusively tied to certain geographical regions. The case of Professor Kongo and his students highlights this point well. Kongo explains,

> Techniques in all the disciplines should not be national, they should be international. Somewhere by all means you will reveal your identity. They will see where you come from. You don't need to do it intentionally. What you speak is something that is rooted in the present in the past (Kongo 2010, interview).

He makes the point that it is natural to use local influences in a work, as this is what composers grew up with and therefore know best. Kongo incorporates "international techniques" in his works, much as Kafui uses twentieth century compositional techniques that he learned while traveling to composition workshops in Europe. Both composers speak of these

compositional techniques as learned and gained on an international scale. However, they differ in the ways that they use traditional material. Kongo explains,

> It's true that I use the minimalism, minimalism techniques… It doesn't mean that everything that I do it's because I want to show African rhythm, because I want to do that. We are just human beings sometimes. You can't teach something that is not close to you. You can't find things that have no relationship with your past and your country. By all means, Wagner composed the regions of the Rhine River, the River Rhine. It's normal that everybody uses some things where they come from. As long as it doesn't appear roughly in our heads, rough material. You have to digest it (Kongo 2010, interview).

Kongo's graduating students naturally display similar thoughts with regards to composition. Adzei explains, 'He's trying to create, he's trying to bring up a new generation with young composers like myself to break always from this old way of writing music" (Adzei 2010, interview). The "old way of writing music" that Adzei speaks of is a reference to the direct use of "rough traditional materials" that composers such as Addaquay say is common in the music of Nketia and Amu. This was made evident in the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra performance of instrumental music by Professor Kongo's students in May of 2010. Frequently, during the presentation of their music, the student composers spoke of their music in terms of the various styles that they learned to compose in. In an interview after the performance, Addaquay described his music by saying,

> Actually I compose Ghanaian art music as well as you know. Aside that, you know, I also compose something like oratorios and all that. I compose Western kind of music as well. Sometimes I try my hands on other styles… like Baroque, like Classical, like Romantic. And sometimes too I try the twentieth century as well (Addaquay 2010, interview).

Similarly, other students described their works as "intercultural," "twentieth century," and "common practice" (involving standard harmonic movements), not just as African art music. This can be viewed as a continuation of Kongo's desire to teach his students how to compose using a number of different "international techniques."

However, Adzei persists in using indigenous materials in his works. As mentioned in Chapter Four, Adzei traces parts of his compositional style to Kongo, but in some ways diverges from his mentor's approach as described above.

Figure 16. Image of Finale score of "Kikliaki" by Senyo Adzei (Adzei, n.d. unpublished score).

A look at Adzei's work "Kikliaki" (Figure Sixteen) (Adzei, n.d. unpublished score) demonstrates his approach to using indigenous materials in his compositions. Adzei explains that the rhythms used in "Kikliaki" come from *Akpese* drummers in his home village of Tchito with whom he performed fieldwork to make recordings and understand the social context of the rhythms (Adzei 2010, interview). He mirrors the traditional call to the *Akpese* performance from his home village by beginning the work with the same rhythm (Adzei 2010, interview). In doing so, he reflects his ethnic *Ewe* identity and demonstrates a concern for portraying the social context of traditional music in an African art music composition.

Like Kafui, Adzei employs indigenous musical elements from his home village in the Volta Region of Ghana, a region populated by the *Ewe* ethnic group. However, during the course of fieldwork, I became curious if composers used elements from other indigenous musical traditions outside of their home region or even outside of Ghana. Kafui noted,

> As you grow up in the environment you learn these things unconsciously and they become part and parcel of you. If you start to compose a piece, you don't need to think of which tradition to go to, but it just flows naturally through you (Kafui 2010, interview).

Previously, Kafui pointed out that his use of African materials is a conscious thing in order to display his African identity. Here he speaks of the unconscious use of ethnic *Ewe* materials. This is interesting, as he seems to be saying that he uses African materials consciously but materials from his origins in the Volta Region of Ghana in an unconscious manner.

