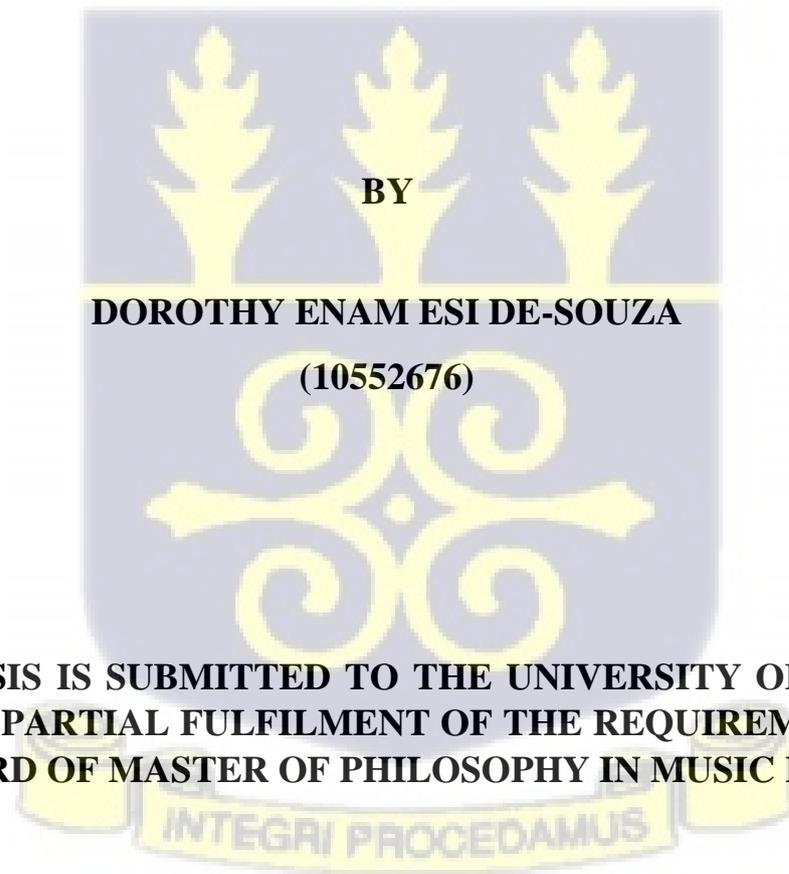


**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**

**A STUDY OF THE *GHANAIAN CLASSICS* RECORDING PROJECT
BY THE GHANA NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**



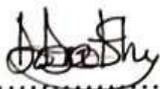
**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR
THE AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN MUSIC DEGREE**

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

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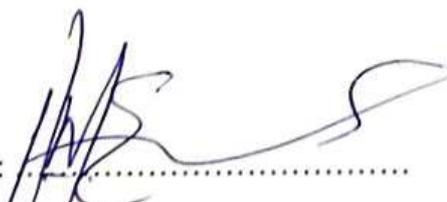
DECLARATION

I, Dorothy Enam Esi De-Souza of the Department of Music, University of Ghana, Legon, hereby declare that this thesis with the exception of quotations and references which have been recognized and properly acknowledged, is absolutely my original work produced from research undertaken under supervision.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*My vows I will to His great name before His people pay,
And all I have, and all I am, upon His altar lay. The God
of all-redeeming grace my God I will proclaim,
Offer the sacrifice of praise, and call upon His name.*

(M.H.B. 399)

My utmost gratitude is to God, the author and finisher of my faith, who has guided me from start to finish at this level of my education.

I am so thankful to Prof. Austin Emielu, who willingly devoted his time in assisting me. To Dr. Adwoa Arhine, I say kudos, for your selfless support in my thesis writing; you both have been very instrumental in encouraging and advising me.

I am also grateful to both teaching and non-teaching staff of the Music Department of the University of Ghana, Legon, for their resolute support and inspiration during my studies in the University.

I use this occasion to thank Mr. Isaac Annoh the Director of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra (GNSO), Mr. Jonas Bibi Hammond the Engineer and Producer, Mr. Allotey Bruce-Konuah the Project Coordinator, Mr. Sela Adjei the artist, Mr. Eric De-Graft Amoah, and Mr. Patrick Adu-Darko (members of GNSO and my resource persons), Dr. Eyram Fiagbedzi, Mr. Evans Oppong, Prof. Daniel Avorgbedor, Prof. G.W.K Dor, Mr. Farouk Nii Aryee the accountant of the GNSO and all members of the GNSO for their constant responses to my interviews, which largely inspired my work.

I finally extend my appreciation to my husband Dzitsinya Cosmos Gbekie for his support and all who contributed in diverse ways towards the successful completion of my thesis.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to Fred and Nancy De-Souza and to my loved ones who stood by me in prayers through thick and thin of my education.

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ABSTRACT

The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra (GNSO) has been in existence since 1959. It is one of the oldest symphony orchestras in Ghana. Set up on the directive of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, first President of the Republic of Ghana, the aim was to introduce Western classical music to Ghana and also to show the competence of Africans in playing both *African Airs* and Western classical music. Despite being in existence for over fifty years, the GNSO had not embarked on any recording project. However, in 2015, the idea of the *Ghanaian Classics* recording project was conceived and realised. This project veered off the usual practices of the GNSO and there is some curiosity as to what this album was all about and what it set out to achieve.

This study therefore examines the *Ghanaian Classics* album project, focusing on the recording process, how selected pieces for the album were recontextualised, and the commercial dimension of the project and how the album contributed to a sense of Ghanaian nationalism.

Ethnographic approach was employed in the methodology. Between 2010 and 2013, I served as an intern and national service person with the orchestra. During this time, I was a participant-observer and became acquainted with the repertoire, performance practices and the general organisation of the GNSO. For this project, I listened to the album purposively and did a musical and textual analysis of the songs and the album design. Using Hannenin's theory of recontextualisation, I examined the changing context of the songs as compared to the original forms. I also did analysis of the instrumentation, arrangement and the choice of repertoire and guest musicians. Other primary data sources included interviews with the director of the GNSO, the project coordinator, the producer, the artist, some members of the GNSO and selected patrons. Secondary sources included previous studies of the GNSO, music scores, and information gathered from libraries and internet sources.

The research reveals that this project was to enliven the cultural memories of Ghanaians and to honour highlife legendary artistes. The recontextualisation of selected pieces was to link old performance styles to the new ones and for a better appreciation of the songs on the album. It concludes the GNSO has exhibited their versatility in performing art, traditional and popular musical types and most significantly projecting Ghanaian culture and heritage.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In 2015, the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra (GNSO) embarked on a recording project labelled *Ghanaian Classics*. The recording was done both in Ghana and Germany. The project involved rearrangement and recontextualisation of old Ghanaian popular songs including the Ghana National Anthem. GNSO for the first time was known to have recorded an album engrossed by popular songs rather than their usual performance practices which is playing ‘classical’ music.

The recording project was held on the 4th of September 2015. A six-member crew made up of Philipp Heck, Francis Kwakye, Allotey Bruce Konuah, Emmanuel Larbi, Samuel Yeboah, and Jonas Bibi Hammond assembled a special studio in the J.H. Kwabena Nketia Conference Hall at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon. A commercial CD was produced from the recording and launched on the 18th of March 2016. The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra was established in 1959 by Philip Gbeho with directives and instrumentality of the first President of Ghana, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. This was after preliminary meetings were held at Rev. Father Quainoo Bonaventure’s residence.¹ So much has been written on the GNSO and it is not my intention to rehash these details here. I only provide information that fills certain gaps in knowledge. For more on the history and development of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra please refer to Gbeho (1965), Arhine (1996) and Nii-Dortey (1998).

Nii-Dortey and Arhine (2010) categorised the developmental trajectories of the Ghana

¹ Rev. Fr. Bonaventure Kweku Quainoo is Roman Catholic Priest who was interested in the GNSO’s activities.

National Symphony Orchestra into four stages, as follows: (1) Establishment stage (1959-1971) with Philip Gbeho as director; (2) Experimental stage (1972-1984) with Dinah Reindorf (a female Ghanaian director); (3) Consolidation Stage (1985-1995) with several directors – Nana Danso Abiam, Ken Kafui, Nicholaz Zinzendorf Nayo and Kwasi Aduonum and (4) period of Vigorous Indigenisation (1996-2009).

According to Nii-Dortey and Arhine (2010, p. 52), the period of vigorous indigenisation had a programme dubbed “The African Composers’ Series,” during which guest composers including George Worlasi Kwasi Dor, Gyimah Larbi, Cosmas Mereku, Kweku Acquaaah Harrison, Armisson Dzokoto, Ken Kafui and Oscar Sulley, all from Ghana, and Sharon Katz from South Africa were introduced. The “African Composers’ Series” contributed immensely towards building a collection of Ghanaian and other African classics in the repertoire of the GNSO. Looking at the periods above, one may want to know about the happenings between the years 2010-2020. It will also be interesting to understand the period within which the recording project took place and what it represents in the developmental process of the GNSO. To this end, a number of activities such as stage concerts (private, official, and educational performances which have featured the orchestra) took place during this decade². An appendix of a list of some important works in the repertoire of the GNSO is provided at the end of this thesis.

As stated earlier, the GNSO has been in existence for fifty-six years but had never embarked on a recording project. There is therefore some curiosity about what instigated this project, the framework of the project itself, its goals and objectives and how five years after, these goals and objectives have been achieved. This thesis thus seeks to examine the recording project from the perspectives of musical recontextualisation, commercialisation

² Some of the stage performances include Emancipation Day, World Music Day, PANAFEST and so on.

and how this project embodies a sense of Ghanaian nationalism. It also evaluates its success five years after the project was completed.

While all of these activities are typical of the GNSO, one unique activity of this phase is the *Ghanaian Classics* recording project. This distinct project by the orchestra with its focus on recontextualisation of old Ghanaian songs and at the same time exhibiting elements of commercialisation and nationalism generated my interest for this study. Somehow the period (2010-2020) during which the orchestra has been under the directorship of Isaac Annoh appears to me as the novelty stage. My study therefore focuses on the *Ghanaian Classics* recording project, its objectives and success or otherwise, framework of recontextualisation, its economic and political dimensions as a way of understanding the developmental trajectory of the GNSO in the period 2010-2020 which is missing in existing literature.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The seeming vacuum in scholarship in the development of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra between 2010 and 2020 raises questions. These include why the GNSO embarked on a recording project, why it took so long to record and what the aims and objectives of the project were. Although, the project appears to have attracted national interest and also shifted the focus of the GNSO momentarily from ‘classical’ to popular music, there has not been any study devoted to examining the success or otherwise of the GNSO’s recording project from the perspectives of musical recontextualisation, commercialisation or Ghanaian nationalism.

Much of the studies on the GNSO have been on the historical development of the GNSO, how cultural policies affected GNSO in the late 1990s and Africanisation of Western art music in GNSO among others. My thesis focuses on the uniqueness of this recording

project to the GNSO and its underlying objectives and whether the objectives were achieved. This is the gap in knowledge which this study attempts to fill.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions will guide my study:

1. What factors instigated the recording project and what were the main objectives?
2. Why recontextualise old Ghanaian songs and how was the framework for recontextualisation developed?
3. What were the economic dimensions of the project?
4. How did the project contribute to a sense of Ghanaian nationalism?
5. How successful was the project based on intended objectives?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Investigate the reason why the GNSO set out to record an album, consultations made, and structures put in place and assessment of the whole project.
2. Access the purpose of recontextualising old Ghanaian songs and analyse some selected songs on the album stylistically using a recontextualisation framework.
3. Evaluate the commercial aspect of this project and review pecuniary factors involved in assembling all aspects of the recording project.
4. Analyse the artistic expressions and impressions, especially textual and those included in the cover design of the CD to show how they reflect Ghanaian nationalism.

1.5 SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of this study is limited to the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra's *Ghanaian Classics* Recording Project. It examines the project from the point of view of musical recontextualisation, commercialisation and Ghanaian nationalism. The study also uses this recording as a way to mirror the developmental trail of the GNSO in the period 2010-2020.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Considerable studies on the GNSO have focused on the orchestra's developmental phases, the effect of national policies on the orchestra, indigenisation of Western Art Music by GNSO and none on the recording project which marked a shift to commercial music. The period 2010-2020 has been omitted in studying the developmental path of the GNSO. Thus, this study turns out interdisciplinary and therefore, significant as it extends scholarship to the development of the GNSO and combines perspectives from musicology, ethnomusicology, economics, and sociology of music.

In a country where national policy has favoured the sciences at the expense of the humanities, this study highlights the arts as a force of national cohesion, harmony and peace. Hopefully, this study will serve as a manual for policy makers, music business enthusiasts, and music scholars in Ghana. Again, the methodological framework may serve as a resource to other related studies in orchestral music recordings in Ghana.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

The methodology entails ethnography. This approach informed my data collection, data interpretation, and data analysis.

1.7.1 Ethnography

Ethnography is a qualitative research method that comes from the discipline of anthropology which centres on knowing the world from the standpoint of its social relations. According to Burke & Kirk (2001), ethnography is a method of observing human interaction in social settings and activities, in other words, observing people in their cultural context. Using an ethnographic approach in this study, I observed the activities of the GNSO from 2010 to 2013. Through joining their rehearsal sessions to perform with them on various stages/auditoria, I assert that the GNSO is well grounded in performing Western art music interspersed with Ghanaian popular music based on their audience appreciation.

Voluntarily, I worked with the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra in 2010/2011 during my undergraduate studies internship period. I also did my national service with this state institution in 2012/2013. Throughout this experiential learning process, I got inspired and became fond of their performance practices, not necessarily for monetary gains but because of my passion.

The ethnography was not only about my observation and participation but this approach helped me in reflecting on the experiences shared with the GNSO which was further summarised in the analysis, findings, and final conclusions.

