SAXOPHONE SOLOS IN GHANAIAN HIGHLIFE MUSIC: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY
OF TEMPOS AND THE RAMBLERS INTERNATIONAL BANDS

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MUSIC DEGREE

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my own work produced from research undertaken under supervision.
Wherever sources have been quoted, full acknowledgement has been made.

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ABSTRACT

Highlife dance band music is one genre of popular music in Ghana that makes use of both Western and African idioms. This makes highlife music to be enjoyed by both Africans and Westerners. One unique characteristic of this type of highlife music is improvisation. Other instruments such as the trumpet and guitar perform this style but the saxophone instrument, is preferred above all the others.

This study aims at recording and compiling selected saxophone solos by the Tempos and Ramblers highlife dance bands through live and prerecorded media. The saxophone solos will then be transcribed to and studied more critically. Analysis will be to identify the styles and techniques that are used such as vibration and pitch bending. The study will also examine other musical elements such as melody, scale, rhythm, pitch, articulation, phrasing, dynamics and tonal organization. Since it is a well-known fact that Ghanaian dance band musicians do not read music from scores I shall find out possible traces of variations, copious repetitions and similarities of rhythmic patterns in the same music performed on different dates and conditions as well as locations, stock progressions and other points of interest when Western and African idioms are combined. In addition, I shall listen to other instrumental solos and draw my own conclusions on why the saxophone is the more preferred instrument for improvisation.

Other research strategies will include libraries, interviews, participant observation, and employment of qualitative data collection. It is expected that the compilation of saxophone improvisation repertoire will reveal the contribution of Ghanaian highlife dance band music and will serve as reference material for the study this style of popular music.
DEDICATION

To the Almighty God
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I am very grateful to God for His mercies and love towards my life. He picked me from the valley and has brought me to the mountains so I can see how great He is. My sincere thanks go to my supervisors, Prof. John Collins and Dr. Colter Harper, for their directions and guidance throughout this research. In fact, they have made me learn a lot and may the good God bless them all.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF EXAMPLES</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER ONE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Background to the study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Problem Statement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER TWO</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Brief History of the Origin of Highlife Music in Ghana</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER THREE</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANALYTICAL PARAMETERS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Musical Analysis of Onipa</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1 Form</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:1:2 Rhythmic Structure</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:1:4 Harmonic Structure</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.5 Compositional Techniques</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Musical Analysis of Sunday Mirror</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1 Form</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.2 Rhythmic Structure ....................................................................................................... 38
3.2.3 Melodic Structure ......................................................................................................... 40
3.2.4 Harmonic Structure ....................................................................................................... 42
3.2.5 Interpretative Technique ............................................................................................... 43
3.3 Musical Analysis of “Day By Day” ................................................................................ 46
  3.3.1 Form .......................................................................................................................... 46
  3.3.2 Rhythmic Structure ................................................................................................... 46
  3.3.3 Melodic Structure ....................................................................................................... 48
  3.3.4 Harmonic Structure ................................................................................................... 50
  3.3.5 Interpretive Techniques ............................................................................................. 50

CHAPTER FOUR ................................................................................................................. 53
4.1 Musical Analysis of “Aunty Christie” ............................................................................ 55
  4.2.1 Form ........................................................................................................................ 55
  4.2.2 Rhythmic Structure ................................................................................................. 55
  4.2.3 Melodic Structure ..................................................................................................... 57
  4.2.4 Harmonic Structure ................................................................................................. 59
  4.2.5 Interpretive Techniques ............................................................................................ 60
4.2 Musical Analysis Of “Aboo A Yiee” ............................................................................. 63
  4.2.1 Form ........................................................................................................................ 63
  4.2.2 Rhythmic Structure ................................................................................................. 63
  4.2.3 Melodic Structures ................................................................................................. 66
  4.2.4 Harmonic Structure ................................................................................................. 67
  4.2.5 Interpretative Techniques ......................................................................................... 68
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Musical Analysis of “Aoo Danye”</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1 Form</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2 Rhythmic Structure</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.3 Melodic Structure</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.4 Harmonic Structure</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.5 Interpretative Techniques</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER FIVE</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Summary</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Conclusion</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Recommendations</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX II: SELECTED SONGS</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF EXAMPLES

Example 1: The rhythmic motifs found in the saxophone solo of Onipa…………………32
Example 2: Syncopated rhythms found in the saxophone solo of Onipa…………………33
Example 3: The overall compass of the saxophone solo of Onipa…………………………34
Example 4: The rhythmic motifs found in the saxophone solo of Sunday Mirror………… 40
Example 5: Suspensions seen in the saxophone solo of Sunday Mirror……………………41
Example 6: The overall compass of the saxophone solo of Sunday Mirror…………………41
Example 7: Melodic variations seen in the saxophone solo of Sunday Mirror
   (a): F major chord in root position ..............................................................42
   (b): F major chord in 2nd inversion..............................................................42
Example 8: Intervals of the same length in different pitches seen in the saxophone solo of
   Sunday Mirror..........................................................................................43
Example 9: The rhythmic motifs found in the saxophone solo of Day By Day…………48
Example 10: The Polyrhythmic notes seen in the saxophone solo of Day By Day………94
Example 11: The overall compass of the saxophone solo of Day By Day………………50
Example 12: Harmonic extension seen in the saxophone solo of Day By Day……………50
Example 13: The spelling of C major chord seen in the saxophone solo of Day By Day….51
Example 14: Chromatic notes seen in the saxophone solo of Day By Day………………52
Example 15: The rhythmic motifs found in the saxophone solo of Aunty Christie…………57
Example 16: Melodic variations found in the saxophone solo of Aunty Christie…………57
Example 17: The overall compass of the saxophone solo of Aunty Christie……………58
Example 18: Harmonic extension seen in the saxophone solo of Aunty Christie…………58
Example 19: The rhythmic motifs found in the saxophone solo of Agboo A Yiee………66
Example 20: The overall compass of the saxophone solo of Agboo A Yiee………………67
Example 21: Melodic sequence found in the saxophone solo of Agboo A Yiee…………68
Example 22: Rhythmic motifs found in the saxophone solo of Ao Danye………………73
Example 23: The overall compass of the saxophone solo of Ao Danye…………………75
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Cadences found in the saxophone solo of Onipa…………………………………36
Table 2: Chord Structure found in the saxophone solo of Onipa…………………………..36
Table 3: Chord Structure found in the saxophone solo of Sunday Mirror…………………43
Table 4: Cadences found in the saxophone solo of Sunday Mirror………………………44
Table 5: Chord Structure found in the saxophone solo of Day By Day……………………51
Table 6: Chord Structure found in the saxophone solo Aunty Christie……………………61
Table 7: Cadences found in the saxophone solo of Aunty Christie………………………61
Table 8: Chord Structure found in the saxophone solo Agboo AYiee………………………69
Table 9: Chord Structure found in the saxophone solo Ao Daanye………………………76
Table 10: Cadences found in the saxophone solo of Ao Daanye…………………………76
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The history of Ghanaian popular music would not be complete without the influence of dance bands who contributed immensely towards its development. Two of the most notable dance bands were the Tempos Band and the Ramblers International Band, which were most active during the 1950s and 1960s respectively. These bands modeled themselves after the swing jazz bands of America employing similar instrumentation, though their music was decidedly Ghanaian. One unique characteristic of the dance bands highlife music was the role the saxophone played. The saxophone was allowed more space to improvise than other instruments. This thesis explains that saxophonists were integral to expanding the improvisational language of highlife by employing techniques gained from swing jazz bands or the big bands.

1.2 Problem Statement

The study of the saxophone in Ghanaian popular music is still at its nascent stages. Scholarship in Ghanaian popular music appears to focus most on the socio-historical aspects to the neglect of the sound of the music. The saxophone has been ever present in the development of highlife music as it has been an integral part of the instrumental resources that helped shape this style of music. However, its usage became prominent in swing dance bands being used as part of the brass section of the band and most defining as an instrument for improvisation. Very little has been studied on the improvisation in highlife music let alone the improvisations of the saxophone in dance band highlife. The study seeks to throw light on this aspect of highlife music.
1.3 Aims and objectives

To explore the centrality of solo improvisation in saxophone and contemporary highlife music
To document saxophone solos for contemporary Ghanaian popular music history
To examine saxophone styles and techniques in Ghanaian highlife music

1.4 Significance of the study

The primary purpose of this study is to provide a greater insight into the saxophone solos in highlife dance band music through transcription. It will also present detailed analyses of the music of the Tempos and Ramblers International bands respectively. The two selected dance bands, among others, have really contributed to Ghanaian highlife music, hence the need to document their works. It will also build an archive of transcriptions of dance band highlife music for future generations. The study will also serve as a springboard for others to research into the other forms of Ghanaian popular music in particular and Ghanaian music in general.

1.5 Scope of study

The study focuses on the saxophone solos of the Tempos Dance Band and the Ramblers International Dance Band. In so much as it focuses on the saxophone solos; there is an attempt to discuss the history of the two bands in relation to other dance bands that developed around the same time. Furthermore, the study analyses some selected solos of the two dance bands with emphasis on the techniques that were used during their period.

Moreover, the tonal organization of the selected solos is presented in this undertaking. Basic rhythmic characteristics will be outlined as well. Items pertaining to melody, including the use of sequences,
variations and phrasing are discussed. Other aspects of music such as rhythmic organization of pitches, articulation and dynamics are also discussed. As a budding saxophonist, I examine the style and techniques that were used in the period of my selected solos as compared to what saxophonists are doing currently.

1.6 Literature Review

Collins (1994) wrote extensively on the historical development of highlife music in Ghana. In this treatise, he explains how the term highlife was coined in the 1920s. According to him, Ghana popular music developed during the 19th and early 20th century from a fusion, blending or ‘transculturization’ of three elements: the indigenous African, the European and the New World music of the Black Diaspora. Consequently, many local orchestras were formed. The class orchestras led by the well to do educated Ghanaian later became the dance band and started playing various form of street music; *gome, osibisaaba, ashiko and adaha* tunes in big clubs and hotels. The poor people hearing their local music orchestrated and performed by these dance bands in prestigious black elite clubs and hotels, named the music ‘highlife’. He further gave details of the various dance bands including the Tempos and the Ramblers International dance bands. He explains that the Tempos band was set up in 1942 by Ghanaian pianist Adolf Doku and English engineer Arthur Harriman. E.T. Mensah later joined the band, doubling on the saxophone and trumpet after the Second World War. The band later became composed solely of Africans, and E.T Mensah ultimately becoming its leader in 1948. He also emphasizes Guy Warren’s contribution to the band as a drummer. He argues that Guy Warren’s contribution of adding Afro-Cuban musical elements and Calypsos were invaluable. Therefore, the Tempos not only played with a Jazz touch, but also incorporated Calypsos and Latin music.
Coffie Mark Millas (2012) provides a vivid analysis of some selected works of Ebo Taylor, Stan Plange and Kwadwo Donkoh. He gives a historical background of these composers, how they orchestrate for their respective bands and also categorize the stylistic development of dance band highlife into three stages. Additionally he explains that the earliest stage from 1950 to 1960 was an era where the brass section (horns) plays the introduction of the song either a section or the entire vocal melody before the vocals. From 1960 to 1970 was a middle age era where symphonic idea of arrangement was introduced. He categorized 1960 to 1980 as the era of experimentation where dance band highlife was fused with other forms of music like Afrobeat, Afrorock and Afrojazz.

Sunu-Doe (2011) also traces the origin and the development of burger highlife music both in Ghana and Germany. He writes about this type of highlife music that emerged in the early 1980s in Germany. It was a collaboration of Ghanaian immigrant musicians in Germany, their German colleagues and producers who pioneered this kind of highlife music. He analyzes some selected songs and also examines the different stages of its development as well as the social forces, personalities or groups involved.

Locke (1980) also defines improvisation in African music as a composition at the moment of performance. He argues that, this form of composition is bounded by strictures of style and a habit of a given performer. He says, in Africa, improvisation is realized in its fullest capacity when new melodies, song texts and rhythms are invented. Therefore, jazz music and African music are the same. He concluded that, in Africa, the talent and the ability to improvise is a gift from God.
Smith (1962) discusses the origin and the forms of highlife music in Africa. He explains that highlife music is very simple in terms of melody construction and also full of repetition.