It seems that he uses *Ewe* musical materials in his compositions, as this is the African tradition that he is the most familiar with. One can hypothesize that for Kafui the choice to compose African art music involves the conscious decision not to be Western. He displays his African identity through the creation of difference, the inclusion of African materials over materials that he perceives as being purely Western. In meeting with Kafui numerous times, I learned that he prides himself in the manner in which many (not all) of his works are “non-Western.”

In responding to a question of whether he uses material from other ethnic groups or other nations, Kafui explained,

> No, because there is so much here that it never even occurred to me to do what Nigerians do but the thing I that we need to grow in the environment to have those things in you. I grew up as an *Ewe*. When I compose music I use what is particular to the *Ewes*. Even in Ghana I haven’t used *Akan* music in my musical structures at all. What we have at our place is so much that I didn’t reach out for others (Kafui 2010, interview).

Similarly, Adzei explained that he primarily uses indigenous materials from his own *Ewe* ethnic origins but expresses an interest in incorporating music from other cultures throughout Africa (Adzei 2010, interview). In saying this, he pointed out that this would require ethnographic knowledge of other traditional cultures throughout Africa.

Identity and African Authorship

Both Adzei and Kafui insist that the use of indigenous materials in their works allows for the creation of a larger audience for African art music

in Ghana. However, in a time period characterized by the frequent study of indigenous Ghanaian musical traditions by foreigners, it is not only Africans who have knowledge of indigenous musical traditions. For instance, the University of Ghana is an important location for those from Western countries to study music of various Ghanaian people groups such as the *Akans* and *Ewes*. Western composers including Steve Reich have studied traditional drumming in Ghana and have incorporated the learned traditional musical resources within their own compositions. However, is this music composed by Westerners with a background in traditional music the same music that I refer to as African art music? During several interviews I posed the question, “Is it possible for a North American such as myself to compose African art music?” Several composers responded that it was possible for me to compose African art music as a combination of Western and African musical elements. However, Nketia responded to this question with,

> I will say that it is possible to use African materials. You can get to a point of creating African art music, not just the materials, but being able to express our feelings… that little thing that dominates the culture in terms of perception and movement and the things you anticipate and so forth. But it is difficult to bring it in, because the other one is so much a part of you that your thinking will always be interrupted by your background (Nketia 2010, interview).

Nketia’s response is telling, as he points to the idea that a person such as myself could compose in a manner that combines Western and African musical elements. However, he explains that the “feelings” expressed in this type of music go beyond the mere elements included in the works. By making such a statement, he implies that the African “feelings” in these

works can only be included by those who have grown up in the cultures being presented. In a sense, the African identity of the music comes from the African birth of the composer. However, this identity that he speaks of is not merely focused on the location of birth or the color of skin. From his perspective, the ability to compose and appreciate this music seems to be inherent in composers and listeners who were born in Africa and grew up with traditional music from childhood. Much of this is in line with Nketia's past writings that emphasize composing in a manner in which the "expectancies in melody and rhythm… provide the common bond for mutual responsiveness and shared focus" (Nketia 1982, 83). He points out that an African audience understands the codes within such music, leading to a common understanding and appreciation of the music. This perspective hints at the idea that there is something embedded within African communities that leads to an understanding of traditional elements within a composition that outsiders cannot completely grasp. It remains to be seen if a Westerner can arrive at the point where he or she can understand or even compose in a manner that brings about these "expectancies."