1.7.2 Data Collection

The data collection of this study did not follow the traditional fieldwork procedure where the researcher stays in the field for a long and continuous period at a time of one year, trying to understand the people, their belief systems, and musical traditions. It was more of a staggered process, going in-and-out of the field as and when necessary. Nevertheless, as a consociate, interaction with members of the GNSO over these three years contributed immensely in gathering rich data derived mostly from semi-structured interviews with

musicians and administrative staff and engaging instrumentalists in conversations. A good rapport offered me the opportunity to communicate with the recording team through phone calls for some informal discussions on subjects related to my study. Furthermore, spontaneous interviews with informed audiences and observations I made in the field gave me rich primary data on the entire *Ghanaian Classics* Project.

I listened to the *Ghanaian Classics* album, examined the selected songs musically and also analysed the song texts and the album design. My interviews were aided by audio recordings with my cell phone, which I transcribed through a laptop while using a headset and speakers. These research approaches enriched my primary data for this study.

Sources of secondary data included archival records such as old Ghanaian music CDs which were retrieved from the J.H. Kwabena Nketia Archive at the Institute of African Studies (IAS). Additionally, literature on recontextualisation, commercialisation, and Ghanaian nationalism were collected from the IAS library, International Centre for African Music and Dance (ICAMD) library at the Department of Music and Balme Library, all located at the University of Ghana, Legon. Other archival and internet sources are JSTOR, Encarta Dictionary and YouTube.

Although I was not part of the recording, I was up to date with the activities of the GNSO. In a discussion with Professor Daniel Avorgbedor who was my lecturer about the orchestra, I obtained the *Ghanaian Classics* CD from him.

1.7.3 Field Trips

Field trips where I collected data included the National Theatre where the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra is located, the Movenpick Hotel in Accra, and the University of Ghana campus libraries and the J. H. Kwabena Nketia Archives.

Data collection was mainly in the form of one-on-one interviews of key consultants including Isaac Annoh, the director and Ato Quayson deputy director of GNSO, Jonas Bibi Hammond the producer of “*Ghanaian Classics*”, Allotey Bruce-Konuah the project coordinator, Selasi Adjei the artist who designed the cover sleeve of the album, Dr. Nii Dortey³ and some active and retired members of the GNSO, composers and arrangers of the songs selected. Additionally, I communicated with Professor George Worlasi Kwasi Dor⁴ and Professor Daniel Avorgbedor through whom I gathered vital data via email and telephone calls on copyright and other issues related to the development of the GNSO. In social circles, I randomly interviewed people on their awareness of the recording.

1.7.3 Data Analysis

By data interpretation, I imply the subjective representation and systematisation of the primary data recorded, as much as possible without adulteration, on paper. All recorded interviews with respondents were transcribed, transliterated and construed. I compared the findings of interviews with my respondents and observations made in the field with the results of literature review and discussed their similarities and differences.

My analysis is based on transcription, representation of excerpts of the melodic lines of selected songs, rhythmic pattern of time lines and original scores of some songs. In reference to audio playbacks in the recording for analysis and identification of sections.

I analysed some selected songs (the Ghana National Anthem, *Yen ara asase ni*, *Apatampa*, *Ebe Ebe Tatale*, *Osabarima*) on the CD musically and presented excerpts of the scores for examples in the thesis, I also discussed an old and new recording in terms of recontextualisation.

³ A lecturer at the African Studies Department who has written extensively on the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra and former member of the orchestra.

⁴ George Kwasi Dor was a composer and a former member of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra. He is currently a Professor at the University of Mississippi, United States.

Moreover, I textually scrutinised the songs and CD cover texts, images and iconographies. As I intend to investigate the commercial success of the album, I scouted around for avenues that I presume the CDs could be sold.

Additionally, I included visual representations of the studio crews and the performers who took part in the recording; to enable my readers to comprehend the descriptions and analysis. These visuals were taken from the inlay attached to the CD and photos collected on the field.

During the initial stages of data gathering, I referred to relevant secondary data: commercial CDs, books and articles from libraries and internet sources. These materials guided my literature review and the entire work. The CD cover page and the songs on the *Ghanaian Classics* for example, provided rich data as colours, symbolisms, and other artistic designs on the cover page, communicated deep indigenous values and belief systems, lyrics, structure, and meanings of the songs articulated with various sentiments, which will be discussed in chapter four. However, the commodification of the album was examined in chapter three.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

My research employed recontextualisation and nationalism frameworks. These frameworks guided my observation and analysis of the *Ghanaian Classics* project and showed how the orchestra conveyed these concepts.

1.8.1 Recontextualisation

The process of recontextualisation is not a new phenomenon to the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra. Over the years, the GNSO has recontextualised Ghanaian songs during stage performances and these songs were arranged/rearranged, notated and instrumented by directors/composers/copyists. In order for music to be recontextualised it

must be in a context. This can be applied to any type and category of music, be it classical, contemporary, popular, or traditional (Mundundu, 2005, p. 16). Popular music for example, is part of popular culture and is shared widely. For instance, hip-hop is a global genre with local cultural inflections which also has implication on making allusions to other texts⁵.

According to Nketia, “a context is any setting or environment – be it physical, ecological, social, cultural or intellectual – which an entity or a unit of experience is viewed in order to define its identity or characteristics as well as its relations in comparison with other entities or units of experience” (1990, p. 81). For example, taking a folk song in its original context which is normally performed vocally and accompanied by traditional instruments and putting it in a different context by altering the arrangements rhythmically, instrumentally, or even the performance arena. These techniques were employed in producing the *Ghanaian Classics* album.

1.8.2 Nationalism

Nationalism according to Smith (2010) is an idea or movement that promotes the interest of a particular nation. It can also be described as a system created by individuals who believe their nation is superior to all others. Nationalism is the desire that drove the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra towards their intent for the recording project. Some countries build nationalism around a shared language, religion, culture, or a set of social values. The nation emphasises communal symbols, folklore, and mythology⁶. Nationalism can further be strengthened through shared music, literature and sports among others.

⁵ Retrieved from:

http://blc.berkeley.edu/2012/01/15/teaching_intertextuality_and_recontextualisation_through_music/

⁶ <https://www.thebalance.com/nationalism-definition-examples-pros-cons-4149524>

As J.H.K Nketia played a very instrumental role in enforcing Pan-Africanism in the Ghana Dance Ensemble which tallied with nationalism; so also did Philip Gbeho steered this ideology in the GNSO during his tenure as the Director. According to Shauert, Nketia became one of the founding members of the Arts Council of the Gold Coast in 1955 and under the directorship of Gbeho, this body was responsible for promoting African arts activities, which subsequently initiated the establishment of the National Theatre Movement (NTM). The contributions of the NTM “emphasised the underlying unity of the nation and the equal importance of the output which is made by people of every region” (NAG/RG/3/7/33:66 cited in Shauert, 2015). The NTM in its pursuits of nationalism resulted in countless performing groups across the nation and further inspired conscious indigenous traditions (Botwe-Asamoah 2005, also see Schauert 2015). Although the producer’s drive for this recording was towards Pan-Africanism, Ghanaian nationalism was more prominent and projected in the recording project from the selection of the songs to the cover design of the album.

According to Sweeney, in 1954, the government decided on setting up a legal organisation to foster, improve and preserve the traditional arts and culture of the Gold Coast and Philip Gbeho was appointed the Chairman of the Interim-Committee for the Arts Council of the Gold Coast (1994). Gbeho gave several talks on national radio in which he led a renaissance in Ghanaian traditional music “as part of Nkrumah’s Pan-Africanist ideals in the face of obstacles placed in its way by colonial missionary overlords” (1994, p. 16). Ghanaian nationalism was born from Nkrumah’s Pan-African ideology. Through this revival agenda, Gbeho composed the Ghana National Anthem.

National Anthems are generally thought to embody the ideologies and collective self-images of the nations to which they are attached (Eyck, 1995 cited in Daughtry, 2003). Although Daughtry contests the fact that collective self-images are subject to the

conflicting and ever-changing interpretations of groups and individuals within nations, these anthems unify the citizens in a nation as one people. Wade also posits, “It is no accident that one of the first recordings by a Colombian was Colombian National Anthem, cut in 1919 by Emilio Murillo with the Lira Anti-oqueña (a string ensemble)” (1998, p. 7). Similarly, in the *Ghanaian Classics* recording, the Ghana National Anthem was used as a curtain raiser.

In Ghana, drum appellations are mostly used in welcoming prominent persons like chiefs, presidents and dignitaries. The opening drum language “Ghana *montie*” symbolically calls on Ghanaians to pay attention to the music. As part of the orchestra’s innovative style, the original anthem composed by Philip Gbeho was in ~~12~~₈ time and was strategically fitted in the *Agbadza* rhythm it was played to as the producer and conductor wanted a folksy feel or groove.

As Nketia informed Terpenning, Ephraim Amu’s ‘*Yen ara asase ni*’ was the “first statement of affirmation of his consciousness of identity” (Terpenning, 2016). This song is popularly performed at national celebrations and in schools. According to Nketia, the composition of Amu has not only marked a pivotal moment in his own musical development, but also was an early musical sign of awakening national consciousness that led to independence. *Yen ara asase ni* means ‘This land is our own’.

Gbeho and Amu were advocates of cultural identity. As Terpenning argues that the texts reflect Amu’s reading of secular, Pan-African literature and the juxtaposition of musical elements associated with Christianity reflects a dedication to hybridity in his creative process of a cultural nationalism (2016, p. 461). Also, an anonymous person commented:

In the days of Gold Coast where our culture and its various manifestations, language, dance, music, religions, traditions, institutions were

misunderstood, mostly condemned, Amu was one who protected the culture through his teaching, musical compositions and style of dressing. Amu's disagreement with the Synod of the Presbyterian Church over the wearing of our Ghana traditional attire and I was full of admiration for his courage and his daring to dress in a non-European fashion in those days (GhanaWeb 26/03/2018).

Nketia, in his Inaugural Amu Memorial Lecture in 1998, described Amu as a “man of action committed to culture and development” (Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences). Agawu describes Amu's choral works as essays that reconcile foreign and traditional models of composition (Agawu, 1984; also see Terpenning, 2016). “This metaphor of musical composition as an essay is helpful in thinking about Amu as an intellectual who strategically manipulated the boundaries between foreign and local” (Terpenning, 2016, p. 490). In support of this argument, I present an excerpt of Amu's song *Yen ara asase ni* in the appendix of this thesis.

The issues of recontextualisation and nationalism of local and international musical models have been discussed through the analyses of selected pieces for the recording. It was obvious that, although the orchestra was originally equipped with Western instruments, the *Ghanaian Classics* project brought to bear, the breath of Ghanaian rhythmic patterns predicated on traditional dance styles (*Agbadza*, *Fontomfrom*, *Kpanlogo*, *Bawa*), folksy melodic patterns and the traditional conventional Ghanaian call-and-response form. The chapter two also presented seasoned highlife musicians whose music have crossed the shores of Ghana onto the international scene, justifying the choice of their participation. Although the selected songs for the recording were relatively simple, they were more appropriate in reaching out to the targeted audience.

1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW

As Wade accessed homogeneity and heterogeneity of cultures, he alluded that “a nationalist project does not just try to deny, suppress or even simply channel an unruly diversity; it actively reconstructs it” (1998, p. 1). Society is dynamic and so is culture, therefore old traditions can be modified to suit modernisation or recontextualisation in modern times. As the GNSO focused on reconstructing identity, they adapted Ghanaian folk tunes and re-arranged, orchestrated or recomposed for both Western and African instruments in the orchestra.

According to Matczynski (2011):

“The ‘golden age’ of highlife spanned from the 1950s through the 1970s, a period during which hundreds of bands operated across Ghana; nightclubs and dance halls were filled with dancers moving to live music and local record labels/recording studios released a staggering number of new and exciting highlife albums. Highlife is music characterized by lilting guitar melodies, soulful singing and Ghanaian rhythms, a music located at the intersections of tradition and ‘modernity’.” (p. 3)

Highlife music was for the upper classes or the elite as Collins (2009) also informed. Highlife can be termed as the heartbeat of our motherland just as Baldomero Sanin Cano ‘Bambuco resounds with the heartbeats of the fatherland’ (Wade, 1998, p. 7).

Philip Gbeho in a newspaper review emphasised how crucial it is to include locally arranged pieces which he referred to as *African Airs*. Although the description of *African Airs* referred to folk tunes or traditional pieces that were arranged and performed by the orchestra in the 1970s, these African pieces have been swept under the carpet over the years. Looking further at the *Ghanaian Classics* as the title of the recording project and combing through the elements entailed in the pieces that were selected, I define *Ghanaian Classics* as follows: The Highlife rhythm has been a popular tune that is enjoyed by Ghanaians especially those of the older generation. The themes of the songs include love,

peace, victory and encouragement using both secular and sacred texts performed in the appropriate contexts.

The genre is performed during various gatherings in Ghana, be it naming ceremonies, marriage ceremonies, funerals, even in the church with sacred texts. Furthermore, jingles and adverts use highlife to set their tunes. Thus, Highlife can simply be described as a “Ghanaian thing”.⁷ Highlife classics are known as highlife music by individual musicians and musical groups—A.B. Crentsil, Jewel Ackah, George Darko, Osibisa, Gyedu-Blay Ambolley and Agya Koo Nimo among others which made hits in the 1960s and even now. I argue that there can be traditional classics and also choral (art music) classics. Classics are songs that have made hits. In other words, any songs from these three genres that have become popular can be referred to as classics. I say this because the selected pieces on the CD can be classified in these three genres (highlife, traditional and art music). Pieces on the album include *Ebe Ebe Tatale* (folk tune), Ghana National Anthem (art music) and ‘Echoes’ (highlife anthem composed for the GNSO by G.W. K. Dor).

Ghanaian Classics is hereby defined as an orchestrated style of music derived from highlife traditions, folk tunes and art music embellished with – *Agbadza*, *Kpanlogo*, *Adowa* and *Fomtomfrom* amongst other Ghanaian music traditions which hold the typical components of the rhythmic structure in the percussion section and are popularly performed by a symphony orchestra. Although, the pieces in the recording were not solely set to a highlife timeline, this genre dominated the performance and it is what gives us (Ghanaians) a single identity. While Mr. Hammond laments on the rise of popular music (example hiplife) which do not communicate good messages to the youth, he opines that this musical type could be a peril to national identity because they evolve with time.