“The melody line is generally simple with little use made of accidentals. Repeated notes are often used, with the second or third note longer than the first. There is some syncopation, usually of the first beat of the melody.” He further discusses the structure of highlife music through analysis of some selected highlife music.

Ampofo (2011) discusses the life of Jerry Hanson and the formation of the Ramblers International Dance Band. He retorts, “The Ramblers as the band came to be known, was borrowed from a group based in Holland”. He states that the group comprised some of the members of the Black Beats who had also left the band. All these literature seem to focus on the socio-historical aspects of highlife music in Ghana; hence the need for more comprehensive analytical study on this music.

Agawu (1990) explains the distinctive quality of African music which lies in its rhythmic structure. He uses the drumming as one among several modes of rhythmic expression that are more fruitful approach to the understanding of African music. He made a vivid analysis of rhythm in language, song, drumming and dancing, musical performance, and folktale narration. I used this article as my reference as he discusses the use of rhythmic improvisation and variation in African Music in his analysis.

Amuah (2012) did a vivid analysis of three African composers, bringing out the use of traditional music elements as the basis of their arts choral music. He explains that, the use of
these traditional elements defines their identity as African/Ghanaian composers. He also talks about the incorporation of Western elements into the music of these three composers. The relationship between Amuah’s work and mine is the incorporation of Western elements into African music.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

This study is based on the concept of improvisation. David Locke (1980) defines improvisation in African music as a, “composition at the moment of performance”. He argues that the art of improvisation involves spontaneous creation, unique and impermanent, “but it is not completely free”. He continues to say that improvisation has a definite structure and style. This art of improvisation is developed through training and experience, resulting in the acquisition of technique of a given performer. Therefore, to Locke, improvisation is a form of composition.

Locke came up with this idea because of the development of an incorrect notion of Western explorers and missionaries, that African music consist of free collective improvisation. Many people still see improvisation as a mere music term forgetting about the embellishment, technique, and the spontaneous ornamentation that are involved. However one needs to undergo proper training, and obtain experience before he/she can come out with such marvelous creations. I also agree with him that improvisation is not free in the sense that one needs to follow a given principles like chord progression, rhythmic structures and modes or scales. He concluded by saying that, in Africa, improvisation is a gift from God.

Another school of thought also thinks that improvisation in African music is not a form of
composition but rather a performance practice. Veit Erlmann (1985) states that; “Ethnomusicologists since 1960s seem to have gradually abandoned the idea that improvisation and composition are two separate processes.” B. Nettl (1983) argued that, “all musical creation everywhere, including composition, improvisation and performance, is broadly alike”. M. Hood (1975) also suggests that; “the fine line between improvisation and composition may be difficult to establish and that possibly, in some instances, such a line may not even exist”.

My interest in this concept is not the aspects of improvisation being classified as composition or performance practice but rather the spontaneous techniques, embellishment, ornamentation and the creativity that come along. Drawing on the solos of the Tempos and Ramblers International bands as case study, I develop an original analytical model that represents and explains the grammar and syntax of highlife solos. The grammar derives from the rules, techniques, and general performance practices identified in the solos of the Tempos and Ramblers International bands. Furthermore, the model or grammar takes into account the performer's plural contexts, audiences' input and the performance space among others.

A comparative structural analysis will include melodic lines, motifs, articulation and ways in which melodic lines are elaborated. In this the transcription methods and techniques will include, for the sake of efficient comparative analysis, synoptic transcriptions
1.8 Methodology

Relevant documents such as books, magazines, journals and theses that talk about the selected dance bands and highlife were consulted. Since the focus of this study is analytical, I draw on the lecture notes of experts in these areas. I also employ a form of qualitative data collection strategies which include all forms of interviews to collect reliable information on the selected dance bands. Since one of the dance bands still exist, I observed their rehearsal sections and performances.

Again, available audios recordings of these selected dance bands from Ghana Broadcasting Cooperation (GBC) library and achieve were collected. Transcriptions of the selected songs for my undertaking were done using finale software. For clarity and also for the purpose of performance, the saxophone solo transcription was more elaborate than that of the orchestral work in the appendix. These scores are the starting point for a detailed analysis hence the traditional notion of the music itself, a musical text so to speak, is the object of my analysis. All the above findings reflect to the true and vivid picture as set out in the research outline.
CHAPTER TWO

Historical Background of The Tempos Dance Band and The Ramblers International Dance Band.
This chapter talks about a brief history of the origin of highlife music in Ghana. It also highlights
the historical background of the Tempos Dance Band and the Ramblers International Band.

2.1 Brief History of the Origin of Highlife Music in Ghana

Highlife music is one of the first forms of fusion between African music and the Western music
with its roots in Ghanaian traditional music. Although popular music developed in Ghana during
the 19th and early 20th century, the term “highlife” was coined in the 1920s. According to Collins
(1994), Highlife music existed long ago under various names, and its development came about as
a result of the fusion between local African and Western music in three imported contexts: the
coastal military brass band, the port music of the seamen and fishermen, and the local dance
orchestras of the Christian elite. This type of popular music grew up in the coastal towns such as
Cape Coast, Accra, Winneba and Elmina on the arrival of the Europeans and the American
sailors.

Smith (1962) argues that, most Ghanaian musicologists agree that the Konkomba music was the
forerunner of highlife music. She explains that the Konkomba band concentrated more on
singing. Therefore, adding guitar and percussion instruments to these singing bands made it
highlife music. Nketia (1963) also believes that highlife music originated as “street music”. The
dancers and the players of the street music originally moved from one side of the street to the
other dancing individually. Therefore, the origin of highlife music has been the subject of much
discussion.
In all these, no one can give a tribal origin to highlife music. From my own point of view, highlife music is an intertribal music that originated from the various musical traditions in Ghana in combination with the Western music. We have highlife songs in Ga, Twi, Fante, Ewe, Hausa, and even many other West African dialects such as Yoruba. Therefore, one can label it as a new type of folk music. Collins (1992) states that, Kwela, Township jive and Mbaqanga music from South Africa, Chimurenga from Zimbabwe, the Benga beat from Kenya, Taarab music from East African Coast, Congo Zaire Rumba Soukous and Kwassa Kwassa from Central Africa, Juju, Apala and fuji from Western Nigeria are other examples of popular music beside highlife music.

Highlife music went through a lot of metamorphosis of which different forms of highlife music emerged. The earliest type of highlife is the Brass band highlife, which was derived from the regimental brass and fife bands formed by the Europeans. We have Guitar band highlife, which emerged from the “Osibisaaba” music of the coastal West African musicians. The third major type of highlife is the dance band highlife (Adaha), which developed from the dance–orchestras.

The British and the Americans who came to Ghana were more used to jazz and big band music or the swing band music. Therefore, they started recruiting local musicians from the dance orchestras and the army who could read the musical scores. They trained some of them on jazz style and technique including breath control, intonation, glissando. Out of the recruitments, the first swing band was formed in Accra by the Scottish saxophone player whose stage-name was Sergeant Jack Leopard in 1940. He named the band, ‘Black and White Sport’. The Tempos band was also formed in the same year by a Ghanaian pianist, Adolf Doku, and an English Saxophonist, Arthur Leonard Harriman. Many other swing bands were formed but they all
collapsed after the Second World War, except the Tempos band comprising only African members. These bands collapsed because of the exit of the foreigners who were the leaders of the bands after the war. Other dance bands formed after the Second World War include: the Black Beat, led by King Bruce, the Uhuru Dance Band, the Ramblers Dance Band led by Jerry Hanson, Red Sport led by Tommy Gripman, Rhythm Aces led by Anyankor, Rackers Dance Band led by Zuzer Greenslade, African Tones led by Saka Acquaye.

In the mid 1930s, another genre of music evolved from the Jazz music called Swing Music. It is also known as Big Band Music due to the large dance orchestras of 13-25 members. These types of ‘big bands’ were pop-oriented, placed emphasis on horns and wind instruments, and also improvised melodies. Swing music can also be understood as music that moves one to dance due to its propulsive sense of rhythmic feels. The swing music reached its peak and was most popular in America between 1935 and 1946. It was the same era that swing music was introduced in the coastal areas of Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria by the British and American troops who were stationed in West Africa.

Since The Black and White Spots was the first dance band, E. T. Mensah left his brother, Yebuah’s orchestra known as Accra Rhythmic Orchestra and joined Sergeant Leopard’s band as saxophone player. The Black and White Sport did not play only Classical music, but also European and American dance music like Tangos, Sambas. After the Second World War, the British and the American troops started leaving the country and the blacks took over their band. One of the bands which survived was the Tempos band set up by Ghanaian pianist Adolf Doku and English Engineer, Arthur Harriman. According to Owusu (2012), Arthur Leonard Harriman
was a very good British military saxophonist, who had played with several bands in Britain before making his way to Africa to form the Tempos band. In interviews with John Collins, he states that “the band was first under the leadership of the tenor saxophonist, Joe Kelly, and then from 1947, E.T. Mensah (doubling on saxophone and trumpet) took over. He bids that it was through E.T. Mensah’s leadership that the Tempos band became the most popular and important band in West Africa during the 1950s.

These are the first members of the tempos band: Guy Warren (Kofi Ghanaba) on Drums, Joe Kelly on Tenor Saxophone and Clarinet, Kimpo Amarfio (Serious) on Double Base, Bob Nelson (Baby) on Lead Guitar, Pop Hughes on Alto Saxophone, Dodo Schall (Dodds) on Piano and E.T Mensah on Trumpet

2:2 The Life Of E.T Mensah

Emmanuel Tettey Mensah, the multi-instrumentalist and the King of Highlife in the 1950s, was born in 31st May, 1919 and died on 19th July, 1996. He was a gifted musician who played almost all the woodwind and brass instruments. His talent was discovered by his elementary school head teacher, Teacher Lamptey, who was also the founder and leader of the Accra Orchestra in the early 1930s. Accra Orchestra was one of the first local orchestras formed in Accra. E.T Mensah joined the orchestra as a flutist at the age of fourteenth in 1933, and used the opportunity to develop his style and technique of playing. He further progressed into other instruments like the saxophone, the trumpet and the organ.

After his elementary school, he collaborated with his older brother, Yabuah, to form their own band. They named the band ‘Accra Rhythmic Orchestra’ of which top Ghanaian musicians like
Joe Kelly, Guy Warren and Tommy Gripman were also members. According to Collins (1986), the Accra Rythmic Orchestra won the Lambeth Walk Dance Competition in 1939 at the King George Memorial Hall (present-day parliament house). They also incorporated jazz and swing tunes into their music to enhance their performance. They performed at various places including night clubs, private events and ball dances.

In 1940, E.T. Mensah was recruited into the Sergeant Leopard’s Black and White Sport Band. These bands were full of British soldiers and local musicians who could read musical scores and play very well. Mensah and his black colleagues learnt a lot of techniques and style of playing jazz from Sergeant Leopard. E.T.Mensah refined his style of playing and experimented new elements into his highlife music. Collins (1986) quoting E.T Mensah states that:

> It was Sergeant Leopard who thought us the correct method of intonation, vibrato, tonguing and breathe control, which contributed to place us above average standard in town… We played from one army camp to another in the Accra district. Each of us got a pound for each engagement. Boy, oh, boy, that pound seemed a fortune to us in those days. For some years we have been playing in one or the other of the three orchestras in town: the Accra, Rhythmic and City. In this we used to get about two shilling every engagement… When the Americans came we learnt a lot of lessons.

After the World War II, almost all the white military and audiences including Sergeant Leopard left the country and the Blacks took over their bands. Throughout Mensah’s up and down movement, he never stopped studying. He study pharmacy and was posted to Ashanti region as a qualified pharmacist in 1943. He stayed there for four years and came back in 1947 to join the Tempos band. His friends, Guy Warren and Joe Kelly, also joined him in the band. When the whites left after the World War II, Joe Kelly, the tenor saxophonist, first took over the leadership of the band and later E.T Mensah. Mensah doubled on the saxophone and the trumpet whiles Guy Warren (Kofi Ghanaba) also played the drums. These two musicians not only played in the band but also were rotating leadership.
E. T. Mensah left his job as a pharmacist and became a full time musician after he had taken over the leadership of the band in 1950. In late 1951, the band collapsed and E.T has to find new members for the band. Guy Warren (Kofi Ghanaba), Kimpo Amarfio, Joe Kelly and Bob Nelson, separated from E.T Mensah to form their own band. In the same year, Mensah formed his own Tempos band with new musicians including Dan Acquaye, Rex Ofusu, Tom Tom Addo, and Rich Cadjoe. In 1952, the band became very popular and Mensah became equally famous as a bandleader and ‘King’ of highlife.