Other composers such as Kafui and Adzei explained that a Westerner such as myself would be able to compose African art music but emphasized that I would first need to do a lot of research on traditional African music (Adzei 2010, interview; Kafui 2010, interview). In a sense, anybody can compose music that combines Western and African elements. However, composers seem to be at some sort of disagreement with regards to defining

African art music in terms of the African identity of the composer. When speaking with Kafui about this same topic, he expressed that he was starting to lean towards the idea that African art music must be composed by Africans, though he mentioned that he had not completely made up his mind on this (Kafui 2010, interview). Considering the fact that Kafui insists that he unconsciously employs *Ewe* traditional materials, I wonder if somebody not familiar with traditional African music from childhood could ever compose in such an unconscious manner. The key question is whether or not Kafui's insistence that he uses African materials consciously in order to be non-Western is indeed how he approaches composition. It is evident, with regards to the contradiction discussed earlier around the unconscious or conscious use of traditional materials, that this is something that will need to be looked into further in the future. However, it becomes evident that the African art music composition community lacks consensus on this topic of African identity.

Connections Between Canada and Ghana

African art music composers have become increasingly connected with musicians, composers and compositional trends around the world, and I have also taken part in these interactions. Having come from a Western art music performance background, I became interested in actually performing some of the works prior to my return to Ghana and field research in 2010. My supervisor Michael Frishkopf encouraged me to explore the idea of

making recordings of African art music composed by modern Ghanaians. Drawing on my connections with several composers whom I met in 2008 (Pascal Zabana Kongo and Senyo Adzei), we began to look into the possibility of recording University of Alberta students performing some of these works. Kongo expressed interest in the project and emailed several scores of his own as well as works by his undergraduate students at the University of Cape Coast. What we called the "African Digital Score to Digital Sounds Project," allowed composers in Ghana to email works composed using Finale composition software to us in Canada. Email proved to be a tremendously useful medium of communication between myself, Frishkopf and Kongo. As described before, composers in Ghana such as Adzei and Kafui value their connections with composers abroad and frequently speak of their ongoing interactions with individuals abroad through email, the Internet and travel. Email allows for musical interactions between composers and musicians thousands of miles apart.

From 2009 to 2010, I arranged to have a solo piano work by Kongo as well as a work by Amu for *atenteben* and piano (arranged by Kongo for saxophone and piano) to be recorded and returned to the composers via email. Reactions by the performers characterized the type of musical interaction taking place via the Internet. All three students were shocked that the works were composed by Ghanaians and were curious as to the indigenous elements included in the compositions. Students who recorded Kongo's arrangement of Amu's work noted that the rhythmic elements of the

piece provided a particular challenge and also pointed out that at times that the works sounded like church hymns. It is particularly interesting that the students recognized several key elements of African art music in Ghana throughout the past century, most notably its associations with Christian choral works and the rhythmic elements that composers often incorporate into their works. It is also important to recognize that in this case the performance of African art music abroad was associated with curiosity about the ways in which it is different from Western art music.

The final phase of this project took place in 2011 when I arranged for four works to be performed at two concerts, one featuring the University of Alberta West African Music Ensemble in a performance on campus and another concert at the Winspear Centre in Edmonton, Alberta featuring all of the world music ensembles at the University of Alberta. Both performances included a trio of Kafui's choral works with accompaniment by piano and another work composed by one of Kongo's students (not interviewed in Ghana due to logistical and time issues of arranging a meeting) that incorporated four traditional *Ewe* instruments, a string quartet and a wind quartet. Recordings of both performances were returned to the composers via an email file following the concert. In speaking with performers and audience members after the concerts, many expressed shock that such music was being composed in Ghana. Such a reaction is not surprising considering the common focus on traditional music on the African continent as mentioned by Omojola (Omojola 1995, 1).

The "African Digital Scores to Digital Sounds Project" is only one of the ways in which African art music composers in Ghana are engaging with global flows of composers and musicians around the world. Beyond this, the project brought about performer and audience reactions that challenged conceptions of African identity by Canadian students. The realization of the possibility of African compositions of Western-inspired art music ultimately broadened certain individuals' conceptions of what it means to be African. All of these identities weave together into the complex multiplicity of identities that characterizes African art music composers in Ghana.