⁷ Ghanaian thing is a popular term used today in Ghana. It refers to culture and lifestyles which have been held and still practiced by proud Ghanaians. Example; eating fufu is a Ghanaian thing, wearing a cloth around the neck is a Ghanaian thing etc.

Timelines are very important in determining the style and mood of performance. “A timeline is a short rhythmic pattern normally entrusted to the bell (or castanet, stick or stone) and played as an unvarying ostinato throughout a particular dance drumming” (Agawu, 2016, p. 171). Agawu likened the timeline to a metronome, although they can be differentiated. He discussed the difference in metronome and timeline as:

Successions of pulses rather than patterns, metronomic traces are not normally considered part of music ... They help to provide a perspective on the music. Each individual timeline is in principle structurally dependent on a metronomic foundation, but the beating that constitutes such a foundation is more often implicit in the timeline pattern than stated explicitly (2016, p. 172).

In support of Agawu’s assertion on a timeline, it guides a person to determine the style of music and also affects the mood of a performance. Africans are known to closely associate timelines with different types of musical traditions (genres)⁸. The analysis also considers the cultural significance of the songs and why these songs were selected. The use of the word percussion only refers to traditional percussion for the purpose of this recording, thus I base my analysis of the pieces on the CD on the timeline to which these pieces were set.

All the selected pieces in the recording were performed without any scored accompaniment for the percussion and also the *ad libs* of soloists. These accompaniments were performed based on experience and improvisation. “By improvisation, we mean that the patterns are assembled in the moment under pressure from the practical and aesthetic exigencies of the occasion” (Agawu, 2016, p. 185). A drummer organises procedures which he uses in his narration. He also has in his memory certain stock phrases associated with a particular dance (ibid). The techniques that Agawu described were exhibited by the drummers and the soloist in this recording.

⁸ Kubik, G. (1991). *Africa and the blues*. Jackson: University of Mississippi.

The harmony of these songs was basically in the intervals of 3rds and 4ths. As Nketia described some techniques in harmony in Africa, melodic lines were performed in unison by the orchestra. Simple chord schemes were employed in the harmonic structures of the pieces.

1.10 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one is the introductory chapter which looks at the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, research objectives, significance, scope of the study, methodology, theoretical framework, and literature review.

Chapter two examines the project from the perspective of musical recontextualisation. I also analyse and compare selected songs on the CD in context. In this chapter I investigate what prompted the idea of recontextualising old Ghanaian recordings, particularly highlife music.

Chapter three focuses on the commercial dimension of the recording. I examine the processes involved in the recording project and the economic dimension of the recording from the point of view of the GNSO as well as the commercial success of the project and its impact in the Ghanaian music industry. I also examine copyright issues here.

Chapter four discusses the political dimension of this project. Specifically, I focus on how this reflects a sense of Ghanaian nationalism and government involvement in it. I analyse song texts, CD jacket design, texts, images and iconographies for their deeper cultural and political underpinnings.

Chapter five presents a summary of the work, its major findings, conclusion and contributions to knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT AND PROCESS OF RECONTEXTUALISATION

This chapter explores recontextualisation as a concept and proceeds to discuss the recontextualisation of old Ghanaian songs by the GNSO in the *Ghanaian Classics* album. It further analyses the process by which the songs on the album were recontextualised as well as why the GNSO considered it necessary to recontextualise rather than produce new songs. The discussion hinges on the selection of songs, arrangements using conventional notation, the instrumentation, as well as the process of analogue and digital recordings.

2.1 RECONTEXTUALISATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

According to Hardenberg (1772, p. 45), to recontextualise is taking something from its usual context and resituating it in an unfamiliar context. As an aesthetic practice, this is characteristic of surrealism, where it serves the function of ‘making the familiar strange and the strange familiar’. Connolly also defines recontextualisation as the process whereby content that has been given expression in one context (the “source” context) is subsequently reused in a different context (the “destination” context)” (2014, p. 1). Recontextualisation therefore implies a change of meaning and redefinition. I examine the project from the perspective of musical recontextualisation which states that “recontextualisation indicates a phenomenal transformation of repetition induced by a change in musical context” (Hanninen, 2003, p. 5). Using musical examples, I present first of all, some of these old songs as produced by the original musicians, and then I compare and contrast the old formats and the new recontextualised ones. I discuss the framework of recontextualisation for each song; what informed the choice of instruments, musical arrangements and the choice of performing musicians. I also discuss audience reception of the recontextualised songs.

In this chapter, I am focused more on music recontextualisation. This can be explained as the efforts made to present existing songs in a current dispensation for better appreciation and enjoyment. There is variance in the level of appreciation and meaning of songs among different generations. The level of appreciation and meaning of songs can be more or less depending on what is in vogue, but the variance in different generations is prevalent. It is plausible that songs that were most enjoyed in a particular period in history may become less enjoyed over time. This happens when the motivations behind certain songs as well as their socio-cultural relevance, songs lose their significance over time. For example, songs that are/were linked to certain cultural practices may eventually lose their importance or will not become widely performed when such cultural practices change over time.

On the other hand, some musical styles have also stood the test of time. For instance, Western art music forms performed in the medieval, baroque, romantic and classical periods are still appreciated in contemporary times in many countries including Ghana. This may be due to its ability to add aesthetic and emotional value to human experience. As Getz (2015) explored the scientific values of Classical music to one's life, it has scientifically been proven to improve cognitive performance (p. 8). Thus, it can be concurrently entertaining, emotional and aesthetically valuable. One is therefore curious to know when the GNSO decided to recontextualise old Ghanaian songs. It could be that these songs were losing their socio-cultural significance and therefore needed to be recontextualised to appeal to current generations. Culture is said to be dynamic but could this be the primary reason why the GNSO undertook this project? Primarily, the GNSO set out to record the *Ghanaian Classics* album to preserve the music and culture of Ghana.

Hanninen (2015) used the theory of recontextualisation in music to explore phenomenal transformation of repetition in music by Feldman, Haydn, Morris, and Bach⁹. The theory defines two basic concepts (ideas and instances) and three means of recontextualisation.

These are changes in active contextual criteria, segment boundaries and structural interpretation. She explains ideas as a set of one or more contextual (not sonic or structural) criteria. According to her, contextual criterion identifies a characteristic of a grouping with a propensity for association among groupings within a musical context under consideration.

Meanwhile, the sonic criterion responds to disjunctions between “primitives” in a musical system identified as attributes of individual tones, such as pitch, duration, dynamics, etc. The largest disjunctions within a musical dimension she said mark sonic boundaries. For example, in Feldman’s work, the measures of silence within each part constitute relatively large disjunctions between attack points and so mark sonic boundaries in that dimension.

Conversely, she explains structural criterion as a structural interpretation defined by or formulated with respect to a particular theoretical orientation (adopted, invoked, or developed by an analyst) and used as a rationale for a musical grouping. Hanninen defines a ‘musical context’ as one or more musical passages enriched by the combined workings of particular sonic and contextual criteria and structural interpretations recognised or invoked by a listener. Clearly, Hanninen posits from the absolutist¹⁰ point of view.

The second concept of Hanninen’s theory of recontextualisation is ‘instances’. She explains instance as a grouping in which the instantiations of (all or most of) the contextual criteria in the set that define an idea coincide, noting that an idea must have at

⁹ (<https://academic.oup.com>.)

¹⁰ An absolutist musical responses stirred are secondary and independent from the music itself, which can only express musicality.

least two instances. To define a set of criteria as an idea implies that the analyst regards its instances (and the contextual associations among them) as analytically significant.

Clarifying the difference between idea and motive, Hanninen posits that an idea is in some respects similar to a motive, but there are important differences. Motives tend to be very short; to call something a motive suggests it has many instances and that these have a certain priority in a composition. An idea, in contrast, may encompass an entire passage; and it may have only two instances. She adds that all motives are ideas but not all ideas are motives. Although the GNSO did not fully explore Hanninen's recontextualisation theory, elements such as musical contexts and motive were found in the song arrangements on the album.

As a way to foreground the background of the songs, it is important to have an overview on the repertoire of the GNSO.

2.2 REPERTOIRE OF THE ORCHESTRA

In the early days of the orchestra, the repertoire was mainly based on musical works of the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods. These collections consisted of symphonies, concertos, oratorios and waltzes (Arhine, 1996, p. 27).

Nii-Dortey (2006) has categorised the orchestra's repertoire on the basis of an indigenisation project. In that paper, he assessed Ghanaian orchestral compositions which created a new outlook for the GNSO. The author gave a classic example of Gbeho's Africanisation legacies of orchestrated popular highlife melodies (*Wofa Nono, Tatale and Odo Bra*). The members of the orchestra call these highlife tunes 'African Airs'. He further examined a few scores, limiting the general overview of Ghana National Symphony Orchestra's repertory. Because the orchestra does not have full records of its assets, especially the repertoire of the orchestra, it is difficult to track music pieces or scores.

Most pieces, from the inception of the orchestra, have been misplaced due to poor inventory taking. It is important to note that record keeping in the GNSO is not as effective as practiced in the Western and European cultures. One of the reasons may be the fact that Ghana has been practicing oral culture since time past. Shifting from oral to written as well as imbibing the intrinsic attitudes governing the written could be a herculean task.

The poor preservation of the music scores by the GNSO is unacceptable in the 21st century. After several years of the existence of the GNSO, music scores are being kept in boxes which are exposed to wear and tear including dust and handling of music sheets with hands by members of the orchestra and other people. This makes sorting scripts for the various instruments difficult and time consuming. One would expect to be provided with orchestral music in finale format unless one requests for research purposes but this is not so. The original copies of orchestral music scores in which one finds handwritten like Beethoven and other 18th century composers did with mistakes crossed out as exhibits of original drafts.

Moses Adjetey enlightens us on music production and preservation of Ghana Broadcasting Corporation and which I propose to the GNSO as follows:

“what GBC has done and continues to do about music production and preservation in maintaining Ghanaian music and cultural heritage is essential, and can serve as a historical source of reference for many important issues” (Adjetey 2015, p. 3).

Preservation, record keeping and tracking of borrowed items are closely related to problems of storage retrieval and also are synchronic traditions; sometimes either pages of scores are missing or scores cannot be found at all. Issues of safeguarding items and records began from time immemorial. “When the Roman friars arrived in the New World in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries”, as Diana Taylor explored, they claimed that the

indigenous peoples' past and the life they lived had disappeared because they had no writing (2003, p. 16). There are concerns of misplaced original scores of composers like George Dor. For documentation, I collected the repertoire according to titles and composers from the library of the orchestra which is presented in the appendix of this thesis.

In the next section I examine the recontextualisation of *Ghanaian Classics* by the GNSO against the backdrop of the conceptual clarifications of recontextualisation discussed in this section.

2.3 GHANAIAN CLASSICS ALBUM AND RECONTEXTUALISATION

The quest to enliven and preserve some Ghanaian songs must have instigated the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra to produce the *Ghanaian Classics* album. Even though, according to the leader of the GNSO Isaac Annor, the aim of the recording was a preservative one, the process of getting this done was through musical recontextualisation (personal interview, September 14, 2018). *Ghanaian Classics* are Ghanaian songs that are believed to be relevant today. They have appreciably stood the test of time and therefore, deserve to be sustained. Again, this is also because of the tunes, the morals in the texts and the histories behind some of them. These songs include folk songs and popular music spanning palm wine music and highlife music from the 1920s to 1970s.

Below is the list of songs (as they appear on the CD):

Track 1: *Ghana National Anthem*,

Track 2: *All for you medley*,

Track 3: *Echoes*,

Track 4: *Ebe Ebe Tatale*,

Track 5: *Naa Densua*,

Track 6: *Apatampa (Whana n'akoko na woatow hei?)*,

Track 7: *Hi life time*,

Track 8: *Osabarima*,

Track 9: *Oman ye wo man*,

Track 10: *Abrokyiri abrabo*,

Track 11: *Yee ara asase ni*.

This short selection of songs represents only a few from the corpus of Ghanaian classic songs which may not be on the market now. However, there are many other songs that are remembered and enjoyed by many Ghanaians for their socio-historical significance. There are others that I personally know that may be considered as classics. These include 'Okwan tenten aware' a folk song, 'Kundo' a folk song, 'Mitee Chorkor miya hiee yoo se' a folk song, 'Osobrokyee' by Dr. Paa Bobo¹¹, 'Adwoa besa' a folk song and 'Akwankwaa' a folk song amongst others which are conspicuously missing from the GNSO's library. Even though it is obvious that the repertoire of *Ghanaian Classics* did not cover all the songs that are considered classics in Ghana possibly due to time constraint and I think production costs of the first ever album, on the sound carrier, the GNSO effort could be seen as a progressive one which possibly could include others in the future.

2.4 BACKGROUND OF THE SONGS

In order to understand these songs better, particularly in the way they have been tagged as classics, I give a brief background to each of them.

- i. *God Bless our Homeland Ghana* (The National Anthem) was originally composed by Philip Gbeho in 1962. Isaac Annor, the director of the orchestra and Jonas Bibi Hammond the producer creatively introduced Ghanaian percussion and rhythmic

¹¹ Kwaku Agyapong Danemah popularly known as Dr. Paa Bobo is a highlife music legend.

patterns as the orchestra's version of the National Anthem during the recording process. The national anthem was introduced by drum appellations signaling "Ghana *montie*" (Ghanaians listen). This was followed immediately by the anthem in Western harmonic style and *Fontomfrom* (an Akan court drum style) rhythmic accompaniments. Towards the ending of the anthem, the traditional drums repeated the "Ghana *montie*" statement. (See audio track 1 on the CD, also appendices for the score).