Mensah and his band (Tempos) made their first tour to Nigeria in 1950. He also toured many West African countries including Togo, Guinea, Cote d’Ivoire, Liberia and Benin. In 1953, he made his first trip outside Africa to London. In London, he performed in many African clubs in Soho and also recorded for HMVs GV series. In 1969, he took his band on a three-month tour to England.

In 1952, E.T. Mensah recorded his first album, for Decca West Africa. ‘Essie Nana’, ‘Nkebo bayaa’, ‘All For You’, and ‘Sunday Mirror’ are examples of his early compositions. He did a lot of recordings for Decca West Africa which made him popular in both Africa and outside the African continent.

Unbelievably, the music brought a lot of money to the extent that he was able to afford his own club, of which he hosted the big time black American Musician, Louis Armstrong, during his visit to Ghana in 1956. Collins (1986) states that, “…..E.T. was playing part-time, saying that he had never expected to earn a living from music”. Owusu (2012), being in the same line with
Collins states that, “If one musician in his band typified the excitement of highlife the scene in Accra during its golden years between the 1950’s and 1960’s, it was E. T. Mensah and his Tempos band”. E.T. Mensah did a lot of performances with Louis Armstrong, the incredible jazz trumpeter, in different places including the present day Black Stars Square and Mensah’s Paramount club all in Accra.

One can never talk about E. T. Mensah’s music without its political impact as Collins describes his music as the sound of African independence days. His song, ‘Ghana highlife’, marked the Ghanaian historic Independence Day event in 1957. He did not only promote highlife music but Pan-African popular music as well. His music had influence not only on Ghanaians but also Nigerian musicians including Rex Lawson, Victor Chukwu, Victor Olaiya, and Roy Chicago. During Mensah’s marvelous performances, he was credited with many awards. In Lagos, Nigeria, a show was organized in honor of E.T. Mensah in 1986. He was also honored with the title Okunin (very famous) for his contributions in promoting Ghanaian’s culture in 1989. E.T Mensah was awarded an honorary Doctorate for his marvelous works. He retired in the 1970s and died in 1996 after a long illness.

### 2.3 The Second Generation Of The Tempos Band

The second generation of the Tempos Band was led by E.T. Mensah. It was under Mensah’s leadership that the Tempos Band became the famous dance band in Africa. In the 1950s, the band separated and Guy Warren (Kofi Ghanaba) the drummer, Kimpo Amarfio (Serious) the bassist, Joe Kelly, the tenor saxophonist, and Bob Nelson (Baby), the lead guitarist, left the Tempos to set up their own band called “Jam Session”. Consequently, E.T. Mensah had to
recruit new musicians to set up his own Tempos band. E.T. Mensah maintained the name “Tempos” and used it to re-name his ‘E.T. Mensah & His Tempos Band’.

The new musicians of ‘E. T. Mensah & His Tempos Band’ were Rebop Aggrey, a very good lead guitarist, Herbert Thompson on conga, Amo Dodoo on alto saxophone, Rich Cudjoe on trombone, Dan Acquaye on drums and vocals, Bob Vealle on Double Bass and also vocals, Dizzy Acquaye on guitar, Tom Tom Addo on bongos, Spike Anyankor on alto saxophone Pappoe on maracas, Moilai on claves and E.T. Mensah himself doubling on trumpet and tenor saxophone. It was this group that started touring Africa and also making recordings for Decca in the early 1950s. In 1951, E.T. Mensah made his first tour to Nigeria with Guy Warren and Joe Kelly before the second generation of the Tempos band in 1953. They performed at many places in Lagos including Booby Benson’s club.

In 1952, E.T. Mensah & his Tempos band made their first recording for Decca West Africa. This was the first highlife band in West Africa to be recorded by the British record company Decca. E.T did not only serve as band leader but also arranger or an orchestrator and composer. In his first 78rpm disc, the compositions were in five languages: Fante, Ga, Twi, Ewe and English. E.T talks about social issues such as love, politics, respect, tragedy of death, poverty and freedom. Songs such as ‘Munsuru’, ‘Nkebo Bayaa’, ‘Inflation Calypso’, ‘Essie Nana’, ‘Don't Mind You Wife’, ‘Sunday Mirror’ and ‘All For You’, were the first compositions on the Tempos first recording for Decca West Africa. It was through these recordings that E.T became very popular in West Africa and gained the name “King of Highlife”. Owusu (2012) quoting one commentator in the contemporary press in 1959 states that: “Mensah, of course, is even more popular in Nigeria than his own country”.
A short time after their first recording, Bob Vealle, the singer, left the band and this brought about a reshuffle in the band. Joe Ransford moved on to the bass whiles Tom Tom Addo took over from Dan Acquaye on drums but not vocals. They also brought new instrumentalists including two Nigerians, Glen Kofie on trombone, the first female highlife vocalist Juliana Okine, Baby Face Paul (Nigeria) on saxophone, and Zeal Onyia (Nigeria) on trumpet. This team played for a very long time and in 1969, E.T Mensah took this team for a three-month tour in England.

The Tempos band with this team recorded their second song of which ‘Freedom’, one of the famous songs on the album became Ghana’s independence song in 1957. From 1957, E.T. Mensah started associating himself with politics. He composed songs for the then president of the Republic of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, and even went on tours with him. He recorded the President’s speech on one of his summits with other African heads of state on his album. Osagyefo was one of the songs written by E.T to congratulate and also ask God’s strength for the President. His Paramount club was officially acknowledged by Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah’s government.

In 1956, E.T & his Tempos band welcomed Louis Armstrong and the All Stars into Ghana on his tour of Africa. Louis Armstrong and his All Stars Band together with the Tempos and other highlife bands played at the then Polo Grounds in Accra, now Black Stars Square, where independence was declared the following year. They also played at E.T. Mensah’s Paramount club in Accra.
The Tempos band played at many programs including weddings, engagements, funerals, and night clubs and also for several heads of state. In 1958, E.T. Mensah & his Tempos band toured Liberia, Cote d’Ivoire, Sierra Leone and Guinea playing for their heads of state and other ceremonies. From 1953, the Tempos began a regular trip to Nigeria once or twice a year. This regular trip had influence on some of the top musicians in Nigeria including Victor Olaiya, the trumpeter, and Eddie Okunta. These people started adding highlife tunes into their repertoire. Collins (1986) states that:

On occasion, Nigerian musicians would come to the Tempos for training. Agu Norris, leading the Empire Band, took trumpet lessons from E.T. on the trumpet. In Benin city, Victor Uwaifo, then a school boy, would rush to watch and study the Tempos' guitarist Dizzy Acquaye. Other Nigerian musicians influenced by the Tempos included Rex Lawson, Charles Iwegbue, VictorChukwu, Chief Billy Friday, Enyang Henshaw, King Kennytone and Roy Chicago.

Members of the Tempos also became very good when it came to leadership, composition and orchestration under E.T. Mensah’s leadership. These helped some of the members to form their own bands after they had left the Tempos band. Spike Anyankor formed the “Rhythm Aces Band”, Saka Acquaye helped King Bruce form the “Black Beats” and Tommy Gripman also formed the “Red Spots”.

The Tempos band blended highlife with Afro-Cuban music, calypso and swing jazz music, and this made them outstanding among other highlife dance bands in West Africa. Songs like ‘Medze Medze’ (I’ll eat and eat) and ‘Nkebo Baaya’ (I’ll go with you) became one of the Pan African anthems on Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) radio. The Tempos band and other highlife bands that played before, during and after independence raised highlife to its golden peak. These bands associated their music with Africa’s freedom to the extent that the then President
invariably made highlife Ghana’s national music. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah made sure that almost all
the regions in Ghana have a resident highlife band after Ghana’s independence.

2.4 A Brief Historical Background Of The Black Beats

One can never talk about the origin of Ramblers International Band without mentioning Black
Beats. Ramblers International Band was formed out of the Black Beat and almost half of its
members were from the Black Beats. The Black Beats also had a little influence from E.T.
Mensah and His Tempos Band. When the leader and the founder of the Black Beats, King Bruce
return to Ghana from London in 1950, he was not that strong on his trumpet and could not even
play by ear. Therefore he went understudy from number of people such as E.T. Mensah and His
Tempos Band, Joe Kelly and Tommy Gripman

King Bruce after seeking help from his senior colleague joined the Accra Rhythmic Orchestra
led by E.T. Mensah’s Elder brother Yebuah Mensah and the Accra Orchestra led by Teacher
Lamptey. An interview with King Bruce by Collins (unpublished script) states

I joined them somewhere in the middle of 1950, and one thing I liked about them at
the time was they were playing from written music. It was standard strict-tempo
ballroom numbers and jazz numbers using stock arrangements imported from
England. But I must say I owe my real progress to personal coaching from Mr.
Tommy Gripman.

King Bruce left the Accra Orchestra after one- and-a- half years due to mismanagement in the
middle of 1951. As a senior civil servant, he did not join the orchestra because of money, but
rather interested in building himself as a dance band musician. Collins (unpublished script)
Interviewing King Bruce states that:

For if you don’t have audience to play for, and therefore have the opportunity to
master your nervous tension that goes with this, then you don’t get anywhere. So in
my effort to build myself up as an accomplished instrumentalist, money didn’t matter.

King Bruce left the orchestra and teamed up with an old friend Saka Acquaye to form the Black Beats in 1952. As soon as they got their instruments set, they called in other musicians to join them. Among them were Jerry Hanson, the founder and leader of Ramblers International Band. Hanson was the alto saxophonist and also doing a bit singing for the Black Beats. Saka was on the tenor sax, Kwamena Croffie on bass and two leading vocalists Lewis Wadawa and Frank Attoo Barnes. Though they were not that good when it comes to performance, they managed to come up with their own style by emphasizing on vocals as compare to the others bands. They did listen to a lot of Louis Jordan (an African-American)’s swing music and that influenced them to play more jazz and ballroom music.

The Black Beats performed in so many occasions including wedding and clubs. Since every union has its own crisis, so as Black Beats. In 1953, Saka Acquaye left the band to the United State of American for further studies and in the same year, the owner of the instruments also came for his equipments. It was a big blow for the band because Saka was the only one who can orchestrate for the band. The west all is the exit of Jerry Hanson.

Jerry Hanson joined the Black from 1952 to 1961 as alto saxophonist and a leader when King Bruce was away for other duties. There was a disagreement between the members of the band including Jerry Hanson and King Bruce about some amount of royalties due to the Black Beats. The members thought the amount paid by Decca West Africa to the band was more than what their leader gave them. This argument moved Jerry Hanson out of the band together with nine
members to form the Ramblers Dance Band. Therefore King Bruce had to train the six remaining armature musician who were studying under them to carry on with his band. It took King Bruce six months for the band to stand on its feet again until 1977 when he went on retirement and could not perform with the band again. An interview with King Bruce by Collins (unpublished script) states:

“Only very occasionally did I play with the Black Beats and the Barristers, after I had retired from government service in 1977.”

### 2.5 The Life of Jerry Hansen

John William Hansen, popularly known as Jerry Hansen, was born on 23rd February, 1927, in Asante, Bekwai. Maame Sekyire and Johnny Hansen were his parents. His father worked with the Ghana Health Service at Asante Bekwai Government Hospital as a Pharmacist. He started his elementary education at Asante Bekwai, Seventh Day Adventist School (SDA). His interest in music started the very day he saw his elementary teacher, Pastor Stoke, performing on his accordion. Ampafo (2011) quoting Jerry Hansen states that:

I admired the performance of both the teacher and the instrument as it was not common in my village; however I never got the chance of trying my hands on the instrument although I followed him everywhere he performed.

He had his education at Achimota College where he was formerly introduced to the rudiments of music. During this time, he interacted with prominent musicians such as Philip Gbeho, Mr. Robert Kwame and Ms Parnell. He moved from Achimota School to Accra Academy due to financial crisis. He completed sixth form in Accra Academy after obtaining the Oxford and Cambridge Certificate in 1947. Fortunately for Hansen, he got the opportunity to work with United African Company (UAC) and was offered a scholarship to study optical mechanics,
specializing in the maintenance of cameras and microscopes in Germany.