Conclusions: Navigating Identities on Local and International Stages

African art music composers in Ghana find themselves in a unique position at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Living in a time period characterized by ease of communication with other composers and audiences around the world via the Internet, places Ghanaian composers at the intersection of cosmopolitan, nationalistic, ethnic, religious and Pan-African identities. The ways in which composers navigate these identities is revealing as to how they perceive themselves in this increasingly interconnected world. Recently, composers have been placed within the international sphere by organizations such as Global Interplay, but at the same time, many also passionately work towards the development of an audience in Ghana. The ways in which composers balance engagement with local and international audiences will have profound impacts on the future of Western-inspired art music throughout Africa.

As I have shown, ethnographic fieldwork in collaboration with African art music composers displays the complex web of socially constructed identities within this type of music. The complexities and interrelatedness of Pan-African, nationalistic, religious, ethnic and cosmopolitan identities emerges out of such an approach and contributes to a fuller understanding of the meanings of African art music in Ghana. I hope that such an approach can be employed in future research on this topic in addition to the analytical

approaches towards the musical score that have been used in the past. Dialogue is a productive means through which to analyze African art music, and an ethnographic approach illuminates the interconnectedness of the multiple identities that composers and their compositions construct. On the contrary, a purely analytical musical approach often seems to search for nuggets of purely Western and indigenous music. Nevertheless, composers often speak of their music as being a combination of these musical elements, and it is therefore not in the interest of the field of music research to completely leave this analytical approach behind.

In a more general sense, the ethnographic study of Western-inspired art music in the post-colonial world should be an important element of future research. This also applies to Western art music communities in North America, as such communities are often ignored in search of music that is perceived as being foreign or exotic. Scholars should not back away from untangling the webs of identities present in a musical discipline that is predominantly focused on the written score.

For much of the history of African art music in Ghana over the past century, the emphasis of scholars and composers such as Nketia has often been on creating an African identity in African art music that counterbalances the Western influences in these works. The case of Kenn Kafui in this study certainly brings this practice to light today, as Kafui passionately speaks about consciously inserting an African identity into his works through the use of traditional musical materials. In the case of Kafui,

his first and foremost concern is in engaging Ghanaians through art music that incorporates traditional musical resources. This seems to result out of a desire to carve an identity for himself in the realm of Western-inspired music. Engaging local audiences seems to be a persisting concern in Ghana, as other composers such as Adzei also work towards building a larger audience for African art music in Ghana.

While the search for an African audience for African art music in Ghana is certainly still a trend in this art music community, members of the third and fourth generation of composers have begun to seek increased engagement with practices of composition that originate outside of Ghana. Such an international engagement is evident in the lives of composers such as Kafui and Adzei who often reference their connections with composers outside of Ghana. It is important to note that some of the same composers who strive to write music that Ghanaian audiences will appreciate also frequently speak of their efforts to make connections with composers abroad. This may be partially due to frustration with the lack of an audience for art music in Ghana.

The trend of moving beyond the borders of Ghana is evident in assertions by Addaquay and Kongo that African art music in Ghana is now moving in a direction away from the direct use of unaltered traditional materials. They see themselves as taking part in new “international techniques” of composition, whereas previous generations of composers merely harmonized “rough traditional material” (Kongo 2010, interview).

Addaquay also points out that composing using these "international techniques," twentieth and twenty-first century styles of composition, will help him to gain an audience beyond Ghana (Addaquay 2010, interview).

Alongside connections with composers outside of Ghana is the persisting presence of nationalistic and Pan-African associations with the music. Frequently, African art music composers and African scholars speak of their music in terms of the nation in which the music was composed. In analyses of art music composition in West Africa in particular, the phrases "Ghanaian art music" and "Nigerian art music" (Omojola 1995) are frequently employed. Furthermore, the time period in which art music compositions in West Africa were first composed by figures such as Nketia and Sowande was characterized by Pan-Africanism and nationalism. Today, organizations such as the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra and School of Performing Arts at the University of Ghana play a central role in the perpetuation of African art music in Ghana. Such institutions are still the primary locations for the study and performance of African art music in Ghana, and composers are continually placed in an environment that often emphasizes nationalistic staged productions of traditional music.