- ii. *All for you* is a medley comprising *All for you*, *Nke Bo Baaya* (I will go with you) and *Hey! Everybody*. *All for you* and *Nke Bo Baaya* were originally composed by E. T. Mensah who has played a vital role in the evolution of Ghanaian music. He was popularly known as the "King of Highlife" (Collins 1986). According to Collins, E.T. Mensah recalls in the mid-1990s that he and his compatriots urgently wanted an indigenous rhythm to replace the fading foreign music of waltz, rumba, etc. Therefore, they evolved a music type relying on basic African rhythms, a crisscross African cultural sound (ibid). He formed his first band Accra Rhythm Orchestra at the age of 18. Mensah assumed leadership of the Tempos Band which became a popular band in the 1940s. An essential element of Tempos was Mensah's style of singing in a variety of indigenous Ghanaian languages. It is therefore not surprising that the orchestra involved the participation of such Ghanaian music highlife icons in their first recording.

Hey! Everybody was composed by Bob Pinodo, a veteran highlife musician and educationist. As one of Ghana's foremost showmen in music, Pinodo was honoured with the Arts Council of Ghana award in 1969 as the country's most talented musician. He

recorded his first album in Germany in 1977.¹² He was known in his days as the “show master of Africa”. Bob has found the need to impart his knowledge in showmanship to the youth of Africa; this was the motive behind the formation of his new band, the Gold Crest Band.

These highlife tunes were sequenced by Patrick Agbodza-Gbekle (a trumpeter in the GNSO) based on his experience in concert band performances. Patrick Agbodza is one of the finest trumpeters in Ghana and a member of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra who was also once a member of the Ghana Police Band. He started his musical education in 1993 in the Volta Region. He further pursued his tertiary education at the University of Education, Winneba, in composition, orchestra and performance. He has experience in concert band performance (personal interview, April 20, 2017). (See audio track 2 on the CD). I present a transcription of the medley for readers to visualise the rhythmic and melodic patterns.

All For You

Composed by E.T. Mensah
Arranged by Patrick Agbodza - Gbekle

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'All For You'. It consists of five staves of music written in a single system. The music is in a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The notation includes various rhythmic patterns such as eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and rests. The score is numbered 1, 4, 7, 11, and 15 at the beginning of each staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fifth staff.

Musical excerpt 1: The melodic line of All for you

¹² Pinodo B. (2016, February 19). Ignorance robs musician revenues. [Graphic Online](#)



Musical excerpt 2: Trumpet *Ad-lib* (All for you)



Musical excerpt 3: Nke Bo Baaya *Ad-lib* for trumpet

iii. *Echoes* is an orchestral piece composed by George Kwasi Dor in the 1990s.

According to Dor, the word ‘echoes’ can be interpreted as using another person’s original voice. In other words, echoes can mean imitating someone. The original title was “Echoes from Nketia and Seth Dor”. Dor further clarified that people most often misunderstood him and mistook the work to be Nketia’s because of the title. Dor chose this title because of the use of harmonic idioms found in Nketia’s work which Dor termed dominant seventh chord (personal interview, October 17, 2016) (See audio track 3 on the CD).



Musical excerpt 4: The melodic line of Echoes

iv. *Naa Densua and Abrokyiri Abrabo* were originally composed by Agya Koo Nimo and were also performed by Koo Nimo with the GNSO in the recording. He was born in Foase, in the Atwima District of the Ashanti Region. He took the name Daniel Amponsah at his baptism. He is known as a living legend due to his tremendous contributions to highlife (palm wine) music and as one who endeavours to preserve Ghanaian culture through music and story-telling.¹³ He was nominated the President of Musicians Union of Ghana (MUSIGA) in 1979 and was also appointed as interim chairman of the Copyright Society of Ghana in 1985. He is also the Advisor to the Seattle Art Museum and currently holds a position as Visiting Artiste in Residence at the University of Washington's Ethnomusicology Department.

These pieces were arranged in 2014 by the late Dr. Zabana Kongo who taught composition in the Department of Music, University of Ghana. Dr. Kongo came to Ghana at the invitation of Emeritus Professor J.H. Kwabena Nketia and was affiliated to the then

¹³ GhanaWeb. Koo Nimo Profile[online]

International Centre of African Music and Dance (ICAMD) in 1995 as a Senior Research Fellow. He was also a Senior Lecturer and the Head of the Department of Music from 2005-2007 at the University of Ghana, Legon. As a scholar and a composer, Kongo was also an agent for the Pan-African consultation on cultural policies for development which was held in Togo and organised by UNESCO in collaboration with the Organisation of African Unity, the Bellagio Group and the government of Togo. Kongo had special training in composition and electronic music at Northwestern University, Evanston, U.S.A. In Kinshasa, he was described as a Keyboard leading light and a master musician. He has also served on both local and international boards such as the Pan-African Society for Musical Arts.¹⁴ (See audio track 5 and 10 on the CD).

Palmwine music is a West African musical genre. It evolved among the Kru people of Liberia, who use Portuguese guitars brought by sailors, combining local melodies and rhythms with Trinidadian calypso to create a “light, easy, lilting style”. According to Collins (1986), palmwine music was named after a drink, *palmwine*, made from the naturally fermented sap of the oil palm, which was drunk at gatherings where early African guitarists played. Palmwine music was first popularised by Ebenezer Calendar and His Maringa Band, who recorded many popular songs in the 1950s and early 1960s.



Figure 1: Ebenezer Calendar and his Maringa palmwine music band¹⁵

¹⁴ Yumpu (n.d). Curriculum Vitae: Pascal Zabana Kongo [online]. Retrieved from <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/10132134/curriculum-vitae-name-pascal-zabanakongo->

¹⁵ Photo retrieved from <https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl> on 18/07/20

The only Western musical instrument in palmwine music used to be simply an acoustic guitar (described as the palmwine guitar); and accompanied rhythmically with a locally-made castanet, maracas, claves, and a three-pronged bass *sanza* (*premprensiwa*). Ed Keazor (2014) posited that the palmwine guitar sound is a distinctive hybrid folk sound that originated in West Africa at the turn of the 20th century. As time went on, the use of the guitar moved away from being in the exclusive domain of African sailors and the most adventurous musicians in port cities, into the hands of the general populace.



Figure 2: Agya Koo Nimo; The greatest exponent of palmwine music in Ghana¹⁶

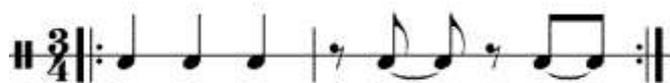
v. *Apatampa* is a recreational music of the Fante ethnic group in Ghana. The instruments involved include ‘*adaka*’ or ‘*adaka mu*’ (a wooden box), castanet, clappers, ‘*akonkon*’ (seemingly of an European snare/side marching drum model but of a local membrane of animal skin) ‘*aben*’ (whistle) and sometimes the ‘*adawura*’ (the slit/banana bell).

¹⁶ Photo retrieved from <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2003/09/03/music/abdul-tee-jay-and-palmwine-a-go-go/> on 18/07/20



Figure 3: An image of the use of adaka and akonkon in Apatampa music¹⁷

The timeline of *Apatampa* is given as shown below:



Musical excerpt 5: The timeline of *Apatampa*

vi. *Hi Life time*. Patrick Ato Quayson is the original composer of this piece. Ato Quayson is the Deputy Director of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra. Ato completed his Bachelor of Arts (Music) from the University of Ghana and in 2005 he went to Germany where he studied conducting and orchestration. Quayson is mostly inspired by indigenous themes and often uses the pentatonic scale in his compositions (personal interview, March 18, 2017). See audio track 7 on the CD.

vii. *Osabarima* (The warrior) was originally composed as a sacred song in *ebibindwom* style by Rev. Gaddiel Acquah. It was sung at an inaugural service of the conference of the Methodist church. It seeks to confirm and elevate God, the controller of the universe (Amuah 2008). *Osabarima* is adopted from Traditional Fante Folklore. Acquah observed the tonal inflection of the Fante Language; the conjunct and distinct movements of *Osabarima* are determined by those of speech-melody (2008, p. 43).

¹⁷ Courtesy -<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fvetter.sites.edu>

viii. *Oman ye wo man* originally composed by Uncle Ato Ghartey, and *Dzigbordi* an Ewe traditional song are from a work titled ‘*Akli do go Kame*’ compilations: A Ghanaian Patriotic Classic” arranged by Patrick Agbodza-Gbekle. *Dzigbodi* was meddled with *Oman ye wo man* in the recording rendered in *Agbadza* time. (See audio track 9 on the CD).

ix. *Yen ara asase ni* is a patriotic song composed by Dr. Ephraim Amu in the year 1929 upon a request by a past student of his, who wanted something African for his primary school students to sing on Empire Day.¹⁸ The song was originally composed in the Peki-Ewe dialect before it was later translated to Akan dialect. The GNSO introduced *Bawa* instrumentation while performing it. (See audio track 11 on the CD and appendices for musical score).

2.4.1 The Use of Staff Notation and Musical Arrangements

Some of the songs on the *Ghanaian Classics* album in their original contexts were not notated and had since been passed on from generation to generation through oral tradition. Part of the process of recontextualisation was therefore to notate the melody as well as musical arrangements of all the songs using the Western staff notation to suit the performance practices of the orchestra. The scores in the appendices are tatted and not clear because the pieces were hand written. These are also personal scores from some of the instrumentalists at GNSO and may have been mishandled. I transcribed some of them in the Finale document. I discuss briefly the musical arrangements of each song below:

¹⁸ Empire Day was a holiday celebrated on Queen Victoria’s birthday throughout the British Commonwealth. It was intended to be a performance of British colonial power and to “convince subjected people that they were now part of a larger empire”. During that time, young people spent Empire Day watching military bands perform regimental pieces and British anthems such as ‘God Save the Queen’ (Plageman 2012 cited in Terpenning 2016).

- a) *Apatampa* (*Whana n'akoko na woato hei?*) - This folk song was notated, arranged and orchestrated by Patrick Ato Quayson. Techniques such as counterpoint, fugal exposition, transposition and coda were employed in the arrangement. In my view, Quayson recontextualised "*Whana n'akoko na woato hei?*" and by this arrangement made a great piece rather than just a folk tune, satisfying both the indigenous and academic audience. (See the figure below for the melodic excerpt and also audio track 6 on the CD).



Musical excerpt 6: The melodic line of Apatampa



Musical excerpt 7: Agbadza timeline

- b) On the other hand, the National Anthem which was originally composed by Philip Gbeho as an Art music was also embellished with drum arrangement by Isaac Annor and Jonas Bibi Hammond. Both *Apatampa* and the Ghana National Anthem were strategically fitted in the *Agbadza* dance. (See musical excerpt 8 & 9).

GHANA NATIONAL ANTHEM

PHILIP GBEHO

The image displays the piano accompaniment for the Ghana National Anthem. The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 12/8 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first system starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second system begins with a measure number '5'. The third system begins with a measure number '8'. The fourth system begins with a measure number '11'. The music features a steady, rhythmic accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands.

Musical excerpt 8: The score of Ghana National Anthem

2

GHANA NATIONAL ANTHEM

The image shows a musical score for the Ghana National Anthem, specifically measures 14 through 17. The score is written for piano and is in the key of D major (one sharp). It consists of two systems of music. The first system, labeled '14', contains measures 14, 15, and 16. The second system, labeled '17', contains measures 17, 18, and 19. The music is written in a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, while the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

Musical excerpt 9: The score of Ghana National Anthem

c) *Ebe Ebe Tatale* is also a folk tune arranged by a renowned Ghanaian organist and composer Kweku Acquah Harrison. *Tatale* is a recreational folk tune of the Gã people of Ghana. A tune that has been passed on through oral tradition. Acquah Harrison employed modulation to see an extension of *Tatale*; and ensured that the call-and-response, and the repetitive natures were maintained; while producing rich harmony in primary and secondary chords. With Acquah Harrison's academic training in music, he recontextualised *Tatale* perhaps to satisfy both indigenous and academic audiences of this 21st century and even beyond. The choice of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra to arrange songs like *Apatampa*, National Anthem and *Tatale* as part of their album was a great effort to ensure recontextualisation. (See audio track 4 on the CD).



Musical excerpt 10: The melody of Tatale

d) On the other hand, *Osabarima* began with a call from palm wine/ acoustic guitar which was responded to by the entire orchestra and the St. Anthony Choral Group with the chorus. This arrangement was repeated several times with improvisation on the guitar. This piece was performed in the originally composed key of D major and the ~~12~~¹⁸/₈ time signature was with rubatos in the solo. (See audio track 8 on the CD and appendices for the musical excerpt).

2.4.2 Recontextualisation through Musical Instruments and Musical Texture

Part of the recontextualisation process was the inclusion of some new musical instruments, particularly orchestral instruments. For example, the song *Abrokyire Abrabo* is a song originally performed in a typical palmwine musical style. Palmwine music is said to be the first point of Ghanaian highlife music. The instrumental composition of this musical style included acoustic guitar, castanet and maracas. Agya Koo Nimo is known to the current generation of Ghanaians as the king of palmwine music and the grandfather of highlife music.

The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra, with the use of their assorted instruments of the Western tradition, performed some palmwine music featuring the king of palmwine music,

Agya Koo Nimo himself. The song was recorded with the use of strings, brass, woodwinds, *Kpanlogo* drums in addition to the typical palmwine musical instruments (acoustic/palm wine guitar, castanet, maracas and sometimes *premprensiwa* or *seprewa*).

Below are some local instruments of the palm wine music tradition:



Figure 4: Kpanlogo drums



Figure 5: Shekere/Axatse (Rattle)



Figure 6: Frikiyiwa (Castanet)

(All photos retrieved from <http://www.africandrumming.com>)

Ghanaians have a great love for art music and are increasingly developing love for the sounds of the orchestral instruments, especially the strings section. This probably explains in part the idea of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra performing and recording an entirely different music genre such as the palm wine music using orchestral instruments. Thus, this recontextualised music perhaps is to win the attention of the orchestral music lovers and add them up to the audience of palm wine music. It then becomes an affable way to promote and preserve music.

The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra therefore did a great job by performing the National Anthem and '*Yen ara asase ni*' a Ghanaian vocal patriotic song that talks about how important our land is and that it beholds on the current generation to continue in the protection of values, resources and development of the land. This is a call to embrace development through unity and positive individual attitudes. The inclusion of the other sections of the orchestra apart from the strings section helps to produce a pleasant texture.