In 1949, Jerry Hansen practically moved up a step in his career by joining the Accra Orchestra of which some old mates of his, including King Bruce from Achimota College, were members. Mr. Johnny Hansen, Jerry’s father, did not like the idea of his son associating with musicians but rather concentrate on his work. However, his stepmother who did not offer any help in his education rather encouraged him to carry on his music career. Jerry spent a lot of time visiting the Accra Orchestra after work not as a player but rather as an observer. Upon sighting some of the orchestral instruments for the first time, he developed interest in the saxophone. Jerry had the opportunity to learn to play the saxophone and clarinet. His colleagues who were very good on the woodwind instruments were ever ready to assist him in his rehearsals. Consequently, he took his lessons very serious and never missed a rehearsal.

With the experience Jerry Hansen gained from the Accra Orchestra, he then joined the Accra Rhythmic Orchestra. The Accra Rhythmic Orchestra was more professional compared to the Accra Orchestra. For this, Jerry joined them as one of their percussionists specifically on the conga. He also helped in arranging and packing their instruments during and after performance. Ampofo (2011) states that:

Jerry Hansen joined the Accra Rhythmic Orchestra as a conga-dee. He took this decision because he was not that versatile on his instrument and as such could not be admitted in the Rhythmic Orchestra. Hence the only way he could attend their performances was to help them unload and offload their equipments for their engagements after every performance.

Jerry Hansen improved on his instrument after he had met famous musicians like Joe Kelly, Tommy Gripman and E.T. Mensah in Accra Rhythmic Orchestra. Jerry became a very good saxophonist but could not read the musical score. In order to learn the musical score, he joined the City Orchestra in the early 1950s.
Jerry returned to the Accra Orchestra after learning how to read the musical score in 1951. Saka Aquaye was the only old member left in the Accra Orchestra and there was no one to play the trumpet and trombone. Jerry decided to learn to play the trumpet and trombone with the help of Saka Aquaye. With all these experiences, Jerry never got the opportunity to perform with the Accra Orchestra till it collapsed due to mismanagement. Consequently, Jerry joined E.T Mensah and his Tempos Band for a month.

After the collapse of the Accra Orchestra, Saka Aquaye and King Bruce formed the Black Beats and invited other musicians including Jerry Hanson to join in 1952. They started rehearsing from January to April 1952. Jerry Hansen was playing alto sax and a bit of singing, Saka was on the tenor sax, King Bruce on the trumpet, Kwamena Croffie on bass and Billy Same on guitar. This was the period when Jerry Hansen’s music career became vibrant. In 1953, the Black Beats did their first recording with HMV (His Master’s Voice). ‘Oshija’ (Spinster) and ‘Tso No Tastsa’ (Tree Aunt) were the only hit songs on the tape. They also did some recordings with Decca till 1965. Collins (unpublished script) interviewing King Bruce states that:

As a result Decca signed us on. Some of the most popular recordings we did for Decca that are still popular today, are ‘Ao! Dei! Oh!’, ‘Mikuu Mise Mebea Don’, and ‘Srotoi Ye Mli’. Then there was ‘Nnomo Noko’ released on Senafone.

Jerry spent nine years playing for Black Beat from 1952 to 1961 and even rotated leadership with King Bruce. After gaining enough experience with the Black Beats, he left together with nine members to form his own band Ramblers International. Among the nine members were, Kwesi Forson, Eddie Owoo, Aryee Hamond and Frank Coffie. In 1974, Jerry was elected as the first president of the Musicians Union of Ghana (MUSIGA).
2.6 Ramblers International Band

Ramblers International Band was form by Jerry Hansen together with some of the old members of the Black Beats in 1961. This idea of forming a band was brought up by Mr. Zakkour, Metropole Hotel manager who promised to sponsor them with instruments. An interview with Jerry Hansen by Aampafo (2011) state that:

Mr. Zakkour kept coming to my office to convince me to form a new band and that he would buy us instruments. I initially thought he was joking but he persistently kept coming to me to convince me. So I thought, why not, I will give a try. I formed the band to surprise, he bought the instruments and offered his hotel as a place we could keep the instruments and practice

Therefore, the band which has not yet gotten a name started rehearsing at Metropole hotel in Accra. The first members of the band were; Jerry Hansen on the tenor saxophone, Mr. Asare on the trumpet, Frank Coffie on lead guitar, Hammond Aryee on bass and Eddie Owoo on drums.

In an interview with Seth Ampofo a current base guitarist in Ramblers International Band on 19th April 2014 explains that, the name ‘Ramblers’ was an existing name of a Holland based dance orchestra. Jerry Hansen met this band in Germany when he was on scholarship to train as an optical engineer. The band was very popular in Germany during the 50s and 60s. The band used to perform in the city of Stuttgart a holiday result called Lake Constant where Jerry Hansen had gone for lunch. Jerry loved their performance and followed them to their hotel where they lodged. He became friends with them and exchanged contact with them. In conversation with them, Jerry realized they were not full time musicians but also doctors, teachers and other professions.

Jerry convinced his colleagues to use the name “Ramblers” after he had narrated the story to them. They agreed to it and named the band Ramblers International Band. Jerry left his job at
United African Company to set up his own camera shop in order to have enough time with his band. Jerry aimed at making his band one of the best bands in Africa, after Ghana’s independence. They started serious rehearsals at Zakkour’s hotel from 6pm to 12 midnight. They sometimes had to stop because people were finding it difficult to sleep.

The Ramblers International Band recorded their first album which became very popular in 1962. Their memberships increased and were made up fifteen strong men. The band became very popular through their performance and also associated themselves with politics. Through the help of then leader of CPP also the President of Ghana, the band did a lot of performances during their political rallies. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the then president of Ghana engaged the band in state functions. They also played for other African countries including Senegal, Gambia Sierra Leone and Nigeria emphasizing Kwame Nkrumah’s vision of uniting Africa. The Ramblers International did not only performed Africa but other European countries including Germany. Ampafo (2011) states that:

In 1971, the band recorded and released another L.P. titled ‘Doing Our Own Thing’ and in 1972, they secured a two weeks contract to play in East Africa as the first official band to play at the All Africa Trade Fair. The band was privilege to meet with President Jomo Kenyatta who invited them to perform in Kenya. They were also invited to perform in Uganda for two weeks.

In April 12, 1984, Jerry Hansen travelled abroad due to the political instability in the country. In 1970s, there was series of coup d’états that brought a lot of military intervention on foreigners and business men including musicians. The musicians were so affected that they could not perform at night due to curfew. Therefore, the country lost most of its professional musicians to foreigners including Jerry Hansen. He left the
management of the Band to his assistant band leader Mr. Amenudah and formed another Ramblers band in the United State of America where he went.

The Ramblers International Band collapsed in the hands of Mr. Amenudah due to misunderstanding among its members. Jerry Hansen came back from the United State of American in April 2001 after staying there for twenty years. Jerry found it difficult to solve the dispute in his band therefore, he dissolved the band and formed a new Ramblers Dance Band with the youth of which his own nephew Peter Marfo, took over the leadership of the band. Jerry now served as the manager of the band and sometime arranged songs for the band. He also occasionally performs with them. An interview with the Base guitarist Seth Ampafo on April 19th, 2014 explains that, Jerry Hansen’s last performance with the band was in 13th of July 2004 at the funeral of his assistant band leader Mr. Amenudah. Jerry Hansen together with the band has worn so many awards including ACRAG award in 2008, Du-Bois-Padmore award and living legends award by the National theatre in 2004.

An interview with Peter Marfo, the leader of the new Ramblers dance band on 15th February, 2014 at their rehearsal’s ground at North Keneshie explains that, the band had never run full time membership since its formation because all the members has been workers. He states, “Since the time of Jerry Hansen, the membership of the band has never been full time.” They even have some of their members in the police, prison and the army band. I also asked the time they meet and how their organized their rehearsal. He told me they meet twice in a week Thursday and Friday and any other day before program. He also states that, “All our members are professional musicians so therefore, we don’t take songs
home to learn before rehearsal but rather, we learn them during rehearsal”. They also train musicians who are willing to join the band but do not have enough skills.

I also asked about how they finance their band and their program charges. He said they support the band and its members through the money they get from programs. He states, “The band charges between 1,000 and 2,000 Ghana cedis depending on the program”. They charge 2,000 Ghana cedis when audiences are paying for the show and 1,000 when there are not. They also some time get donations from their fans but not that much. Based on my research questions, he told me they don’t only perform their old highlife tune but other music genre including jazz and Reggae. He concluded that the band is working on their new recordings which include new songs and new arrangement for some of their old songs.
CHAPTER THREE

ANALYTICAL PARAMETERS

The goal of this analysis is to examine saxophone melodies and improvised sections in Ghanaian highlife music of the 1950s and 1960s. Highlife saxophone melodies represent a conscious blending of traditional West African music, Caribbean music, and swing jazz so as to trace processes of enculturation and stylistic adaptation within a hybrid musical tradition.

Therefore, this analysis employs as its parameters the basic elements of music: rhythm, melody, harmony, musical time, and form. Eric Starr, (2009) defines harmonic extensions in a melody as “a melodic note which is not found in the underlying chord neither does it serve as a passing note”. These extensions are commonly found in contemporary music including jazz and Ghanaian highlife music. These analytical parameters will also include harmonic extensions in melody and also interpretative techniques used in these improvisations.

The interpretative technique or tools include the following: repetition, sequence, imitation, chromaticism, diminution, syncopation, call and response, and ornaments (trill or shake, turn or upper turn, mordent, appoggiatura, and acciaccatura). These will form the general analytical outline of the pieces for analyses. However, only the devices and the elements of music that are found on the face of the pieces will be duly described. This chapter is dedicated for the musical analysis of E. T. Mensah and His Tempos Band which also represent the highlife music of the 1950s.
ONIPA

Stephen Aidoo  Alto Saxophone Solo  E.T. Mensah And The Tempos Band

A

5

9

13

B

17

A♭

21

B♭7

25

A2

29

Cm

Fm

B♭7

Eb

Fm

B♭7

Eb

Fm

B♭7

Eb

Fm

B♭7

Eb

Fm

B♭7

Eb

B♭7

Eb
3.1 Musical Analysis of Onipa

3.1.1 Form

The structure of this song follows a 32-measure AABA form with the saxophonist stating the melody through one entire cycle. Duckworth explains AABA form as followed: “The 32 bar song form is a four-part form that also explores the concept of contrast and repetition. It can be described as statement, restatement, departure, and return, and is diagrammed as AABA” (2009). Because each of the four sections is of equal length, each section is eight measures long. The melody is first harmonized by trumpet, saxophone, and trombone before it is sung with “Twi” lyrics.

The first section A starts from bar 1 to bar 8 and the second section A1, which is a repetition of the first section, starts from the last beat of bar 9 to bar 16. Section B starts from the last beat of bar 17 to the third beat of bar 25, and the last section which is A2, starts from the last beat of bar 25 to bar 32. The piece is in the key of E flat major without any tonal shift.

The predominant improvisational arrangement of the saxophone solo in this piece is based on the theme or the entire melody of the song with little variation on some of the notes.

3:1:2 Rhythmic Structure

The common rhythmic motifs found in this piece are shown in the example 1 below.
Example 1:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

Generally, this improvisation is predominantly made up of long rhythms with few short rhythms which are repetitive and syncopated. The first rhythmic motive is seen in bar 1 to the second beat of bar 5 and is repeated in bar 9 to bar 12 with a half note at the end instead of two quarter notes. In addition, fragment of the other three motifs are repeated throughout the entire song to create rhythmic unity. Furthermore, the triplet rhythm which emphasized the player’s identity and originality as an African musician is first seen in bar 13 and is repeated in bar 31. The player uses this triplet to create rhythmic variations as a saxophone soloist.

In the *Akan* language, the written word is sometimes different from the spoken word. They sometimes stretch the spoken words in order to emphasis the meaning of the message being sent across. The saxophonist does the same thing here by suspending some of the notes to emphasize the meaning of the song. The player also employs the ties to prolong some of the notes to fit into the lyrics of the song.
An example is found in the first beat of bar 8 which is being prolonged to emphasize the word *hwee* (nothing). The lyrics in the first part of this song from bars 1-8 is advising human beings to be very careful, for we are nothing before God.