African and Ghanaian identities are closely related in Ghana, as the country gained independence in 1957 during a time characterized by Pan-African ideals. The concept of Ghana as a nation is intimately connected to Nkrumah's Pan-African leadership throughout the continent. This also applies to institutions such as the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra and

the Institute of African studies at the University of Ghana, as they were also founded during the post-independence period characterized by Pan-African ideals. Therefore, it is important to recognize that African and Ghanaian identities in African art music in Ghana are closely related and overlapping.

Music lecturers and professors at Ghanaian universities such as Kenn Kafui frequently use indigenous material from their own ethnicities. Kafui and Adzei both expressed a relative lack of knowledge of other African indigenous traditions, and these two composers therefore explained that their music excludes influences from other parts of Africa. It is important to recognize that both of these composers use elements from the musical traditions that they grew up in the *Ewe* Volta Region of Ghana. However, within this use of ethnic elements from one's childhood, and pointing back to the nationalistic and Pan-African origins of this type of music, is the persistent idea that composers are writing in order to make their music more African instead of Western.

Time spent studying abroad has a profound impact on composers of all generations in Ghana. This is consistent with the case of Western-inspired art music composers in Egypt as well. As in the cases of Kafui and Mereku, time spent in Europe and the United States to attend university and composers' workshops introduced these individuals to new manners and techniques of composition. It seems to me that the possibility and ease of communication with composers around the world is having a profound impact on African art music composers in Ghana. Throughout much of the

history of African art music in Ghana and throughout Africa, composers have focused on writing music using materials perceived as being African or materials from their own indigenous origins. The mere possibility of interaction with musicians and composers outside of Ghana seems to raise questions in many of my research participants' minds as to the role of their music in Ghana and throughout international networks of composers. Frequently, as in the case of Adzei and Kafui, the desire is to build an audience for art music in Ghana. However, at the same time, connections abroad are proudly spoken of as if these connections are central to their careers.

The case of Kongo is of particular importance for the younger composers presented in this thesis, as he has had considerable influence on many of them as their professor. The scope of this study may be biased as it focuses on students who studied with him and have taken up some of his approaches to using "international techniques" in art music composition. However, it is also important to note that students such as Obosu and Addaquay persist in composing for Ghanaian churches, despite being exposed to numerous "international" compositional styles under the direction of Kongo. Such an interest can likely be attributed to a number of factors including the persisting hegemonic Christian culture in Ghana and the wealth of opportunities for composers in the church as a result of the choral singing culture in the country. It also seems that continuing musical involvement with the church can be attributed to both Obosu's and

Addaquay's personal religious conviction, need to make a living and desire for an audience and recognition.

Many younger members of the African art music composition community in Ghana have collaborated with Kongo or have studied under him. However, when other composers speak of him they recognize that he is not a Ghanaian, despite the fact that he has been living in Ghana for over ten years. Kongo is still a citizen of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and he himself recognizes that he is regarded as an outsider in Ghana. Categorizing Kongo as an outsider introduces the idea of communities of composers defined by their nationality. As I have shown, some writings on African art music focus on individual countries and their art music composition communities (Omojola 1995). Such an approach complicates a wider African identity, as the emphasis seems to be on the home nation of the composer.