Oman ye wo man is a compound duple patriotic pop song by Uncle Ato. As popular music, the first record made use of guitars, keyboards, synthesizers and pop drum kits. The GNSO performed this song not only by employing the full orchestra, but also the typical *Agbadza* ensemble (*atsyimevu*, *sogo*, *kidi*, *kagan*-drums *axatse*-rattle and *gankogui*-bell). *Agbadza* is a recreational musical type of the Southern-eastern Eves of Ghana.



Figure 7: Agbadza set of drums¹⁹

The rhythmic patterns of the ensemble are organised around the timeline as shown below.



Musical excerpt 11: Agbadza timeline

Since *Oman ye wo man* was meddled with *Dzigbordi*, it therefore became a perfect blend in the performance using *Agbadza* rhythm thereby bridging the gap between traditional and contemporary audience. The employment of traditional percussion as rhythmic accompaniments was prevalent in *Apatampa* (*Whana n'akoko na woatow hei?*).

The GNSO, in spite of the designated traditional rhythmic patterns for *Apatampa*, performed *Whana n'akoko na woatow hei?* in an Eve context not only by using *Agbadza* rhythmic patterns, but also the *Agbadza* instruments. This idea is a recontextualised one. *Agbadza* was the closest switch and the popular dance which is comparative to *Apatampa*. In my view, the decision on the choice of *Agbadza* is better because *Agbadza* is one of the popular traditional musical types in Ghana.

Ebe Ebe Tatale in its original context is a *Kpanlogo* song. *Kpanlogo* is a recreational musical type of the people of Gã ethnicity of Ghana. It is predominantly performed by the youth. *Kpanlogo* music uses three instruments; *nono* (metal bell), *fao* (gourd rattle) and *Kpanlogo* drums (seemingly; the *kagan*, *kidi*, and *pati* drums found in *Agbadza*, *Borborbor*, *Adowa* and *Kete* music)

¹⁹ Retrieved from <http://www.african-music-safari.com> on 19/07/20



Figure 8: Kpanlogo drums²⁰



Figure 9: Shekere (Gourd Rattle)



Figure 10: Dawuro²¹

²⁰ Retrieved from <https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fpaulscribble.com> 19/07/20

²¹ Image source: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org>

The key pattern of *Kpanlogo* music is given as shown below:



And a cross pattern as;



Musical excerpt 12: Kpanlogo timeline

These patterns are widely performed in Ghana and known almost worldwide. In fact, Ghanaian popular music (Highlife) predominantly uses these two patterns. Not only did the GNSO use these patterns in the performance of *Tatale*, they also used the typical *Kpanlogo* musical instruments. The idea of making this song a theatrical one is an act of recontextualisation thereby making it widely appealing.

It is more fascinating seeing and hearing the strings and brass sections of the orchestra play the popular lead guitar melodic line known in Ghana as ‘*Yaa Amponsah*’ as shown in excerpt

13 below.



Musical excerpt 13: Yaa Amponsah melodic phrase.

Abrokyire abrabo; happens to follow the ‘*Yaa Amponsah*’ guitar melodic line/motive. The GNSO performed this song; with the ‘*Yaa Amponsah*’ guitar line orchestrated for the strings and brass sections. The traditional percussion instruments for palmwine music were

employed; featuring Koo Nimo himself, doing the singing and also playing the acoustic guitar.

2.5 RECONTEXTUALISATION THROUGH THE USE OF ANALOGUE AND DIGITAL RECORDING FORMATS

As music can be recorded/represented graphically, it can also be recorded as sound. This is collectively made possible electronically, electrically and mechanically. Sound recording and reproduction is an electrical, mechanical, electronic, or digital inscription and recreation of sound waves, such as spoken voice, singing, instrumental music, or sound effects. The two main formats of sound recording technology are analogue recording and digital recording.

According to Techterms (2018), analogue is an adjective that describes a continuous measurement or transmission of a signal. It is often contrasted with digital, which is how computers store and process data using zeros and ones. While computers are digital devices, human beings are analogue. Analogue recording is a technique used for the recording of analogue signals which, among many possibilities, allows analogue audio and analogue video for later playback. Analogue audio recording began with mechanical systems such as the phonograph and phonograph.

According to Sweetwater (2017), analogue recording refers to recording analogue signals without converting those signals to digital audio first. This type of recording requires an analogue recording medium, such as magnetic tape or wax or vinyl cylinders. Until the advent of digital audio, all recordings were analogue recordings. When the compact disc was introduced, the digital recording era officially began. Today, nearly all recordings are digital, and even those artistes who prefer to make analogue recordings for artistic reasons almost always ultimately have to convert their music to digital audio for distribution.



Figure 11: A typical analogue recording desk. (Photo by www.sweetwater.com)

In digital recording, an audio or video signal is digitised and converted into a stream of discrete numbers, representing the changes over time in air pressure for audio, or chroma and luminance values for video. This number stream is recorded to a storage device.

According to the Thesaurus (2020), analogue recording is a method of sound recording in which an input audio waveform is sampled at regular intervals, usually between 40,000 and 50,000 times per second, and each sample is assigned a numerical value, usually expressed in binary notation. In a digital recording system, sound is stored and manipulated as a stream of discrete numbers, each number representing the air pressure at a particular time. The numbers are generated by a microphone connected to a circuit called an Analogue to Digital Converter, or ADC21.



Figure 12: An image of a digital recording process²²

According to Bibi Hammond, the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra employed both analogue and digital methods of recording the *Ghanaian Classics*. The songs were performed live in an analogue format and complemented with digital processes both in Ghana and Germany. Many if not all the songs in their original formats, were recorded and distributed using analogue formats. Thus, recontextualising them to comply with digital technology in the form of compact discs was on the premise that the analogue sound needed to be converted and distributed digitally.

How then can digital audio be a means of music recontextualisation? If music recontextualisation is the process of repackaging the relevance of a musical experience to or meant for a different group of people, then digital audios of such musical experiences will be the best to make this happen. Songs recorded in digital format have the ability to stand the test of time; thereby ensuring that the quality of sound produced remains the same for a considerable period of time. This allows for different generations or groups of people to meet and experience such songs over time.

²² Retrieved from <https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=http%3A%2F%2Fartsites.ucsc> on 11/07/20

The possibility of reaching a larger audience is also part of it since one of the aims of producing digital audio is its ability to be distributed digitally. This has become very important in this current generation because almost every transaction or communication is done digitally.

Below are the images of the GNSO during their recording process for *Ghanaian Classics*.

All photos were taken by Sarah Yeboah and Ebenezer Nii Kwei-Kumah Quaye.



Figure 13: The setting up of the studio at the J.H.K Nketia Conference Hall by the members of the GNSO

The above collage shows the setting up of the studio which includes arrangement of chairs, drums and the electronic gadgets used in the recording.

Line up of Orchestra



Figure 14: Some members of the GNSO on their various instruments

The above are the images of some of the instrumentalists that took part in the recording project.

Supporting Artistes



Figure 15: The supporting artistes featured in the recording

The above collage shows the artistes who performed during the recording included Agya Koo Nimo and his ensemble, Gyedu Blay Ambolley, Bob Pinodo and the St. Anthony Choral Group.



Figure 16: Other supporting instrumentalists

This collage also shows the other support performers from the Ghana Dance Ensemble and the Hewale Band.



Figure 17: The technical team for the recording

In this collage, the technical team was setting up the gadget, checking sound and recording the first part of this project. The second part of the recording was done in Germany where more sophisticated machines were used.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the background of the songs selected in the recording and how these songs were recontextualised using staff notation, musical instrumentation and texture, and the use of analogue and digital recording formats.

The recontextualisation idea of the *Ghanaian Classics* executed by the GNSO shares in Hanninen's concepts of music recontextualisation at the point where there was the use of conventional notation and arrangements of songs as a medium of music recontextualisation.

Similarly, they both sought to deal with music on score – the cognitive perception of music.

Except that the GNSO recontextualised more with instrumentation. While I call the process as notation and arrangements, Hanninen calls it sonic and structural.

However, there seems to be a difference in implication with the use of “musical context”. While I consider a given “musical context” as the relationship of people, in a given period of time and their music, Hanninen sees “musical context” as musical passages. In my view, music in a particular context is about how people relate to it within a given period of time. Therefore, Hanninen’s first concept of recontextualisation ‘idea’ is an issue about techniques in composition. While in the case of the *Ghanaian Classics* of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra, it is an issue about the “realisation” that certain deserving songs need to be sustained in their relevance in the society and for these songs to be better appreciated they need to be recontextualised.

By the use of ‘instances’, Hanninen sought to rename sections of a given structure of a piece of music, which is still an issue of compositional techniques, and a tool for the listener to appreciate and make judgments.

CHAPTER THREE

THE COMMERCIAL DIMENSION OF *GHANAIAN CLASSICS*

This chapter discusses the commercial dimension of *Ghanaian Classics* before, during and after the recording project. I discuss this from the point of view of the GNSO as well as the commercial success of the project, its impact in the Ghanaian music industry and copyright issues.

3.1 MUSIC AND COMMERCE

According to Mark D. Osae in an interview with a radio presenter, music industries around the world are significantly contributing to the economies of their countries such as the United Kingdom, Nigeria, South Africa, America, but the same cannot be said about the music industry in Ghana²³. Economy, from its Greek origin, means household management. It is further explored in most activities of our daily lives ranging from lifestyle, education, religion and business, among others. More broadly, economics as James defines is “the social domain that emphasises the practices, discourses and material expressions associated with the production, use and management of resources” (2015, p. 53). An economy is a broad umbrella with aspects such as the production, distribution and trade, as well as consumption of goods and services. Investopedia summarises this definition as the totality of all activities related to production and consumption of limited resources by a group of participants.²⁴ What is the commercial dimension of the *Ghanaian Classics* recording project? Was this recording considered as a business venture for the executive producer?

²³ Mark Darlington Osae is the chairman of steering committee for the Alliance for Change in Music in Ghana, a charity and a pressure group fighting for a positive change and a proper reconstruction of the Ghana music industry, in order to attract global and local investment, by creating a sustainable music business economy.

²⁴ <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/economy.asp>

According to the producer, the executive producer supported this project based on his love for orchestral music and wanted to support the GNSO²⁵. This should be a great way for the GNSO to generate some revenue internally by sales because the executive producer has not demanded any proceeds from them.

The role of music within society changed from being primarily an artistic creation, meant as a subtle enhancement to social events available to a selected few, into a cultural commodity consumed by the masses (Margeirsson, 2011, p. 1). According to Emielu (2013), “Highlife music, whether in its recorded form or performative context, is an economic product involving a chain of economic activities. This economic chain involves musicians, producers, recording studios, marketing companies and distributors, musical instruments dealers, hotel owners and so on” (p. 55). It is therefore important to consider this album as an economic product which involves a chain of economic activities and that is what this chapter seeks to do. As a way to foreground our discussions here, it is important to first of all look at the revenue base of the GNSO.

3.2 SOURCES OF INCOME OF THE GNSO

Revenue plays a vital role in the survival of an organisation. Since the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra is a Governmental organisation, it is generally assumed that the Government provides financial resources for the smooth running of the orchestra. However, the GNSO did not have financial support from the Government in the production of its maiden recording project. In this section, I provide an overview of the GNSO’s revenue sources. In an interview with the accountant of the GNSO Mr. Aryee²⁶, he outlined the sources of revenue and expenditure of the orchestra as follows:

²⁵ Mr. Bibi Hammond, the producer is a cousin of Dr. Andrian Oddoye the executive producer.

²⁶ Personal interview with Mr. Aryee at the Nation Theatre (GNSO’s Office) on the 12th March 2018.

3.2.1 Private and Public Performances

The GNSO runs two major concerts annually, which are open for public attendance (these concerts are named based on the guest conductors and the theme). However, on an average, fifteen private performances are also held yearly. The major concerts are mostly organised in collaboration with guest conductors from around the world (mostly from Germany, United States, London, Japan and China). The cost of a concert on an average is Five Thousand Ghana Cedis (GHS 5,000.00), and the channels of publicity include television advertisement, banners, flyers and tickets. The concert venue (which is usually the National Theatre), artiste fees, and miscellaneous expenses also form part of the total cost.

Private engagements are usually from programmes organised by individual establishments, weddings, funerals, and birthday celebrations amongst others. The number of these private programmes range from fifteen to twenty-five per annum. The accountant indicated that the orchestra charges between One Thousand and Three Thousand Five Hundred Ghana Cedis (GHS 1,000 and GHS 3,500) for an engagement, and this amount is usually able to cover just about forty percent of the total cost of performance. Perhaps the GNSO could charge more for these programmes, but based on a survey, the average charges in the music industry for performance at life-cycle events are between Five Hundred and Four Thousand Ghana Cedis (GHS 500 and GHS 4,000) depending on the artiste or the group in question. Therefore, it is important for the GNSO not to charge exorbitantly for individuals who wish to feature them in their events.

There are other important events where the orchestra performs annually. These include national festival days such as Emancipation Day, Workers' Day, Panafest, Founder's Day (Kwame Nkrumah's birthday), National Festival of Arts and Culture (NAFAC), Homowo Festival, World Music Day and African Union Day. Though the GNSO is not paid to

perform at these national day celebrations, it is considered as their social responsibility to participate during these occasions. Nevertheless, honoraria are given to performers to offset their transportation costs.

3.2.2 Government Subventions

The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra receives subventions or financial aids from the Government to the orchestra. These come in the form of money for payment of salaries and for goods and services such as performances. Government allocates about Six Hundred and Fifty Thousand Cedis (GHS 650,000) for payment of salaries and Two Thousand Five Hundred Cedis (GHS 2,500) for goods and services annually to the GNSO. One wonders if this pecuniary allocation is sufficient for their needs like the maintenance and servicing of instruments, replacement of old instruments and accessories. It is clear here that GNSO on its own could not have funded this recording project and therefore needed a financier.