Therefore, the longest and the shortest rhythmic notes found in this piece are in semibreves/whole notes and quavers/8th notes. Examples of these long and short notes are found in bar 13 and the first beat of bar 4 respectively. The long rhythms are usually used in phrase endings as evidenced in bars 16 and 32.

Moreover, the ties are also there to create syncopation which is another characteristic of African music. The player did not use only ties in creating syncopation but also the rest sign. Finally, there is also emphasis on the down beat as seen in example 2 below which produces syncopated rhythms that traces back to swing jazz music where the influence comes from.

**Example 2:**

![Example 2](attachment:example2.png)

**3:1:3 Melodic Structure**

Generally, the melodic contour of this song is predominantly conjunct in motion with occasional leaps, depicting human nature as being described by lyrics of the song. An example of the leap is found in the last beat of bar 6 which is a major 6th apart, describing the gap between the ups and
downs of human nature. It also serves as a dominant seventh in preparation towards the end of the first part of the song. The ascending and the descending nature of the melodic contour of this piece depict life and death. In comparing the melody and the lyrics of the song, whenever the singer talks about life, the melody goes up and comes down when he talks about death. Examples are seen in the section B of this song. The last beat of bar 17 to the first beat of bar 21 talks about life and the last beat of bar 21 to the second beat of bar 25 also talks about death.

Common intervals found in this song are unison, major and minor 2nd, major and minor 3rd and perfect 4th. These are the common intervals found in Akan traditional songs. Therefore, the smallest interval found in this piece is the unison and the largest interval is the major 6th (G5-B4) which mirrors the traits of African vocal music. African vocal music does not employ wide melodic intervals as compared to European classical music. This has affected most of their instrumental music as evidence in this saxophone solo work. The overall compass or range of this piece is between Bb 3 and C5 which is a compound major 2nd.

Example 3:

In addition, there are melodic repetitions and variations as evidenced in section A, which is the statement, A1 as restatement and A2, which is the return. In comparing the three sections, the player repeats the first phrase in the statement in the first phrase of the restatement with a rest in the first beat of bar 11. The same episode ensues in the first phrase of the return with a little
variation on the last beat of bar 28 which divides the quarter notes into two 8\textsuperscript{th} notes with two different pitches. Moreover, the saxophonist employs a little variation in the last phrases of the three sections. Comparing the statement and the restatement, the player used ties to prolong the A note in the last beat of bar 5 into the first beat of bar 1 and repeated the same note in the third beat with a tie and ended the bar with G note. He started the next bar with B3 as dominant chord and run it as a scale upwards to the tonic note in the next bar which ends the phrase. In the restatement, he started the phrase with F4 in the third beat of the bar 12, G4 on the fourth beat and A4 in the next bar. He repeated the G note in the next bar using triplet as against the dominant 7\textsuperscript{th} chord to the end of the phrase. He did the same thing in bar 31 of the return.

3:1:4 Harmonic Structure

Generally, the harmonic structure of the entire song is made up of primary chords with few harmonic extensions which serve as a dominant seventh chord to the end of a perfect cadence. Examples of the harmonic extensions are seen in bars 7, 15 and bar 31. This harmonic extension is also used in a conclusion of an imperfect cadence as evidenced in bar 25. Therefore, these are the two ways in which the composer uses his harmonic extensions. This brings us to the cadences used in this piece as shown in the table below.
Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHRASE</th>
<th>CADENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 1 (1-4)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 2 (5-8)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 3(9-12)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 4 (13-16)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 5 (17-20)</td>
<td>Deceptive/ Interrupted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 6(21-24)</td>
<td>Imperfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 6 (25-28)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 7 (29-32)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table below is the primary chords used in this song.

Table 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTIONS</th>
<th>CHORD STRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section  A</td>
<td>I – I – ii – V7 – I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section  A1</td>
<td>I – I – ii – V7 - I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section  B</td>
<td>I – IV – IV – IV – V7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section  A2</td>
<td>I – I – ii – V7 – I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is a standard highlife harmonic progression based on the *Yaa Amposah* chord structure. According Coffie (2012), the *Yaa Amposah* chord structure started from I – IV – V – I and later developed into I – vi – ii – V – I or I – I7 – ii – V7 – I.
3.1.5 Compositional Techniques

The first compositional technique seen in this piece is pitch bending. Due to the versatility of the instrument the player employs pitch bending as a woodwind instrument technique to start some of the notes from a lower pitch or flatted note upwards for embellishment. This technique is very common in jazz music and other contemporary music. Examples are seen in the last beat of bars 1, 5, 9, 17, 21, 25 and 29.

Again, the player employs the *staccato* to articulate some of the notes and also emphasize on the message being sent across. The examples found in bar 4 is emphasizing the words *dwen wo ho* meaning (think about yourself) as a warning message. Those found in bars 9 and 24 are there to articulate the notes for embellishment. Finally, there is also a chromatic note for embellishment or decoration. This chromatic note is the flattened 7\(^{th}\) as evidenced in the last beat of bar 20 and the first beat of bar 23. The player approaches the first chromatic note in bar 20 a third below and resolves unto a second below which is a vivid characteristic of African music and Ghanaian highlife harmony as well. In bar 23, it is being approached from a second below and resolves unto a second below. Therefore, the saxophonist uses this to create a sense of identity and originality.
SUNDAY MIRROR

Tenor Saxophone Solo

Stephen Aidoo

E.T Mensah And The Tempos Band

F Gm Gm C F

bending

F Gm Gm C F

F F F F F F

Gm C F Gm C F

F F F F F F

Gm C F Gm C F

F F F F F F

Gm C F Gm C F

F F F F F F

Gm C F Gm C F
3.2 Musical Analysis of Sunday Mirror

3.2.1 Form

The saxophone solo in the song Sunday Mirror spans 32 bars. The solo is in the form of ABB with B being repeated as a coda to the end of the entire song. This is a binary form of which the B section is reiterated three times. The A section spans bar 1 to bar 8 and the second section B, spans bar 9 to 16. B1, which is a repetition of the B, starts from bar 17 to bar 24. Section B2 serves as the Coda of the entire song and spans bars 25 to 32. This indicates that all the four sections have eight equal measures.

This solo is essentially an improvisation of two thematic materials derived from the main song. E.T. Mensah wrote this song in the Key of F major without any tonal shifts using the Bflat tenor saxophone and the electric lead guitar as solo instruments. The second half of the section B was first harmonized by the trumpet, trombone and the saxophone as the introduction of the song before it is sung with English lyrics.

3.2.2 Rhythmic Structure

The rhythmic motifs found in this song are shown below.

Example 4:

1 \[\text{motif 1} \] 2 \[\text{motif 2} \] 3 \[\text{motif 3} \] 4 \[\text{motif 4} \] 5 \[\text{motif 5} \] 6 \[\text{motif 6} \]

Generally, these rhythmic motifs are repeated throughout the entire solo work. The first rhythmic motif is seen in the second beat of bar 1 and is repeated in the last beat of bar 1, first beat of bar 2, last beat of bar 8, and first beat of bars 13, 23, 29 and 31. In the same manner, the rest of the

38
motifs are reiterated in the entire section. For example, the section B is predominantly based on a sequential motivic development. Thus, the figure in the third and fourth beat of bar 9 which is the fifth motif illustrated above is sequentially treated up to bar 12 which is also a fragment of the second theme of the main song.

Furthermore, this song is predominantly made up of short rhythms with a few relatively longer rhythms based on the English lyrics of the song. Normally, English, a non-tonal language does not inform the rhythmic pattern of the notes in a composition as a tonal African language does in African music. Therefore, the vocalist tries to incorporate this African style of singing into the English lyrics to identify himself as an African. An example of this rhythmic imitation is seen in the first beat of bar 5, which imitates the words ‘Sunday Mirror’.

Again, the entire section B is in the form of call and response. Therefore, the short rhythms create way for the other instruments to respond. This is a typical African way of composition. Finally, there are suspensions and rests that create a syncopated effect as evidenced in bars 5 to 8 illustrated below.
Example 5:

Based on the time signature of the song which is also the standard meter for highlife music, the composer uses very simple rhythmic notes for easy transcription as shown above.

3.2.3 Melodic Structure

Generally, the melodic contour of this song is predominantly disjunct in motion with occasional stepwise movements. Therefore, the common intervals found are major and minor thirds as evidenced in the first and the last beat of bar 1 respectively. There are also perfect fourths and major sixths as seen in the third beat of bar 4 and the second beat of bar 2 respectively. The widest interval is F4 and F3, which is an octave. The entire melody ranges from D3 - F4 which is a compound major third as illustrated below.

Example 6:

Again, the entire melody of this improvisation is based on sequential development of two thematic materials. The second phrase of the A section (bar 5 - 8) is a restatement of the first phrase (bar 1 - 4) which represents the first theme of the melody. The second thematic material
starts from the last beat of bar 8 to bar 16 of the B section which is sequentially developed in B2 and the Coda. Some of this thematic development or variation is based on the harmony of the song. For example, instead of the player repeating the spelling of the F major chord in its root position seen in bar 1, he rather spells the second inversion of the F major chord in bar 5 to create melodic variation. The same variation is seen in the last beat of bar 2 which is the D note as against the G note in the last beat of bar 6, which are all members of the prevailing G minor chord. These variations can be seen in the (a) and (b) illustration below.

Example 7:

(a) F major chord in its root position

(b) F major chord in its 2nd inversion

In addition to the melodic variation based on the harmony or the chord progression, there is the use of intervals of the same length in different pitches as evidenced in the last beat of bar 8 to 11 of the B section. In this section, the player uses the interval of minor second in different pitches, as seen in the illustration below, to create melodic variation instead of repeating the same notes as the vocalist did in the main song. These are the two main techniques used by the saxophonist to improvise the given melody.
Example 8:

![Musical notation image]

3.2.4 Harmonic Structure

The harmonic structure of this song is centralized on the basic highlife primary chord progression as shown in the table below.

Table 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTIONS</th>
<th>CHORD STRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section A</td>
<td>I – ii – ii – V – I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below are the cadences found in the phrase ending of the melody.
Table 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHRASE</th>
<th>CADENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 1 (bar 1 - 4)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 2 (bar 5 - 8)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 3 (bar 9 - 12)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 4 (bar 13 - 16)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 5 (17 - 20)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 6 (bar 21 - 24)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 7 (bar 25 - 28)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 8 (bar 29 - 32)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.5 Interpretative Technique

The four main interpretative techniques used in this song are chromaticism, pitch bending, *legato*, and repetition which have been discussed earlier. One unique thing about this solo work that does not make it boring, though the saxophonist repeated a lot of the melodic lines, is the use of chromaticism. The first chromatic note seen in this song is the flattered seventh (E-flat) as evidenced in the last beat of bar 1. This chromatic note supposes to be C in the main song, but the saxophonist spontaneously played the E flat note to create melodic variation as against the next phrase (5-8) for embellishment. The chromatic note was approached from a minor third below and resolved unto a minor third below.

The next chromatic notes is seen in the B section which incorporated the minor third of the blue scale and the raised fourth which is very common in African music. In order not to repeat the
same melodic line in the B section, the saxophonist tries to keep the melodic interval of a minor second in different pitches by applying chromaticism as evidenced in the last beat of bar 8 and the first beat of bar 9. The player approaches the chromatic note in the last beat of bar 8 a minor second above and resolves unto a minor second above. The saxophonist applies the same approaches and resolutions in the next chromatic note seen in the first beat of bar 9.

Furthermore, the saxophonist applies the *legato* technique to articulate multiples of notes to create rhythmic continuity as evidenced in bars 9 to 12. Lastly, there are repetitions of thematic and *motivic* materials as discussed earlier.
DAY BY DAY

Stephen Aidoo
Alto Saxophone Solo

E.T. Mensah And The Tempos Band
3.3 Musical Analysis of “Day By Day”

3.3.1 Form
The saxophone solo of this song is through-composed in form. This work is based largely on improvised thematic materials. It is distinct in that it has no semblance to the main body of the piece. It is cast in the C major tonality, the home key of the entire piece.

The bell pattern and the bass line of the entire song have traces of Caribbean music. This style was introduced by Guy Warren the drummer of the Tempos band who went abroad to study the Afro-Cuban music. Collins (1986) states that, “Warren had travelled to Europe and America, playing with Afro-Cuban musicians and returned with the latest records including calypsos. This refreshing influence became part of post-war highlife….”