I certainly took a similar step in only interviewing Ghanaian composers. A study focusing on a single nation is not only convenient to the researcher in terms of time and resources, but it is also reflective of the attitudes of many composers such as those who categorize Kongo as an outsider based on his country of origin. Such a classification of Kongo could perhaps relate to the ethnic identities that many composers reflect in their music through the employment of indigenous materials from communities such as the *Ewe*, and the fact that these musical materials are not found in Kongo's home country of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Further complicating the issue of identity in this discussion is the fact that composers

such as Adzei and Kafui reference these ethnic identities in order to "Africanize" their music (a term that both composers used). This once again demonstrates the close relationship between African and Ghanaian identities in Ghana. Kongo is an important figure in the African art music composition community and has had a profound impact on young composers at universities such as the University of Cape Coast. Such perspectives complicate the idea of an African identity and place it amidst contemporary debates on what it means to be African, Ghanaian and a member of specific ethnic groups in Ghana.

It also brings up the question of whether African art music in Ghana is art music composition that takes place in Ghana, art music composed by Ghanaians or art music that incorporates elements of Ghanaian traditional culture. The African art music community in Ghana certainly incorporates all of these practices within what I call African art music in Ghana. Instead of focusing on a definition of African art music in Ghana, I will conclude by stating that this type of music is characterized in the twenty-first century by all of these potential definitions and that the role of the music in Ghana is this very debate between its functions in these various spheres.

Initially, when beginning this research project, I expected to see distinct contrasts within different generations of art music composers in Ghana. In particular, I expected to see younger composers even more engaged with other composers around the world. While this is certainly the case with young composers such as Adzei, who have spent considerable time

studying abroad, members of the older generation such as Kongo also embrace compositional styles that can be considered "international," likely as a result of extensive studies abroad in Europe and the United States. Similarly, Kenn Kafui has become involved with contemporary composition resulting from time spent at composers' workshops abroad. However, at the same time he is still actively involved with church choirs in the Accra area and is well known for his compositions in these communities. Therefore, an overarching conclusion on consistent differences between different generations of composers would be inappropriate here. What can be said though, is that the range of compositional styles and practices has increased greatly since the early days of art music composition in Ghana during the times of Amu and Nketia. The use of contemporary chance music compositions by Kafui is one such example of this broadened range.

African art music in Ghana is connected with complex conceptions of identity through linkages with art music composers around the world. Connections between Egypt and Ghana are particularly important in this study. The discussion of Egyptian composers of various generations including Halim El-Dabh and Nahla Mattar alongside composers from Ghana is significant as it demonstrates common identities amongst these individuals. For instance, Halim El-Dabh is often spoken of as an African composer with great contributions to African pianism. On the other hand, Egyptian Nahla Mattar is listed as an "intercultural" composer alongside Adzei (Intercultural Composers Initiative 2011a). The frequency with which

Adzei spoke of his connections to musicians and composers abroad leads me to think that his connections with them play a significant role in his identity. It is certainly the case that the mere existence of these organizations provides an opportunity for composers to think of themselves in terms of their "intercultural" compositions. Nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether composers such as Adzei will continue to create "intercultural" descriptors for themselves or if these are categories created by Western art musicians seeking to understand the underlying difference between their music and art music compositions in locations often thought of as the non-Western world.

The term "creative ethnomusicologist" provides an interesting view into the ways in which Western-inspired art music composers perceive themselves and are perceived by others on the international stage. Adzei readily identifies himself in these terms as he does research on traditional music and incorporates the musical elements into his African art music works. Frequently, composers of Western-inspired art music end up teaching ethnomusicology at universities around the world. This is true of several of the African composers mentioned here including George Dor, (currently a professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Mississippi), Kwabena Nketia (highly renowned African ethnomusicologist who has taught music at many Ghanaian and foreign universities), Halim El-Dabh (a professor of ethnomusicology at Kent State University) and Akin Euba (Nigerian composer and a professor of music at the University of Pittsburgh).

Their careers as professors of music and/or ethnomusicology are revealing not only in terms of their career ambitions but the ways in which they are perceived abroad. It would be interesting to look into how these composers ended up in these teaching positions, particularly if teaching ethnomusicology was one of the only available routes for them after they moved abroad. I hypothesize that when teaching abroad, such a composer is perceived as a representative of their home culture and in a sense an expert on the traditional music of their home country. In a sense, teaching ethnomusicology is a natural direction for many to take, as some of these composers frequently actively research various music traditions from their respective home cultures to include in their art music compositions. However, it seems that these teaching positions may also at least partially come about as a desire of these universities to have professors in ethnomusicology who are from countries in the non-Western world, in places such as Africa and Asia.