3.2.3 Education and Sensitisation

The orchestra also organises practical lessons for the public at the National Theatre. There are some teachers and staff (instrumentalists) who teach on a part-time basis. Part of the income from the instrumental tutorials is used to pay the instructors and the other part goes into the coffers of the orchestra.

3.2.4 Donations and Sponsorships

Although the GNSO is not a charity group, they benefited from the benevolence of Dr. Andrian Nii Oddoi Oddoye to successfully produce this recording project in 2015. They also received donations of items such as instruments and accessories, equipment for staging performances, and in other cases cash donations, from 1993 till date. Many assets of the GNSO have been acquired through donations and sponsorships. These are supported

by two main donors namely: the Japanese Government and Professor Pascal Younge. The orchestra has also received contributions from guest conductors and friends of the orchestra.

A recent donation to the GNSO was in November 2016, where Pascal Younge, a Ghanaian professor at the Ohio State University, Columbus, USA donated the following items to the GNSO: 20 orchestra reading lights, 2 trumpets, 3 clarinets, 2 trumpet and a trombone mute, 1 tuner and 1 four-stringed bass guitar.

In 1993, the GNSO received some donations from the Japanese Government. This support was in the form of orchestral instruments which the orchestra has been using till date. The following are the orchestral instruments: 20 violins, 10 violas, 5 cellos, 4 double basses, 2 oboes, 2 flutes, 4 horns, saxophones in all parts (2 soprano, 2 alto, 2 tenor and 1 baritone), 1 piccolo, 1 E flat clarinet, 1 bass clarinet, 2 trumpets in B flat, 2 trumpet in C, 1 cornet, 1 trombone, 1 bass trombone, 1 tuba, 2 sets of timpani, 2 marimbas and 4 bassoons.

Having examined the revenue base of the GNSO, I now focus on the production aspect of the recording and the economic imperatives.

3.3 THE CONCEPT OF PRODUCTION

According to Bates and Parkins (1983), “production is the organised activity of transforming resources into finished products in the form of goods and services; the objective of production is to satisfy the demand for such transformed resources”. Suman cited Hicks in an online article, defining production as “any activity directed to the satisfaction of other peoples’ want through exchange”²⁷. In other words, production is the act of creating things to satisfy an individual’s needs. Furthermore, the recording project of the GNSO can be considered as a production because the project had undergone

²⁷ <https://www.economicdiscussion.net/production>

processes/stages to resolve in the product/album titled *Ghanaian Classics*. “Any activity connected with money earning and money-spending is called an economic activity and production is an important economic activity”²⁸.

There are four major factors to consider in production. These include land (natural resources), labour (human resources), capital (man-made resources), and entrepreneurship (which brings all previous resources together for production)²⁹.

- i. Land in a broad sense refers to all the natural resources or gifts of nature. According to the Penguin Dictionary of Economics, “Land in economics is taken to mean not simply that part of the earth’s surface not covered by water, but also all the free gifts of nature such as minerals, soil fertility, and also the resources of the sea. Land provides both space and specific resources”. One may link this definition to the recording project such that the talents and skills of instrumentalists of the GNSO could be likened to the land or the natural resource. However, for the usefulness of these talents they have to be polished. The instrumentalists and musicians have undergone specific training either formally or informally to develop or upgrade the talents. This process has made them efficient and productive in their profession.
- ii. Labour is the collective name for productive services embodied in human physical effort, skill, intellectual powers and so on. Labour is a basic factor in production, where human strength is required for creating any item for production. In this recording project, the labour is channelled from the rigorous rehearsal sessions, performance to the technical aspect of the recording itself. Another hurdle was scouting for the studio for the recording.

²⁸ www.economicdiscussion.net

²⁹ Business Dictionary.

- iii. Capital is the part of wealth which is not used for consumption but is utilised in the process of production. It also included machinery and tools. The musical instruments the GNSO used for this recording were all procured with some form of capital, transportation of the entire crew to the designated location for the recording as well as funds raised for the production of the album were all capital intensive.
- iv. Enterprise or organisation is the act of bringing land, labour and capital together for an effective production. The entrepreneur is the person in charge of supervision of all these aspects of production. In this case, the producer and the project coordinator who took care of the organisation of the whole recording project form the enterprise.

In most developed countries, recording studios are purposefully designed for orchestral recording projects. These studios are fitted out with high-end equipment which facilitates a variety of support services. I inquired why the orchestra did not have the recording done at the National Theatre. According to Mr. DeGraft-Amoah, although the GNSO was located at the National Theatre, they did not have full support from the Government, thus could not access space at the Theatre.³⁰ This situation coincidentally led to the discovery of the J. H. Nketia Conference Hall at the Institute of African studies. As Mr. Hammond further explained, the Nketia Hall was so appropriate for the recording because it had good acoustics, “one would think it was designed as a studio”³¹ (personal interview, September 9, 2016).

3.3.1 Economic Theories and Concepts as they relate to the Recording Project

Theories in economics are largely classified in two: microeconomics and macroeconomics.

Microeconomics is the study of individuals and business decisions while macroeconomics

³⁰ Eric DeGraft-Amoah, a member of GNSO in an interview with the author Accra.

³¹ J. B. Hammond the producer of the Ghanaian Classics album in an interview with the author at Movenpick Hotel, Accra. (September 9, 2016)

is the study of decisions of countries and governments. In other words, macroeconomics deals with performance, structure, behaviour and decision making of an economy as a whole as opposed to the individual market in the case of microeconomics.³² This chapter focuses on microeconomics because the commercial aspect of the *Ghanaian Classics* recording project is an individual business on a smaller scale but not of a nation. According to Reference for Business Encyclopaedia (June 2020) microeconomics deals with the economy at a smaller level or at a smaller scale, such as the market for a particular product (e.g., automobiles) or the behaviour of an individual firm in a particular industry (e.g., decisions made by one of the Big Three in the U.S. automobile industry)³³.

Various economic concepts involve the law of supply and demand, theories of consumer behaviour, product development, marketing concepts such as market segmentation, pricing, distribution and promotion, product life, factors of production, breakpoint and product line amongst others. All these concepts will be explored to ascertain whether or not the album as an economic product can be considered a good business venture.

3.3.2 Theory of Supply, Demand and Price Mechanism

According to the Reference for Business Encyclopaedia (June 2020), the demand for a particular product by a consumer is based on three important factors. Firstly, the price of the product determines how much of the product the consumer buys, given that all other factors remain unchanged. Secondly, the consumer's income also determines how much of the product the consumer is able to buy, given that all other factors remain constant. Thirdly, prices of related products are also important in determining the consumer's demand for the product. More broadly, the lower the price of the product the more a consumer buys and the greater his or her income is, the more commodities a consumer will

³² https://www.diffen.com/difference/Macroeconomics_vs_Microeconomics

³³ <https://www.referenceforbusiness.com/encyclopedia/economics>

buy. The total of all consumer demands yields the market demand for a particular commodity. The market demand curve shows quantities of the commodity demanded at different prices, given that all other factors remain constant; as price increases, the quantity demanded falls³⁴. One is curious to know how the *Ghana Classics* album was priced and the demand for it in Ghana.

Following the above description on supply, demand and price mechanism, the *Ghanaian Classics* CD is taken as the product which comprises highlife tunes performed by the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra (which is a brand name on its own). The process of producing the album has raised economic issues. What is the demand for highlife music in Ghana? The

Ghana Music Industry has evolved over the years with genres such as Gospel, Highlife, Hiplife, Dancehall and Afro-beat among others. As Matczynski (2011, p. 18) recalled “The ‘golden age’ of highlife spanned from the 1950s through the 1970s, a period during which hundreds of bands operated across Ghana; nightclubs and dance halls were filled with dancers moving to live music and local record labels/recording studios released a staggering number of new and exciting highlife albums”. During this period highlife music was in high demand because a lot of people enjoyed this genre but as time went by the demand of Highlife declined.

However, in recent times few people (of the older generation) still enjoy highlife music. It is obvious that the production of *Ghanaian Classics* album was not because of high demand.

According to Isaac Annoh, the *Ghanaian Classics* CD was produced for posterity’s sake. However, it is crucial to consider the economic aspect of this recording because posterity alone cannot be solely the purpose but also the financial and human resource involved in

³⁴ <https://www.referenceforbusiness.com/encyclopedia/Eco-Ent/Economic-Theories.html>

this project. Has the waning of popular highlife music in Ghanaian Music Industry affected the commodification of highlife music? If so, was this recording project designated to boost the market value of highlife music? These are pertinent questions to consider.

3.3.3 Product Development

Product development is a series of steps that includes the conceptualisation, design, development and marketing of newly created or newly rebranded goods or services³⁵.

According to Kumar and Phrommathed (2005, p. 3), “One of the significant tactics relating to product differentiation that a number of firms have implemented to enhance their competitive advantage, is efficient new product development and successful introduction of the new breed of products into markets”. He further raised three questions that aspects of New Product Development (NPD) should be able to answer:

- i. What are motivating factors encouraging companies to develop their new products?
- ii. What is the silver bullet (best practices, or tools) used to accomplish the NPD goals?
- iii. Do these tools really provide sustained competitive advantage to the exercising firms?

3.3.4 Product Life Cycle

A product is a good, service or idea consisting of a bundle of tangible or intangible attributes that satisfies consumers and is received in exchange for money or some unit of value. The price of a product can be charged based on the market, the quality, the

³⁵ www.techtarget.com

marketing and the segment that is targeted. A product also has a useful life after which it needs replacement and a life cycle after which it has to be re-invented³⁶.

Product Life Cycle (PLC) is the stage through which every product passes from introduction to withdrawal or eventual demise. These stages are *introduction, growth, maturity and decline*. In analysing the PLC of the *Ghanaian Classics* album these stages must be considered.

- i. *Introduction* is when the product is brought into the market. Here, massive marketing activity, product promotion and the product is set into limited outlets in a few channels for distribution. Sales take off slowly in this stage because the need is to create awareness, not profits.
- ii. *Growth* is when sales take off, the product is known on the market; other companies are attracted, profit begins to flow in and market shares stabilise. It cannot really be said that the market of the *Ghanaian Classics* album grew because one did not see publicity and for that matter the market share. In a random survey of persons living in Accra and Tema, only 20% out of 40 knew about the album.
- iii. *Maturity* is where sales grow at slow rates and finally stabilise. At this stage, products get differentiated, price wars and sales promotion become common and a few weaker players exit.
- iv. *Decline* is where sales drop, as consumers may have changed, the product is no longer relevant or useful. Price wars continue, several products are withdrawn, and cost control becomes the way out for most products.

PLC analyses can alert a company as to the health of the product in relation to the market it serves. PLC also forces a continuous scan of the market and allows the company to take corrective action faster³⁷.

³⁶ www.economictimes.indiatimes.com

From the data gathered, the introduction of the *Ghanaian Classics* has not done well because currently, this album is not found on the market. And one can conclude that this album never reached maturity on the market before its decline.

3.4 COMMERCIALISATION AND SALES OF THE RECORDING

Key competitive advantage in the marketplace is the ability to repeatedly commercialise successful new products (Griffin & Page, 1996). Commercialisation is the process of introducing a new product and making it available on the market or a production method in commerce. According to Investopedia, “Commercialisation is the process of bringing new products or services to market. The broader act of commercialisation entails production, distribution, marketing, sales, customer support, and other key functions critical to achieving the commercial success of the new product or service”.³⁸ Did the GNSO consider the above aspects of commercialisation as a standard to boost their sales? Who was the marketer of this album? DeGraft in an interview with the author, alluded that the project coordinator, Mr Bruce-Konuah was also the marketer for the *Ghanaian Classics* album.

According to Patel, an online blogger, one of the biggest problems start-ups face is a lack of money. He suggested four ways to make a product sell itself³⁹:

- i. Fill an obvious need with simple criteria
- ii. Make sure the value is obvious
- iii. Offer something unique
- iv. Enter the market with a good product.

³⁷ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/product-life-cycle>

³⁸ <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/commercialization.asp>

³⁹ <https://neilpatel.com/what-is-affiliate-marketing/>

Commercialising a product takes a lot of effort for the product to sell. Narrowing it further to music, commercialisation should consider components such as genre, culture and audience among others. According to Margeisson (2011, p. 7), the culture industry is responsible for the production of works for reproduction and mass consumption. It was therefore crucial for the GNSO to have involved the National Commission on Culture (NCC) and the music industry for their contribution towards the promotion of the sales of the *Ghanaian Classics* album but it was not so in their commercialisation strategy. According to DeGraft-Amoah, they tried with NCC but their effort did not avail much.

Branding and packaging play an important role in the marketing of a product. As an online business magazine discussed, all brands are not equally liked by a consumer and he selects his brand after a careful analysis of a number of factors associated not only with the product but also the manufacturer, the brand name, the packaging, the price, the content, and also the various other factors (BXP Magazine 2017). These factors also promote advertisement of products.

Jam (2008) described the types of CD packages used for marketing in the music industry which the GNSO's package perfectly suits the digipak. "The Digipak has a cardboard sleeve which opens up like a book to reveal a plastic tray glued inside which holds the CD. The artwork is printed on the cardboard packaging. It may include a booklet which will be slotted inside the digipak".⁴⁰ The booklet in the CD sleeve comprises information such as the objective of the GNSO, list of songs and their composers, picture of the process of preparation for the recording, line up of orchestra (pictures of instrumentalists and their names), producer's cut, images of supporting artistes, pictures of technical team and project team. How has this digipak boosted the promotion of the sale of the CDs? Has the

⁴⁰ Rainbow Jam (2008, January8). CD Packing: Different terms and What they Mean [online]. Retrieved from www.ebay.co.uk

design on the cover sleeve anyway contributed to its marketing and sales? These questions are further explored in the next chapter.

In fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) parlance, a brand can be revamped, re-launched or extended to make it more relevant to the segment and times, but keeping the product almost the same.