Moreover, the improvised thematic material is fraught with chromaticism which is characterized by automatic shifts in tonal center. What also strikes the listener on the onset of this solo is E.T Mensah’s prolific use of ornamentation.

3.3.2 Rhythmic Structure
This improvisation generally makes use of rhythmic figure which is a direct opposite to the rhythm of the lyrics of the main song. Example 9 shows the rhythmic motifs found in this improvisation.
Example 9:

1. These are the rhythmic motifs employed by E.T Mensah without any repetition. Furthermore, E.T. Mensah uses different kinds of triplets to create rhythmic variation, thereby breaking monotony and increasing musical excitement. Examples of these triplets are seen in the second beat of bar 2, first beat beats of bar 3 and 7. Furthermore, these triplets as against the bell pattern of the song as illustrated in **Example 10** create polyrhythm.
Example 10:

Saxophone solo – (bars 2-3)

Polyrhythm

Bell pattern -

Moreover, as a result of the triplets that create rhythmic variation and polyrhythm, it also emphasizes the complexity of rhythms in African music that as described by Munyaradzi and Zimidzi (2012) is a basic characteristic of African music. Finally, there are ties and rests that produce a syncopated effect as evidenced in bar 3.

3.3.3 Melodic Structure

The melodic contour of this improvisation is primarily disjunct in motion with occasional conjunct or stepwise movement. Therefore, the predominant intervals found in this piece are major and minor thirds, as evidenced in the second beat of bar 2 and the third beat of bar 8 respectively. There are also perfect 4ths and 5ths, and major 6ths as evidenced in the first beat of bars 8, 4 and 3 respectively. The widest interval found in this piece is the octave which is evidenced in the first beat of bar 2. The overall compass of this melody is between G5 and B flat 3 which is a compound major 6th as shown below.
Example 11:

Furthermore, there are three distinct thematic materials seen in this improvisation. These musical materials are not restatement. The first thematic material starts from bars 1 to 3, the second theme continues from bars 4 to the third beat of bar 7 and the last theme starts from the last beat of bar 7 to bar 9. A look at the chord structure of the second bar of the first theme as against the melody reveals that the E flat note is not a member of the prevailing F major chord but rather, serves as a melodic extension which change the sound of the harmony to a seventh chord, as shown in the illustration below.

Example 12:

This improvisation is preponderant with these melodic extensions as evidenced in bars 3, 4, 6 and 8.

Again, the player tries to spell the notes in the prevailing chords in different inversions. In bar 4, the saxophonist spells the root position of the dominant triad of the C major chord. The next example is seen in the second beat of bar 5 where the saxophonist spells the third inversion of C major seventh. However, the player ended the last phrase of the improvisation with the spelling of the C major chord as shown below.
Example 13:

\[\text{\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example13.png}}\]

3.3.4 Harmonic Structure

Generally, the chord structure of this song is based on the primary chord progression, with C major seventh as a secondary chord. This is shown in the table below.

Table 5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BAR NUMBERS</th>
<th>CHORD STRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>IV – V – V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>I – I7 – IV – I – V – I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.5 Interpretive Techniques

The predominant interpretive techniques used in this piece are chromaticism and ornamentation. The first and the predominant chromatic notes seen in this piece is the E flat which indicates the player’s use of the blues scale. This kind of scale is not common in Ghanaian traditional music but very popular in swing jazz music. Examples of these notes are seen in the last beat of bar 2, first beat of bar 5, third beats of bars 6 and 8. Moreover, the examples seen in bars 2, 5 and 6 have different approaches but the same resolution which emphasize the fact that, African music is full of repetition.
Furthermore, the next chromatic notes which are very common in Ghanaian traditional music are the flatted seventh and the raised fourth. These chromatic notes are very common in almost all the Ghanaian traditional music especially the *Akan* traditional music. Examples of the flatted seventh which is the B flat notes are seen in the third beat of bar 5 and the last beat of bar 8. The first example seen in bar 5 is approached in a major second above and resolved unto a minor third below. In bar 8, the player approaches it from a major second above and resolves unto a major second above. Comparing bars 5 and 8, it is very obvious that they have the same approach but different resolution. The raised fourth note, which is the F sharp, is approached a minor second above and resolves unto a minor second below, as evidenced in the second beat of bar 8. Aside these chromatic notes, we also have the flatted sixth, which is the A flat note as evidenced in the first beat of bar 6 for embellishment. The player tries to combine both the minor third of the blue scale and flatted seventh to break away from tonality as illustrated in **Example 14** below.

**Example 14:**

![Example 14](image)

The next compositional technique to talk about is the ornament *acciaccatura*. E. T. Mensah employs this ornament for embellishment or decoration as evidenced in the third beat of bar 3 and 7, and the last beat of bar 7. Lastly, E. T Mensah uses the technique of pitch bending which runs through all the saxophone solos in these selected songs to create tone variation.
Generally, this is the third type of improvisation in Ghanaian highlife music where the thematic material or the idea of the solo work is different from the theme of the main song. In this work, there were no repetitions of thematic idea as compared to the “Onipa” and “Sunday Mirror”. E.T also makes use of more chromatic passages.
CHAPTER FOUR

This chapter examines the characteristics of saxophone improvisation in highlife music of the 1960s. Composers of this era adopted the Caribbean style of music, which include calypso and samba where accents or strong beats were no more placed on the second, and the fourth beats, but on the first and the third beats of the bar. Furthermore, a greater emphasis was placed on the singing rather than the instrumentation, as compared to the 1950s. This emphasis on singing was partially connected to influences from American small swing bands also known as ‘jump’. Collins, (unpublished script) in an interview with King Bruce the leader and founder of The Black Beats Band, emphasized this connection: 1

Louis Jordan was a black American and his records were influential when I first started working with bands in Ghana… His was quite a small seven piece group with a front line of trumpet and C melody saxophone which Jordan played. Up to then instrumental dexterity had been predominant among jazz and swing bands, but Jordan watered this down and stressed the singing. He was also a singer, and the instrumentals only came in to provide variety, stress emphasis and to repeat choruses… So a group that didn’t have skilled instrumentalists, like our Black Beats, could very successfully use Jordan’s music… Fortunately the fans liked our predominance of singing and this trend was proved later in the 1960’s and 70’s.

‘Deacon Joe’ and ‘How Long Must I Wait For You’ by Louis Jordan is a typical example of King Bruce description.
AUNTY CHRISTY

Alto Saxophone Solo

Jerry Hansen
Ramblers International Dance Band

Stephen Aidoo
4.1 Musical Analysis of “Aunty Christie”

4.2.1 Form

The saxophone solo in the song “Aunty Christie” spans 12 bars. It is cast in the F major tonality, the home key of the entire piece. This solo work is in a binary form (ABB) with the B section repeated. Duckworth explains that; “Binary form is a two-part form that explores the principle of contrast” (2009 p). Therefore, this form can also be seen as a statement, contrast or counter statement, and emphasis since the B section is repeated. In this solo work the A section, which is the statement, spans bars 1 to 4. The B section, which is the contrast or counter statement, spans bar 5 to the second beat of bar 8, and the emphasis which is the B1 spans the third beat of bar 8 to 12. In all, both sections have four equal measures.

4.2.2 Rhythmic Structure

This saxophone solo is characterized by short rhythmic figures with the crotchet as the longest note/tone. The shortest note found is this work is the semiquaver. Furthermore, the common rhythmic motifs found in this piece are shown in Example 1 below.
Example 15:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

The first and second rhythmic motifs in Example 1 above underscore the first musical idea of this work. Furthermore, the third and the fourth rhythmic motifs present the second musical idea or theme of this improvisation. This leads to a rhythmic repetition, which is seen in section B1 and emphasizes the counter statement with few melodic and rhythmic variations (last beat of bar 8 and the first beat of bar 9 as against the last beat of bar four and the first beat of bar 5). These differences can be seen in Example 2 below.

Example 16:

Section B

Section B1
Finally, almost all the rests and ties or suspensions signs seen in this piece do not create syncopation, but rather, makes the rhythm short or long as compared to what prevailed in the 1950s. Consequently, there are no displacements of accents in this work. This traces back to Afro-Cuban music, which influenced the 1960s highlife music after the Second World War. The player also employed the triplets to create rhythmic variation as evidenced in the first and second beats of bars 6 and 10.

4.2.3 Melodic Structure

Generally, the melodic contour of this improvisation is predominantly disjunct in motion with occasional stepwise movement. Among the intervals found in this piece are unison, major and minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} as evidenced in the first beat of bar 1, fourth beat of bar 1, second beat of bar 2, second beat of bar 4 and fourth beat of bar 11 respectively. There is also a perfect 5\textsuperscript{th} and a major 6\textsuperscript{th}, which is the widest interval in this piece as evidenced in the second beats of bar 1 and 3 respectively. The entire melody spans F5 to C3, which is a compound major fourth as illustrated in Example 3 below.

Example 17:

![Example 17](image)

Though, the first thematic idea of this work resembles the statement of the main song based on the same chord progression, the second thematic idea of this solo work is the same as the counter statement of the main song with little variation. The composer also uses the same thematic idea,
which is the counter statement as an introduction to the main song. Although, highlife composers/arrangers of the 1960s tried to move away from the arrangement of the 1950s highlife music, traces of their arrangement still persists. Most of them including Jerry Hansen still employ a fragment of the theme or one of the themes of the main song as an introduction by the horns. Coffie explains:

“Dance bands in the 1950s such as the Tempos, Black Beats, Read Spots, Stargazers, and Rhythm Aces were noted for a particular style of arrangement. This style became the basic dance band highlife arrangement. Artistically, it does not required high level of creativity as harmonies were based on primary chords. The brass begins the introduction by playing either a section or the entire vocal melody either in unison or in harmony”.-(2012, pg. 78)

Furthermore, comparing the melodic nature of the counter statement and the emphasis to the second thematic idea of the main song, one can easily come out with the spontaneous ideas the saxophonist employs in creating melodic variation and continuity.

The fifth, seventh, and the eighth bars of the counter statement have the same melodic line with the second theme of the main song. The only difference is in the sixth bar where the saxophonist introduces the blue note, which is the flatted 3rth in the second beat. In the same manner, the saxophonist varies all the notes in bar 10 of the B1, which is the emphasis section. The player introduces new chromatic and diatonic notes of which some are members of the prevailing chord and others serve as harmonic extension. For example, the A and the C notes are members of A minor and D major chord respectively. The other notes serve as harmonic extension. These variations are illustrated in the Example 4 below.
Example 18:

Main vocal line

Saxophone line B

Saxophone line B1

4.2.4 Harmonic Structure

Generally, the harmonic structure of this song comprises both primary and secondary chords including secondary dominants. Based on the love lyrics of the song, the composer uses secondary chords to create the love mood. Moreover, these secondary chords serve as one of the characteristics of the 1960s highlife music since composers of this era explored other genre of music including Afro-Cuban music. Below Table 6 is the chord progressions used in this song.
Table 6:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTIONS</th>
<th>CHORD STRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 7 shows the cadences used in this song.

Table 7:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHRASES</th>
<th>CADENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 1(bar 1-4)</td>
<td>Half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 2(bar 5-8)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 3(bar 9-12)</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.5 Interpretive Techniques

The predominant technique that runs through all the selected pieces is pitch bending. The saxophones employ pitch bending in all the three sections as evidenced in the first beats of bars 3 and 6 for embellishment. This is followed by the element of chromaticism, which is the next interpretive technique used for decoration. The first chromatic note used in this piece is the flatted 3rd, which is approached a minor second below and resolves unto a minor second above as evidenced in the first beat of bar 2.
Again, flatted 7\textsuperscript{th} as evidenced in the second beat of bar 4 and the first beat of bar 10 is the next chromatic note used in this work. The player approaches it a minor second below and resolves unto a minor second above which is a repetition of the first chromatic note. Moreover, in bar 10 the player approaches it a minor second above and resolves unto a minor second below. Furthermore, C sharp or raised 5\textsuperscript{th} is the next chromatic note used in this improvisation as evidenced in the second beat of bar 10. It is being approached a minor second above and resolves unto a minor second below. The last chromatic note which is a member of the main melodic line is the F sharp as evidenced in the third beat of bar 6. Finally, the player employs all these chromatic notes to establish and maintain the romantic mood of the son.
AGBOO A YIEE

Stephen Aidoo
Alto Saxophone Solo
Jerry Hansen
Ramblers International Dance Band

Double Time

C

F

Dm

G

Em

F

G7

C

C

F

Dm

G

Em

G7

C

bend

bend

bend

bend

bend
4.2 Musical Analysis Of “Aboo A Yiee”

4.2.1 Form

The structure of this improvisation is a strophic form (AA) with 32 measures, which is different from the main song because of its double timing. The main song has 8 measures and it is repeated throughout. It is firmly anchored in the common time signature. The time signature changes to two-four immediately the saxophone comes which expand and augment the measures and the notes respectively.