In concluding, I would like to focus on the ways in which Western-inspired art music is placed on the international stage. This international involvement is made the most evident in the discussion of the connections between composers in Ghana and Egypt. The history of Western-inspired art music in Egypt is very different from Ghana due to the fact that the Egyptian government actively encouraged and funded institutions that promoted Western-inspired art music in the country in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This government support is also true of Ghana during the period

following independence. However, as explained, Ghanaian government funding and support waned during the 1980s and 1990s, partially as a result of government skepticism of the Western elements of organizations such as the National Symphony (Dor 2003), a trend that continues today. This contrasting history is made evident in the fact that, to my knowledge, the Cairo Symphony is a vibrant organization today while the Ghana National Symphony continues to struggle financially and performs on a much less frequent basis. The move towards replacing the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra with the Pan-African Orchestra of indigenous instruments further illustrates such trends. In contrast with Egypt, the political situation in Ghana seems to be predisposed towards not favoring Western music. This is ironic considering the African art music's foundation in Western music literacy and education. This could partially explain the lack of a large audience for African art music in the country and shed light on statements by composers such as Kafui and Adzei that they attempt to "Africanize" their compositions in order to make them less Western. In a sense, Ghana is able to continue to have an African art music tradition as a result of its Christian culture and the role that the church plays in training young musicians. It is interesting to note that such a Christian culture does not play such an important role in Egypt, since the country has a much smaller Christian population.

As I have shown, composers in Egypt often negotiate the nationalistic and international elements of their music. Unlike the case in Ghana,

composers in Egypt rarely reference the use of indigenous materials, and it is less common for composers themselves to discuss their Egyptian or African identity. The closest thing to the use of Egyptian materials is the incorporation of Arab modes and rhythms and elements of ancient Egyptian music and religion. Identity in Egypt is very different from Ghana due to the fact that Egypt is at a crossroads between the Arab World, the Western world and Africa. I hypothesize that Egyptian composers are less concerned with asserting an African or Arab identity in their works due to the fact that the government was much more supportive of Western-inspired art music in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The desire to create difference from Western music in this sense seems to have been lessened in comparison to Ghana.

Composers from Egyptian and Ghanaian backgrounds are grouped together in the websites Global Interplay and Intercultural Composers Initiative. Similar to when composers study abroad and become aware of the fact that they are representatives of their respective home cultures, in such instances the composers are presented as "intercultural." However, it is imperative to note that both of these organizations were founded and are currently managed by a German performing organization Musik der Jahrhunderte (Intercultural Composers Initiative 2011c). This raises the point that these composers are being presented as "intercultural" by this organization and that they are not themselves attaching the label of "intercultural." It would be interesting to understand how these composers

became involved in such projects. This would be revealing as to the degree with which the composers had a part in defining themselves as "intercultural." Either way, the use of this term reveals one way in which Western-inspired art music composers are perceived on the international stage. It seems likely that such international presentations in turn influence composers' perceptions of themselves.

At times on the international stage, composers also move away from the idea that they are intercultural. It is interesting to note that composers such as Kongo are closely aligned with Egyptian composers like Nahla Mattar in the ways in which they approach the wealth of compositional materials and techniques in the post-colonial world. As presented before, Nahla Mattar describes her interests with regards to composing using two musical cultures. She explains,

> This combination succeeded at times, and fails at others; yet, the common interest in all focused around the fascination with the sound as an independent entity, far from the well-ornamented melodies, or even the sensual sequences of the rhythmic cycles known in the tradition of these local cultures. Accordingly, music is the organization of sound over time, regardless of the sound identity used (Mattar 2009).