In an informal interaction with the director of the orchestra and a cross section of management, it was obvious that one of the aims of the recording project was to bring Ghanaian orchestral music into the global canon, and also marketing the CD for economic gain. Since its release, Mr. Hammond, the producer, has been excited at the frequency with which the songs are aired on radio and Television in Ghana, Germany, and other parts of Europe. Yet this could not boost the marketing of the CDs here in Ghana because the producer is resident in Germany. Nonetheless, some of the songs on the CD are also uploaded on YouTube for easy access to the public.

In an interview with Mr. Hammond (the producer who marketed the CD in Germany, where he is domiciled), he stated that a recent radio chart-show placed the *Ghanaian Classics* album on the 25th position out of a total of 156 international songs. This shows how far the project of the GNSO has gone in promoting Ghanaian orchestral music.

In marketing the CDs, the orchestra selected seasoned artistes in Ghana to collaborate with them. These artistes included Agya Koo Nimo and the Adadam Cultural Band from Kumasi, Gyedu Blay Ambolley and Bob Pinodo. Musicians, producers, songwriters and composers of Ghanaian highlife fame, and the popular St. Anthony Choral Group (from the St. Anthony Anglican Church, Achimota) were also involved. Putting together such music icons on this recording project was a marketing strategy which could draw the attention of a larger audience and in making their fans recognise this brand name. The

popularity of the artistes featured locally and internationally was a good way to market the CDs.

A conversation with Mr. DeGraft-Amoah suggested that the mini-launch was even impromptu. “The GNSO was invited on the 18th of March 2016 for a live performance at +233 Bar. During the show they decided to chip in some tunes on the CD and as the audience got involved by dancing along, Mr. Bruce-Konuah who hosted the programme seized the opportunity for the mini-launch.⁴¹ Consequently, about a hundred CDs were sold at One Hundred Ghana Cedis (GHS 100.00) each, a matter the director of the GNSO confirmed. It is rather unfortunate that after the mini-launch, one can only purchase the CD on request from the GNSO premises at Thirty Ghana Cedis (GHS 30.00). It is not clear why the CD was priced GHS 30.00 while on average CDs are sold for GHS 10.00 in Ghana. However, if effort is put in the marketing, distributing and promoting of the sales of the CD, this investment will not go wasted.

3.4.1 Marketing

Also Branding plays an important role in marketing a product. As Emielu (2013, p. 55) discussed in his book, “Highlife is also a market label by which producers and buyers identify the product in the marketplace...” he mentioned some examples like the *Trumpet Highlife* by E.T. Mensah, *Highlife in the '60s, 3 Decades of Highlife and Highlife Reincarnation*’ by Victor Olaiya. In the case of the GNSO, the title is *Ghanaian Classics* which featured the legendary highlife artistes such as Agya Koo Nimo and Gyedu Blay Ambolley. Although this label does not suggest anything highlife, there may be some curiosity drawn in the mind of the buyer after seeing the names of these musicians on the CD jacket. ‘The National Symphony Orchestra of Ghana’ on the other hand, is another

⁴¹ Eric DeGraft-Amoah a member of GNSO in an interview with the author Accra.

brand name which might draw the attention of the customer in purchasing the CD. I sought to know if the GNSO deployed any company/group to market the *Ghanaian Classics*. National day festivals could be perfect avenues for more publicity for the sales of the *Ghanaian Classics* album. If Highlife is a branded product as Emielu (ibid) alluded to, then the *Ghanaian Classics* album generally falls in the description, although there are some exceptions of the songs on the album.

Furthermore, Emielu (ibid) indicated that the highlife music market position is open to the law of demand and supply and to theories of consumer behaviour, there is a need here to explore consumer behaviour.

3.4.2 Consumer Behaviour Theory

There are four theories to consider when studying consumer behaviour theory. The data below were taken from Husson University Online⁴². These include:

- a) Marshallian Economics theory which believes that consumers buy their goods and services based on what offers the most personal satisfaction.
- b) Psychoanalytic theory which states that consumers respond to symbolic concerns as much as they respond to those of economics and function.
- c) Pavlovian theory. In a famous experiment, Pavlov discovered that if he rang a bell immediately prior to feeding a dog, he could eventually get the dog to salivate just by ringing it. He concluded that much of human behaviour results from conditioned responses. Therefore, when establishing or reinventing a brand, marketers can use this knowledge to help create or change consumer habits, or reinforce brand elements that are associated with positive customer experiences.
- d) The Veblenian Social-Psychological Model believes that people's individual needs and desires are created and influenced by group membership. It suggests that

⁴² <https://online.husson.edu/consumer-behavior-theories/>

marketers should understand the social influences that impact consumers in order to better comprehend product demand.

Following these theories, one can then conclude that the GNSO selected enlisted songs for the album based on their audience's emotional and physical responses whenever these songs are performed by them and therefore considered these a good marketing strategy. For example, this was evident during the mini-launch of the *Ghanaian Classics* album when these songs were performed and the audience were intrigued and danced along.

3.5 TARGETED AUDIENCE

According to the production team, the targeted audience for the CD album was the elite who enjoyed highlife since the 19th century, the youth who love highlife and music lovers who enjoy listening to the orchestra – which is fair. However, in my view, the market segmentation should have been broader. During my interviews and interactions with sixty-eight individuals in Accra and Tema, one major challenge the youth had was in relation to the high cost of the CDs. While some unemployed youths said they cannot pay Thirty Ghana Cedis (GHS 30.00) for a CD, the elite, working class and other music lovers from my survey who were interested in the *Ghanaian Classics* could not understand why the CDs are not circulated at vantage points. These individuals questioned why the purchasing point is limited to the National Theatre where the orchestra is resident.

Although the production of the recording project was successful, one cannot say the marketing was. This is because the project coordinator and some members of the orchestra still have about 100 CDs unsold as at the time of my research. The intended aim of promoting *Ghanaian Classics* at home and abroad to a wider audience is yet to be achieved. How then can the orchestra recoup its capital, make some profit, and embark on more recording projects in the future? Has there been a reproduction of more CDs five years after the recording project? It does not seem so. The GNSO, even after five years,

has not officially launched the *Ghanaian Classics* album. Perhaps they could involve the Government or NCC for support in boosting and promoting the sales of the CD or aimed the launch at any of the state functions rather than trying to sell them by themselves. Obviously, the orchestra did not involve the NCC in the recording and hence, their nonparticipation in promoting the sales of the *Ghanaian Classics* album.

3.6 COPYRIGHT CONCERNS

Ghana Music Rights Organisation (GHAMRO) is a non-profit corporate body which collects and distributes royalties on behalf of authors, composers and other rights owners. This organisation was established in December 2011 under section 49 of the Copyright Law, Act 690 of 2005 and regulated under L.I 1962 of 2010⁴³.

According to DeGraft-Amoah, the GNSO has obtained the copyright from the composers of the songs they reproduced on the album but not through GHAMRO. As Hammond purported, there is no copyright for recontextualisation of songs. All rights of the producer and the owner of the recorded work have been reserved by Zaria Music. Since the songs were recontextualised by the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra, the original composers who are alive still own the copyright.

Copyright is the exclusive and assignable legal right, given to the originator for a fixed number of years, to publish, perform, film, or record literary, artistic, or musical material. Hammond, the producer, defines copyright as “a strong international mechanism that works with each other rigorously and is government sanctioned; even more rigid than the police system and the artist is paid from this system”.⁴⁴ Constant education on copyright protection laws in Ghana will better resolve controversies in the music industry and it is

⁴³ <https://www.musicinafrica.net/magazine/ghana-ghamro-reschedules-2020-agm>

⁴⁴ Interview with Jonas Bibi Hammond the producer by author on the 15th September 2018

important that we understand how these copyright controls are implemented to help musicians recover some financial benefit for their artistic works.

As Investopedia further explicates:

Copyright law gives the creator of the original material the exclusive right to further use and duplicate that material for a given amount of time, at which point the copyrighted item becomes public domain. Under copyright law, a work is considered original if the author created it from independent thinking void of duplication. If the songs on the album were recontextualised, they may not fall under this jurisdiction. This type of work is known as Original Work of Authorship (OWA). Anyone with OWA automatically has the copyright to that work, preventing others from using or replicating it. The copyright can be registered voluntarily by the original owner if they would like to get an upper hand in the legal system in the event that the need arises”.⁴⁵

These laws may not apply to Ghana when it comes to copyright. However, in April 2003, the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Ghana organised a Seminar on **Copyright and Related Rights and Collective Management of Mechanical Rights**. The system of protecting the rights and royalties of composers and performers in Ghana was not effective. Adopting the WIPO Treaty seems to be very beneficial but the question is, how to enforce this law in the music industry?

Article 3 of the Rome Convention defines performers as “*actors, singers, musicians, dancers, and other persons who act, sing, deliver, declaim, play in, or otherwise perform literary or artistic works*”. The WIPO Treaty on Performance and Phonograms of 1996

⁴⁵ www.investopedia.com/copyright.com

(usually known as WPPT) echoed the same description in its article 3a but added “expression of folklore”.

According to the director of the GNSO, copies of the CD were sent to be sold at the Accra Mall, and Reimer Music Bookshop which is a commendable step to publicise this work. Nevertheless, I could not locate a copy of the CD in a couple of shops such as Accra Mall, Art Centre and University Bookshop, Legon which could also be vantage points where it could be sold. In Germany, some songs on the CD were played on the radio stations. These royalties have to be safeguarded and the royalty is allocated to the original composers, the artistes, but there are no royalties for recontextualisation or rearrangement on the side of the GNSO (performers and instrumentalists)⁴⁶. Conversely, the CD is not protected against replication. How then can all the law effectively be enforced if they could not secure this product from a ‘simple rip’?

Mr. Hammond also attested that unlike the European countries where artists earn royalties, copyright does not work here in Ghana. He pointed out that there are various international copyright organisations like Society of Europe Stage Actors and Composers (SESAC), the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), Broadcasting Music Incorporation (BMI) who do not send royalties to Ghana because they have issues with artistes’ complaints of not receiving royalties due them. This is how copyright control works according to Mr. Hammond, noting that it is an area that requires urgent attention.

According to Hammond:

All the songs I recorded with the orchestra and other artistes are written on International Standard Recording Code (ISRC) which means they are digitally encoded. So, when international radio stations play the music from their machines it displays the title, composer’s name along with its

⁴⁶ Interview with Jonas Bibi Hammond the producer by author on the 25th September 2020

ISRC number and the publisher. And at the end of the year I know where and the number of times these songs have been played on radio.⁴⁷

He further explained that in Ghana, radio stations do not have the precise technologies to read this information. Thus, songs are played many times but the machines do not read the correct data. These are all against international regulations because there are no checks and balances.

“All copyright organisations of the world are connected to one server. So, for instance, if your music is being played on a radio station in Malaysia; they will send a list of the items played which is not from their countries to the countries of origin because they see your copyright organisation there (let’s say Zaria Music-Germany) at the end of each year. The percentages of money due will be paid to the organisation and this is made known to the artiste and the publisher pays the artiste”.⁴⁸

This is what we need in Ghana, and until that comes into play, we cannot talk about copyright.

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the commercial dimensions of the *Ghanaian Classics* recording project against the backdrop of modern international music recording, marketing and copyright procedures. It looked at the chain of economic activities around the recording project, the GNSO’s source of income and the marketing and sales of the album. Based on available data, we can see that the market segment of the album was not wide; it is limited to only a few stores in Accra. The chapter observes that the album did better internationally in terms of publicity and sales since the producer is resident in Germany.

As Skolnick proposes, your music, your performance, your reputation – these are your assets as a musician. It is important to know and protect your assets; by doing so, you can

⁴⁷ Interview with Jonas Bibi Hammond the producer by author on the 27th September 2020

⁴⁸ Interview with Jonas Bibi Hammond the producer by author on the 27th September 2016

better control your career (Skolnick, 2005, cited in Eason, 2006). The orchestra really has a role to play in protecting and securing their works such as the *Ghanaian Classics* album and also musical scores and archives. This will improve situations like misplaced/destroyed original scores of some composers in the past and issues of ownership of compositional works.

The Ghana National Symphony Orchestra is a Ghana Government organisation so it needs the full support from the Public Purse to be able to carry out its mandate effectively. We can therefore conclude that the GNSO's maiden album (the *Ghanaian Classics*) was partially successful in the commercialisation because the orchestra has not made much out of the sales of the recording project nor carried out its marketing strategy professionally. One is bound to think that focusing on the limited middle class as the main buyer of her maiden album that features legendary musicians in the history of Ghanaian music was a nonstarter.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTRIBUTIONS TO GHANAIAN NATIONALISM

This chapter analyses the song texts, images, artistic designs and iconographies on the sleeve of the Compact Disc (CD) of the *Ghanaian Classics* album. It examines how these represent ethnic and national identities and how altogether they project a sense of Ghanaian nationalism. In pursuance of this, the chapter begins with a discussion on the meanings and interpretations of the various colours, and the *Adinkra* (Akan), *Laimomo* (Gã) and *Agama* (Eve) symbols on the CD sleeve. It looks at these from the perspective of the project coordinator(s), sleeve designer, musicians involved and audiences to ascertain their underlying sense of cultural nationalism and nationhood.

4.1 ARTISTIC DESIGN

In a conversation with Sela Adjei the sleeve designer, the cover art was an intuitive conception that can be described as “abstract art”.⁴⁹ Although abstract art has a subjective interpretation and meaning, images are interpreted from the viewer’s standpoint or from public understanding of the symbols and colours. Adjei described the art form as “The *Laimomo* Dilemma” concept which literally means old firewood and metaphorically ex-lover/partner in Gã. The full Gã expression is *‘laimomo tsoɔ fe lai ‘he’* (the old firewood glows better than a new one). The art form on the sleeve is made up of several Akan and Eve symbols, therefore, it is important to establish the difference between symbols and signs. Signs have direct meaning and are specific to its connotation while symbols may have several meanings, multivalent or polyvalent interpretation to an artistic context.