Furthermore, section A, which is the main theme of this solo work starts from bar 1 to 16. Section A1, which is the repeated version based on chord progression starts from bar 17 to 32. Though, the saxophonist changes almost all the notes in the A1, he does not make it different from the A because they are all based on the same harmonic progression. This is another type of highlife improvisation where the melodic material is completely different from the main song but still maintain the same harmonic progression. The song “Aboo A Yiee” is cast in the C major tonality.

4.2.2 Rhythmic Structure

Generally, the rhythmic structure of saxophone solo in “Agboo Ayiee” is predominantly short, often ending with long notes. The shortest rhythm is the quarter or the crotchet note and the longest is the minim or the half note. Furthermore, the player employs ties or suspensions to prolong some of the note and also to create a syncopated rhythm as evidenced in the last beat of bar 1, 3, 5 and 7.
Due to the double timing of the entire song, the player also employs syncopation in the saxophone solo to serve as a bridge between the late 1950s and the early 1960s highlife music. To explain further, the composer placed accents on the strong beat of the main song, which is one of the characteristics of 1960s highlife music. Moreover, there was rather emphasis on the weak beat of the saxophone solo which also follows the highlife music of the 1950s. Therefore, this combination is a clear transformation process in highlife music from the 1950s to the 1960s. This combination also helps in creating rhythmic variations.

Again, the common rhythmic motifs found in this song are shown in the Example 19 below.
Example 19:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7.
In examining the rhythmic motifs, it is clear that the player employs very simple rhythms with few triplets as evidenced in bars 4 and 5. These triplets were used in the same way by tying a quarter notes at the last beat of the previous bar to join the first note of the triplet to displace ascent as seen in the first rhythmic motif in example 5 above.

Moreover, due to the changes in the time signature, the tempo also increased when the saxophonist came in with the solo using the two-four time signature. Finally, there are no repetitions of rhythmic motif in this piece.

4.2.3 Melodic Structures

Generally, the structure of this solo work is predominantly conjunct in or stepwise motion with few disjunct movements. Therefore, the predominant intervals found in conjunct motion are minor and major 2 as evidenced in the first and last beat of bar respectively. We also have minor and major 3rd as evidenced in the last beat of bar 9 and the first beat of bar 30 respectively. Therefore, the major 3rd serves as the widest melodic interval in this solo work. As discussed earlier, these intervals are very common in Ghanaian traditional music. The overall compass of this work is between G4 and A5, which is a compound major 2nd as shown in Example below.

Example 20:
Furthermore, one unique thing about this work is the saxophonist prolific used of melodic sequence as evidenced in the last beat of bar 1 to the first beat of bar 11. The player used this melodic sequence to start this solo work, by playing from the fifth degree and sequentially descend unto the tonic note of the scale as shown in **Example 21** below.

**Example 21:**

![Example 21](image)

Again, the saxophonist spells the root position of the D minor chord in bar 22 to the first beat of bar 23. Finally, the player employs chromatic scale as evidence in the first beat of bar 11 to the last beat of bar 13. This scale can also be seen in the first beat of bar 26 to the last beat of bar 28. The player employs this chromatic scale to create the sense of tonal shift.

### 4.2.4 Harmonic Structure

The harmonic structure of this song is based on both primary and secondary chords. The composer also made use of harmonic extension in melody, which serve as a dominant seventh in preparation towards the end of the first perfect cadence in this song as evidenced in bar 14. Because this improvisation is in strophic form, there are two perfect cadences found at end of each phrase. **Table 8** is the chord structure used in this piece.
4:2:5 Interpretative Techniques

The predominant interpretative technique used in this piece is the chromatic note, bending and ornamentation (*acciaccatura*). The first chromatic seen in this piece is the flatted seventh as evidenced in the first beat of bars 11 and 32, which is very prominent in African music. This flatted seventh is approached a major 2\textsuperscript{nd} above and resolves unto a minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} above. Furthermore, the next chromatic note seen in this work is the D flat, which is very uncommon in African music specifically Ghanaian traditional music. The player approaches it a minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} below and resolves unto a minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} above. We also have the blue note, which is the E flat as evidenced in the first beat of bars 13 and 27 with different approaches and resolutions. In bar 11, the saxophonist approaches it a minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} below and resolves unto a minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} above. Moreover, the saxophonist approaches and resolves unto a minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} below in bar 27.

Again, another common chromaticism in African music that is found in this piece is the raised fourth as evidenced in the second beat of bar 27. The last chromatic note seen in this piece is the flatted sixth as evidenced in the first beat of bar 23 and the second beat of bar 31. The saxophonist uses these chromatic notes, to establish the romantic mood of the song and also for decoration.
The next interpretative technique used in this work is the bending technique, which is found in almost all the saxophone solos in my selected work for tonal decoration. Lastly, we also have the acciaccatura as evidenced in the last beat of bar 3 for embellishment.
4.3 Musical Analysis of “Aoo Danye”

4.3.1 Form
The musical form of the song “Aoo Danye” also follows the 12 bar blues form (ABB) with emphasis on the respond or the counter statement as discussed earlier in the first song of this chapter. Therefore, the statement, which is the A section spans bar 1 to 4. The counter statement, which, is the B section spans bar 5 to 8 and emphasis spans bar 9 to 12. This song is cast in the key of E flat major.

4.3.2 Rhythmic Structure
The common rhythmic motifs found in the saxophone solo of the song “Aoo Danye” are shown in the Example 22 below.
Example 22:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6.
Generally, the saxophone solo in this song is predominantly made up of short rhythms. The longest rhythm is the crochet or quarter note and the shortest is the semiquaver or sixteenth note. The saxophonist repeated and varied most of the rhythms to break rhythmic monotony as evidenced in the second and third rhythmic motifs, and the fourth and fifth rhythmic motifs in Example 8 above. Comparing the second rhythmic motif as against the third motif, it is clear that the player repeated all the notes in the first bar and varied the notes in the first and the second beats of the second bar. Moreover, the player maintained the notes in the third and fourth beats, which is the quarter note and the rest sign in the second bar.

Again, comparing the fourth and the fifth rhythmic motifs, the saxophonist repeated all the notes in the first bar, and the first note of the second bar. Instead of the two crochet rest sign in the third and the fourth beat of the fourth rhythmic motif, the player rather uses the dotted quaver, semiquaver and the crochet note. Furthermore, the saxophonist employs the semiquaver note at the beginning of the fifth rhythmic motif to serve as a bending note to create rhythmic excitement.

Lastly, the saxophonist employs the tie or the suspension to create syncopation and prolong some of the notes as evidenced in bar 3. The player did not only use the suspension or the tie in creating syncopation but also, the rest sign as evidence in the first of bar 1.

4.3.3 Melodic Structure

The melodic contour of this song is predominantly disjunct in motion with occasional stepwise motions. Generally, the common intervals found are major and minor thirds as evidenced in the first and second beats of bar 1. There are also major seconds and perfect fifths as evidenced in the first beat of bar 3 and third beat of bar 6 respectively. The longest melodic interval in this
saxophone solo is perfect fifth as evidenced in the third beat of bar 11. The overall compass of this work is between C2 and F4, which is a compound perfect fifth as shown in Example 23 below.

Example 23:

Furthermore, this solo as mentioned earlier based on two thematic materials with B repeated. Melodically, B and B1, which is the restatement and emphasis have different melodic lines altogether, which are all members of the prevailing chord with few similarities or repetitions at the end of the phrase as evidenced in the last beat of bar 9 and the first beat of bar 10 as against the last beat of bar 11 and the first beat of bar 12. Therefore, the last phrase is known as B1 or the emphasis, based on the chord structure but not the melody.

4.3.4 Harmonic Structure

Generally, the harmonic structure of this improvisation is based on both primary and secondary progressions with few harmonic extensions, which enriches the harmony and also serves as a dominant seventh to the end of the second and the third phrases of this solo as shown in Table 9 below.
Table 9:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTIONS</th>
<th>CHORD STRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section A (bar 1-4)</td>
<td>I – IV – V7 – I – vi – II – V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section B (bar 5-8)</td>
<td>I – I – IV – iii – IV – V7 – I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section B1 (bar 9-12)</td>
<td>I – I – IV – iii – IV – V7 – I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 shows the cadences found at the end of each phrase.

Table 10:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHRASE</th>
<th>CADENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 1 (bar 1-4)</td>
<td>Half cadence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrase 2 (bar 5-8)</td>
<td>Perfect cadence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrase 3 (bar 9-12)</td>
<td>Perfect cadence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.5 Interpretative Techniques

Basically, the two interpretative technique used in this improvisation are pitch bending and chromaticism. Pitch bending has been one of the techniques, which runs through all the saxophone solos in the selected song as evidenced in bar 9. Furthermore, the chromatic note in this solo work is seen in the second beat of bar 4, which is the F sharp. This chromatic note has been approached and resolved unto a minor second above. The last chromatic note is seen in the
third beat of bar 9, which is the flatted seventh. It has been approached and resolved unto a minor second below. The saxophonist uses all these techniques for decoration or embellishment.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, a summary of the findings and recommendations of the entire thesis is discussed.

5.1 Summary

Chapter one discusses the background to the studies including the contribution of highlife music to Ghanaian popular music and swing jazz band being the main imported influence of highlife music. The problem of this study is the scholarly neglect of improvisation in Ghanaian highlife music as scholars focus on the socio-historical aspect of Ghanaian popular music. Therefore, this study aimed at documenting and examining saxophone styles and technique in highlife music. Furthermore, the significance and the scope of the study, which focuses on the importance of analyzing the saxophone solos of the Tempos and the Ramblers International Band, are highlighted. These two bands among others, have really contributed to the development of highlife music in Ghana. E.T Mensah of the Tempos band and Jerry Hansen of the Ramblers International band among others, are some of the band leaders who have really taken Ghana’s highlife music unto the international level. Finally, the literature review, conceptual framework and the method for organizing this research is adequately dealt with.

Chapter two comprises a brief historical background of highlife music in Ghana, the life of E.T. Mensah, formation of the Tempos band, brief historical background of the Black Beats, the life of Jerry Hansen and the formation of the Ramblers band. The name “highlife” was coined in the 1920s by the poor local musicians who could not afford to enter into the black elite music clubs.
Its development came about as a result of the fusion between local African and Western music in three imported contexts: the coastal military brass band, the port music of the seamen and fishermen, and the local dance orchestras of the Christian elite (Collins, 1994). Therefore, the earliest type of highlife that emerged was the brass band highlife followed by the guitar band and the dance band, which developed from the dance orchestra. The foreign soldiers and sailors who were more interested in jazz music recruited a lot of our local musician and thought them how to read music. Among the bands that were formed are the Tempos Band and the Ramblers international Band.

E.T Mensah became the leader of the Tempos band after the Second World War, when almost all the white band leaders have left the country. He recruited new musicians, trained some of them and took highlife music to different level. In 1961, Jerry Hansen also formed with his Ramblers International Dance Band out of the Black Beats. This was a very big blow to King Bruce the founder of Black Beats, because almost half of its members moved to join the Ramblers International Band. This band also added a little bit taste into the highlife music by incorporating Afro-Cuban music and more Gospel harmony.

Chapter three focuses on the analytical parameters of this research and the analyses of saxophone solos of three selected pieces from the Tempos band namely ‘Onipa’, ‘Sunday Mirror’ and ‘Day By Day’, which represent the highlife music of the 1950s. These parameters focus on the basic elements of music including rhythm, melody, harmony, musical time, form and harmonic extensions in the melody. It also discusses the interpretative technique or tools such as
repetition, sequence, imitation, chromaticism, diminution, syncopation, call and response, and ornaments (trill or shake, turn or upper turn, mordent, appoggiatura, and acciaccatura).