Mattar moves away from associating identities with the origins of the sounds used. Instead she focuses on the resulting composition and its "organization of sound over time." This is closely related to the perspective of Kongo who insists that techniques of composition are "international" and are unattached to any specific locales or nations (Kongo 2010, interview). However, both Kongo and Mattar use material that is from their home countries. As noted before, Kongo uses material from his home country of the Democratic

Republic of Congo, and Mattar has at times been involved with ancient Egyptian music. The employment of such material seems to come about naturally, as this musical material is what the composers know and have access to. Kongo gives perspective to the use of this material by saying, "It's normal that everybody uses some things where they come from" (Kongo 2010, interview). The important thing is that both composers seem to look at these materials in terms of their musical function in the composition instead of in terms of the "sound identity" that they desire to consciously incorporate in their works.

It remains to be seen how composers in Ghana and the rest of the postcolonial world will negotiate the complex multi-layered identities that become increasingly present in a world characterized by fast communication and travel across broad distances. With frequent dramatic improvements in communication and efficient travel, it seems likely that the processes of globalization will only speed up in the years to come. Ghana is commonly perceived as one of the most stable and prosperous countries in Africa. In the coming years, it is likely that an even greater amount of foreign wealth will find its way into the country as a result of the recent discovery of oil off of the coast. An influx of money into the economy has the potential to benefit organizations such as the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra, which has struggled financially in recent years. Similarly, the wave of money that is likely to come into the country as a result of this discovery has the potential

to create a larger upper class, which is commonly associated with the performance Western-inspired art music around the world.

Further research should engage with Western-inspired art musicians in other parts of the world in order to observe how composers of other nationalities and cultures engage with each other across long distances. It will be interesting to see if composers such as those in Ghana will continue to perceive of themselves as "intercultural" composers on the global stage or if other more complex combinations of cultures and concepts about composition and its relationships to audiences near and far will arise. Composers will likely continue to take part in international flows of compositional practices. As in the case of Global Interplay and the Intercultural Composers Initiative, some of these international stages will focus on the intercultural elements of the composers. It seems reasonable to think that organizations such as Global Interplay and the Intercultural Composers Initiative will continue to exist in the decades to come.

However, at the same time, it seems that composers including Kongo and Mattar will continue to steer away from the intentional use of musical resources for the purpose of asserting a certain identity. On a smaller scale, some composers will likely continue to compose using resources from their ethnicities and countries in order to relate to audiences in their places of origination. Art music communities are generally in a minority throughout the world, and it seems that composers of Western-inspired art music will seek to find an audience wherever possible in order to make their music

relevant to an audience, as well as to be able to make a living. The perception of these identities depends on who is displaying the identities, whether it be the composer or another entity such as an international organization. I find it likely that composers will attempt to compose music that is relevant to both local and international audiences. It seems reasonable to think that Ghanaians will become more accustomed to Western-inspired art music and its performance contexts as composers work to build a larger audience. Therefore, it is likely that African art music composers in Ghana will find a way to use the traditional musical materials around them in order to appeal to audiences both in Ghana and elsewhere.

When I first arrived in Ghana in 2008, I was shocked to learn that Western art music is not just a medium of expression for those in the Western world. The presence of similar music by Ghanaian composers is a reality of the post-colonial world and is an important medium through which these composers situate themselves in a time characterized by increasingly interrelated cultures and identities. Beyond this, African art music, as a result of its interrelatedness with other Western-inspired traditions around the world, has the potential to act as a platform for musical dialogue between those who live far apart. Not only does African art music and the dialogue surrounding it reflect the identities discussed in this thesis, but it is also an artistic vessel for the contemplation of identity. It is an art form with a common means of expression that persists even across vast distances and cultures perceived as being distinctly contrasting. Most importantly, it is a

means through which to contemplate the meanings and complexities of simultaneously living and working on local and international stages.

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