Chapter four also follows the same analytical parameters. It also focuses on three saxophone solos of the Ramblers International Band namely ‘Aunty Christie’, ‘Agboo A Yiee’ and ‘AoDaanye’, which also represent the highlife music of the 1960s.

Additionally, the common musical form found in these selected saxophone solos are based on 32-bar form, which comprises the statement, restatement, departure and return, and the 12-bar form which also emphasizes call and response. Moreover, the use of some of the chromatic notes, which include the flatted 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 6\textsuperscript{th} are very uncommon in Ghanaian traditional music. Again, among all the techniques in highlife saxophone playing including double tonguing, circular breathing and multiphonics, highlife saxophonists place emphasis on bending. The reason behind this is that, it was the common technique used in the swing jazz band music where their main influence comes from.

Moreover, the arrangement of the saxophone solo and the entire song is also based on the swing jazz band music especially, Louis Jordan’s arrangements. Furthermore, more than half of my selected songs which represent highlife music of the 1950s and 60s have a fragment of the theme or the whole melody as their introduction and the saxophone solo also plays the same melody or a fragment of either the chorus or the main verse, with little variations. Jordan did the same thing in some of his songs including ‘ChooChooCh’boogie’, ‘Aint That Just Look Like A Woman’ ‘Aint Nobody Here But Us Chicken’ and many others. Aside this arrangement, saxophone players of highlife music also try to introduce few new themes into their solo works, which is
based on the chord progression of either the main verse or the chorus, as seen in E.T Mensah’s ‘Day By Day’ and Jerry Hansen’s ‘Agboo A Yiee’

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, highlife music is an interethic music that originated from the various musical traditions in Ghana, which include; *adowa, agbadza, and Fantiosibisa* in combination with the Western music such as jazz. Collins, quoting FelaKuti states:

> It was after I was exposed that I started using jazz and I was using jazz as a stepping-stone to African music. Later, when I got to America I was exposed to African history which I was not even exposed to here (in Nigeria). It was then that I really began to see that I had not played African music. I had been using jazz to play African music, when really I should be using African music to play jazz. (1987, pg.15)

Like Nigeria’s FelaKuti, Ghanaian musicians in the 1950s and 60s changed highlife to the extent that they started using jazz music to play Ghanaian music. E.T Mensah and His Tempos Band, and Ramblers International Band, among others, were the dance band that took highlife music to this level. The arrangement, harmonic extension in melody, form and instrumentation are all in the style of jazz music. Although, African music also contributed a lot to the formation of jazz music, most of the instrumentation and the arrangements are western. Guy Warren (Kofi Ghanaba) also realized this idea after he had left The Tempos Band and he emphasized that:

> I said to myself “Guy, you can never play like Gene Krupa, Max Roach or Louis Bellson, they have a different culture and they can never play like you”. So I had to make the choice of being the poor imitation of Buddy Rich or play something they couldn’t. I could play jazz well, but I possessed something that nobody else had. So I started to play African music with a little bit of Jazz thrown in, not jazz with a little African music thrown in (Collins, 1987, pg.15).
Therefore, in this analysis, it is very clear that the jazz instrumentation and arrangements over shadows the African ones in the saxophone solos of Ghanaian highlife music of the 1950s up to date. This is probable because of strong jazz influence and instrumentation on highlife music.

I will therefore categorize highlife music into the second point of Akin Euba’s concept of categorization of neo-African Art music. Euba (1993) categorizes neo-African art music as follows:

1. Composers whose works are predominantly western in idioms with little or no reference to African elements. Ayo Bankole’s ‘Toccata and Fugue’ for organ, AtoTurkson’s ‘three pieces for flute and piano’ are examples of this category.
2. Composers whose works are western in idioms and instrumentation but borrow thematic material from African sources. FelaSowande’s ‘Folk Symphony’ and ‘African Suite’ for strings are examples of this category.
3. Composers whose works are equally African and Western in elements and idiom. Ayo Bankole’s ‘Festac Cantata’ and J.H. Nketia’s ‘Volta Fantasy’ for piano are examples of this category.
4. Composers whose works are predominantly African in idioms with little or no reference to western elements. DuroLadipo’s folk opera ‘Oba Koso’ and Solomon Mba-Katana’s ‘Midday Dream’ for an African orchestra are examples of this category.

Again, the analytical findings of these selected saxophone solos reveal the use of African traditional elements. These include the call and response technique, the predominant use of
polyrhythms, tone-text relationship or tonal inflections, syncopation or displaced accents, repetitions (exact or varied repetitions), and the use of the lowered seventh and the raised fourth.

Highlife saxophonists also employed a technique similar to the word painting of the baroque period. Composers of this era try to use their music to depict or to imitate the action or the emotion as described in the text. Ghanaian highlife saxophonists use their pitch to depict the meaning of the text of their music, since most of the themes come from the verse or the chorus of the main song. Furthermore, highlife saxophonists try to stay in their tradition by avoiding large melodic intervals which are note found in Ghanaian traditional music, since jazz are being used to play African music.

Furthermore, Repetition, staccato, and suspension seen in this selected saxophone solos are used to emphasis or stress on the message being sent across since almost all the themes of the saxophone solos based on the thematic material of the main song.

In comparing the highlife music saxophonists of the 1950s and 60s, it is obvious that the 1960s were more elaborates than the 1950s. Furthermore, the saxophone solos of the highlife music of the 1960s took different dimension, based on the kind of music they were exposed to. Most of them were also educated and they started learning how to read music. They focused their attention on Afro-Cuban and Caribbean music, and gospel music as well. Therefore, their harmonies were richer than that of the 1950s. They introduce the harmonic extension of melody and the secondary chords, which include the secondary dominant, as compared to the primary chords used in the 1950s, which are based on the “Yaa Amponsah”chord progression. 1960s Saxophonists do not emphasize weak beat as it was done in the 1950s. They started introducing tonal shift into the improvisations whereby more chromatic notes were used to vary their melody.
Moreover, they also employed the double timing where the time signature changes whenever the saxophonist or any other solo instrument comes in for improvisation.

5.3 Recommendations

These older styles of Ghanaian highlife music have faded from public life due to lack of documentation and patronage. Therefore, this research serves as a springboard for other scholars to document more Ghanaian highlife music through transcription, to keep our music alive for future generations. Dance bands that play highlife music can also draw on my transcriptions to build upon their performance through the blending of African and Western elements. Again, school children who are studying saxophone can also draw on this solo works to develop their repertoire for performance.

Moreover, highlife music has really taken Ghana’s music into the international level therefore, incorporation of African traditional instruments such as the xylophone, *atenteben*, and the *seperewa*, among others, should also be given the opportunity for improvisation. In doing this, one can boldly link up highlife music into the fourth category of Akin Euba’s categorization of neo-African art music. I will also recommend that, saxophone players of highlife music, should explore the other techniques of playing saxophone including multiphonics (it is a technique for woodwind instrument, that allow you to produce more than one notes at once), altissimo (it is a technique that allow you to play the highest register on woodwind instrument), circular breathing (it is a technique that help woodwind players to prolong their tone) and slap tonguing (it a technique, that help woodwind players to produce a popping sound along with the tone), to enhance their playing. The slap tonguing helps the saxophonist to be percussive on the instrument, which also falls under one of the characteristic of African music.
Finally, I wish to comment on the factors militating against women, generally, as far as their active involvement as highlife instrumentalists are concerned. To begin with, there is a general lack of equally talented female instrumentalists relative to their male counterparts. Furthermore, the situation is aggravated by deep-seated cultural underpinnings. To this end, it is generally considered a taboo for females to be active participants in instrumental ensembles in most traditional communities. Moreover, the relative lack of unique cultural capital necessary to participate in instrumental ensembles continues to hold females back. Nonetheless, an instrumental ensemble comprising many female instrumentalists accrues a relatively higher aesthetic value to the ensemble. This is premised on the fact that it is more visually appealing to see female instrumentalists in concert than their male counterparts.

I wish to encourage female musicians to venture into saxophone playing in other to enjoy the sonorities of the instrument.
Bibliography


APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

(FACE - TO - FACE INTERVIEW WITH SETH AMPAFO)

1. How did Ramblers International Band come about?
2. Who were the first members of the band?
3. How many records do they have?
4. How many trips have gone to?
5. Has the band worn an award before?
6. If yes, how many?
7. What are the names of the awards, when and where it was awarded?
8. Who is Jerry Hanson?
9. Where was he born?
10. Where did he school?
11. His music career
12. How many saxophonists have been in the band since 1960?
13. What are their names?
(FACE - TO - FACE INTERVIEW WITH PETER MARFO)

1. When did you join the band?
2. What kind of song do you play?
3. How do you recruit your members?
4. Do you recruit professional musicians or you train your own musicians?
5. If professionals then what are the qualification?
6. Is your member’s full time or part –time musicians?
7. How do you finance the band?
8. How much do you charge for a program?
9. How often the band does rehearsal?
10. How many hours do the band rehears?
11. Do you have musical score of your works?
12. How the band does rehearsals? (do you take the materials home or you listen to it during rehearsal)

M A
ONIPA (HUMAN)

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

Tbn.

Gtr.

Gtr.

Bass

W. Ch.

Clv.

C. Dr.

93
A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

Tbn.

Gtr.

Gtr.

Bass

W. Ch.

Clv.

C. Dr.

ONIPA (HUMAN)
ONIPA (HUMAN)

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

Tbn.

Gtr.

Gtr.

Bass

W. Ch.

Clv.

C. Dr.
ONIPA (HUMAN)

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

Tbn.

Gtr.

Gtr.

Bass

W. Ch.

Clv.

C. Dr.
A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

Tbn.

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

Bass

Clv.

Timb.

C. Dr.
DAY BY DAY

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

Bv. Tpt. 1

Bv. Tpt. 2

Bv. Tpt. 3

Tbn.

Gtr.

Bass

B. Tr.

Cym.

C. Bl.

Bls.

C. Dr.
DAY BY DAY

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

Bv Tpt. 1

Bv Tpt. 2

Bv Tpt. 3

Tbn.

Gtr.

Bass

B. Tr.

Cym.

C. Bl.

Bls.

C. Dr.
DAY BY DAY

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

Bv. Tpt. 1

Bv. Tpt. 2

Bv. Tpt. 3

Tbn.

Gtr.

Bass

B. Tr.

Cym.

C. Bl.

Bls.

C. Dr.
DAY BY DAY
DAY BY DAY

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

Bv. Tpt. 1

Bv. Tpt. 2

Bv. Tpt. 3

Tbn.

Gtr.

Bass

B. Tr.

Cym.

C. Bl.

Bls.

C. Dr.
DAY BY DAY

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

Bv Tpt. 1

Bv Tpt. 2

Bv Tpt. 3

Tbn.

Gtr.

Bass

B. Tr.

Cym.

C. Bl.

Bls.

C. Dr.
D A Y B Y D A Y

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

B♭ Tpt. 3

Tbn.

Gtr.

Bass

B. Tr.

Cym.

C. Bl.

Bls.

C. Dr.
DAY BY DAY

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

Bv. Tpt. 1

Bv. Tpt. 2

Bv. Tpt. 3

Tbn.

Gtr.

Bass

B. Tr.

Cym.

C. Bl.

Bls.

C. Dr.
DAY BY DAY

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

B♭ Tpt. 3

Tbn.

Gtr.

Bass

B. Tr.

Cym.

C. Bl.

Bls.

C. Dr.
AUNTY CHRISTY
AUNTY CHRISTY
AUNTY CHRISTY

A. Sx.

T. Sx. 1

T. Sx. 2

T. Sx. 3

B. Tpt. 1

B. Tpt. 2

B. Tpt. 3

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

Gtr.

Bass

Cym.

C. Bl.

Clv.

C. Dr.

B. Dr.

S. Dr.

Glk.

Mrcs.

F. Cym.
AUNTY CHRISTY
AUNTY CHRISTY

A. Sx.
T. Sx. 1
T. Sx. 2
T. Sx. 3
B. Tpt. 1
B. Tpt. 2
B. Tpt. 3
Tbn. 1
Tbn. 2
Gtr.
Bass
Cym.
C. Bl.
Clv.
C. Dr.
B. Dr.
S.Dr.
Glk.
Mrcs.
F. Cym.
AUNTY CHRISTY
AUNTY CHRISTY
AUNTY CHRISTY
AGBOO A YIEE