⁴⁹ Sela Kojo Adjei interviewed by author, Lashibi, Tema (May 12, 2017). “Abstract art is art that does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of a visual reality but instead uses shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks to achieve its effect” (Wassily Kandinsky 1910). Abstract art is often much more than what you see on the surface of the canvas. According to Alan Avorgbedor (2015), “one is not skeptical about the project of hierarchy or the primacy of the figure presented but one derives the enigmatic yet pragmatic engine of identification from the privileged centre”.

Considering the symbols which represent the various ethnicities in Ghana, one is curious to know how they all add up to represent a sense of Ghanaian nationalism, both politically and culturally.

In this chapter therefore, the focus is primarily on symbols and how they epitomise Ghanaian nationalism. An interpretation of the symbols on the design from the perspectives of the designer, the project coordinator, sampled public audiences, and informed elderly relations as well as my personal indigenous knowledge as a native growing up in the communities where these symbols are popularly used.

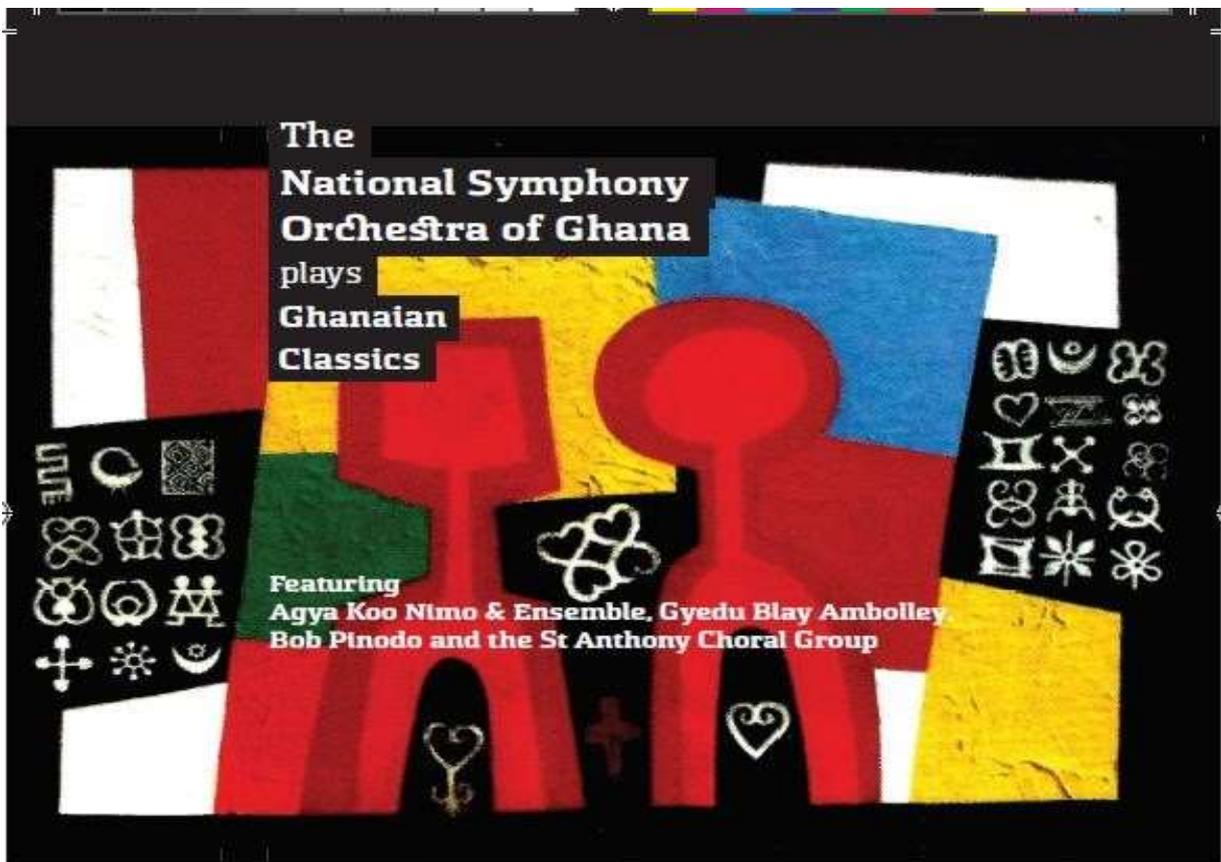


Figure 18: CD Cover of Ghanaian Classics

4.2 DESIGNS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.2.1 Colours and their Representations

According to Bradley (2010, p. 3), people are physically, psychologically, and socially influenced by colours. It is not enough for a designer to use a colour simply because he or she likes that colour.⁵⁰ He cautions that people should know the meaning of the colours they choose, because colours convey and make various impressions on the people who view them. Bradley continued that the most essential thing to understand about the sense of colour is that there is no substantive evidence that supports a universal system of colour meaning. Colours themselves, as he stated, do not have precise meaning, but somewhat, society has assigned meanings to them (2010, p. 8). Shutterstock alludes “colour plays such an integral role in our lives that it even shapes the way we describe our moods”⁵¹. Colours therefore affect one’s emotion and as every individual may be attracted to a particular shade. Organisations also use colours to represent what they stand for. How then do the colours of the sleeve represent what the GNSO stands for? The orchestra generally does not have specific colour/s that represent them; however, they are mostly seen in black and white apparels and occasionally in African printed outfits or fugu/batakari (smock) which comes in various colours. None of the colours on the album sleeve directly represents the GNSO, nevertheless these colours may denote aesthetic relevance.

Although the colours of the Ghana national flag were not arranged on the sleeve design of the album (in the order they appear in the Ghana flag), a Ghanaian may associate these colours in interpreting the design or otherwise. Red, gold (yellow), green, blue, black and white are the colours on the cover of the *Ghanaian Classics* CD. Why did the artist choose

⁵⁰ Steven Bradley (2010, February 15). “How to Use Colour to Enhance your Designs”. Retrieved from <http://vanseodesign.com/web-design/colour-meaning>

⁵¹ Shutterstock (2015, April 3). “Symbolism of Colours and Colour Meanings around the World”. Retrieved from <http://shutterstock.com>

these colours for the artwork? Though he termed the design as ‘abstract art’, could his nationality as a Ghanaian have influenced his choice subconsciously? According to the designer, these colours were chosen at random. However, from close analysis, four of these colours (red, gold, green, and black), share traits with the colours of the Ghana National Flag.



Figure 19: The National Flag

The colours of the national flag provide Ghanaians with the means of defining who they are and also address the importance of the powers beyond control which shape their identities. Theodosia Salome Okoh, the designer of the Ghanaian flag interpreted the colours as follows: Red signifies the blood of those who toiled for the nation’s liberation from colonial rule; yellow or gold symbolises the rich mineral resources in Ghana; green represents the green vegetation, and black stands for the African⁵².

However, although colour symbolism is relative to cultures, in Ghana red generally signifies danger or blood. The logical consistency and local variations in colour and symbolism in African contexts are best addressed by Victor Turner in aspects of Ndembu ritual in Northwestern Zambia. Turner emphasised that colours and symbols represented in the *Nkula* ritual are interpreted differently or similarly based on stages of rituals (1967, p. 41). For example, both the red clay (*mukundu*) and the *mukula* tree are significant

⁵² <https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/people/person.php?ID=190>

symbolic markers in the hunter's cult, which signifies the hunter's power to kill; and the same red in the *Wubanji* ritual represents the blood of homicide and the blood of a circumcised boy during the circumcision ritual (Turner *ibid*).

From the cross-section of people, I interviewed, including my aged parents who are knowledgeable in the Ewe, Akan and Gã cultural traditions, white and other bright colours such as blue are mostly representative of victory, success or joy. For example, women wear white clothes after a successful delivery. Married couples also wear white gowns to celebrate their happy union. The colour blue is conventionally associated with masculinity.

For instance, in Ghana, most mothers will choose blue over other colours (let's say pink) when they buy items for their young sons. As Bradley (2010) stated, blue creates a soothing effect, subdues appetite and is also beneficial to both mind and body. Blue also signifies loyalty, healing, wisdom and stability among other qualities (p. 5).

However, almost everybody commended the producers for the beautiful design of the cover page but had no ideas about the underlying ideologies of the sleeve design. Colours depict underlying aesthetics upon which musical gestures or behaviours are mapped and it is therefore important to pay due attention to album sleeve designs to avoid misrepresentation and miscommunication. I now go on to discuss some of the symbols on the album sleeve.

4.2.2 Adinkra Symbols on Ghanaian Classics Cover Design

Different societies assign different meanings to art and symbols. The meanings may change depending on several socio-cultural contexts. Smith (1952, p. 17) also informed that a true symbol can never be fully explained, for in part at least it is the product of the imagination "reason in its exalted mood" appeals to the feeling, its meaning is grasped by

intuition. “You can understand people’s symbols, as long as you enter sympathetically into their daily experience and see the world through their eyes”.

According to Asmah, “*Adinkra* symbols have become popular and widely used in the various art forms because of the prominent exposure given to them by some eminent foreign anthropologists and 60 local artists in the form of documentation” (2009, p. 59). “*Adinkra* symbols are relatively unknown around the world. However, in Ghana they are almost everywhere: on chairs, buildings, houses, and clothes. *Adinkra* are pictorial designs of birds, vines, chains, body parts, all of which represent more than their image and are understood within the context of Asante’s culture” (Danzy, 2009, p. 3). Why did the designer select these *Adinkra* symbols for the CD cover? Items that are embossed with these symbols are well patronised irrespective of an individual’s ethnicity, because these symbols have transcended ethnic barriers into national identities.

As Twi is widely spoken in Ghana, “*Adinkra* symbols and their meanings have also transcended time, yet, they have adapted to the social, cultural, and historical changes that characterise modern Ghanaian society” (Danzy, 2009, p. 8). For instance, Allotey Bruce-Konuah, the project coordinator confirmed this idea of symbols and national identity. In his own words he indicated that “although I wanted to promote the art work of my friend, I selected this work because I feel a sense of connection of national identity with the recording project.”⁵³

Kondor (1993) also explained that:

These symbols have assumed a national cultural dimension ... With their wealth of symbolic significance, their beauty as objects of art makes Ghanaian and African art objects attract high auction rates on the

⁵³ Allotey Bruce Konuah the project coordinator, interviewed by the author (June 16, 2016).

international scene and are on the local market, a point of attraction for the tourists. (p. 16)

The famous and the most popular one among the *Adinkra* symbols although not on the cover page is the '*Gye Nyame*' which means "except for God". Most artisans use the *Gye Nyame* symbol to design artefacts such as stool, chairs, jewelries, and fabrics and most Ghanaians purchase these items because of what it means (Kondor, 1993, p. 13).

Also, in China for example,

"Intellectuals and artists use appropriate images, myths and symbols to convey the concepts and language of the nation and nationalism — by means of words and visual images, such as the national flag, the anthem and national buildings, and through international acclaim for Chinese performance in sports and music". Smith and Anderson's study (as cited in Wai-Chung, 2006).

The texts of the songs selected on the album are mostly in Twi/Fante which is a language understood by many Ghanaians whereas a few of them were performed in Ewe. On the other hand, as Paul Schauert in his article on the Ghana Dance Ensemble, affirmed that Opoku's approach to the Dance Company was to "unify the country through the dance forms, thereby underscoring Nkrumah's drive for a unified nation and a unitary government" (Opoku cited in Botwe-Asamoah, 2005, p. 200). More broadly, nationalism can be projected through various activities be it music, dance, literature, fashion, food, artistry among others which in a long term shapes identity and preserves cultural heritage.

Adinkra symbols have become national symbols because these symbols are represented in iconographies for national celebrations and programmes. For example, during Ghana's Independence Day celebrations, most of the fabrics worn by both genders had *Adinkra* symbols printed on them. The logo designed for Ghana's 50th and 60th independence anniversary celebrations had *Adinkra* symbols printed in the zeros of the figures "50" and

“60”, confirming Carola Lentz’s (March 2017) statement that “the *Adinkra* symbol is found in the zero”.



Figure 20: *Adinkra* symbol for Ghana at 50



Figure 21: *Adinkra* symbol for Ghana at 60

The common use of *Adinkra* in fabrics has been established by Kondor (1993, p. 14). In his words, various *Adinkra* symbols are used in designing and patterning fabrics. In recent days, many individuals and groups [including industries and economic activities fuelled by local and global influences] are appropriating and creating new symbols; and these trends are important areas for understanding the nature of national and cultural identities in contemporary Ghana. Looking at all these submissions, the designer may have used the *Adinkra* symbols as the dominant of the symbols on the CD cover to project a sense of Ghanaian national and cultural identity.

Additionally, this study reveals that *Adinkra* is not only printed on chairs, stools, jewellery and fabric, it is also used on recorded music cover pages and its linings. From my personal experience and interviews, it was clear that most Ghanaians purchase artifacts and fabrics because of what the design in/on them means to them. Thus, the conscious selection of the cover design may also be a market strategy to boost sales of the CD locally and globally.

In all, projecting Ghanaian nationalism through *Adinkra* symbols conforms to the orchestra’s ideology of indigenisation. As far back as the 1960’s, the orchestra has pursued

this agenda of incorporating indigenous Ghanaian instruments such as the *atumpan*, *gome*, *gankogui*, *axatse*, *adewura* and other traditional instruments in its repertoire. The *Adinkra* symbols on the CD, include *Nyame Dua*, *Nyame bewu na mawu*, *Nyame, biribi wɔ soro*, *Nsoromma*, *Sankɔfa*, *Akoma*, *Ɔsrane ne Nsoromma*, *Sankɔfa dua Nkyinkyimie*, *Kuntinkantan*, *Ntesie*, *Foofo*, *Ohene adwa*, and *Aya*. The meanings of these symbols will help readers understand the aesthetic and artistic significance for which they were chosen for the project.

4.2.3 *Adinkra* Symbols, Meanings and Interpretations

Beginning from the left-hand side on the cover page, there are twelve symbols of both *Adinkra* and *Agama* in three columns and four rows, and on the right hand side there are fifteen symbols (See Cover design in table 1). Each is described in rows based on Alex Kpodonu, Amoaku Atta and Adolf Agbo's (1996, pp. 38-39) interpretations.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ These authors are considered to have written extensively on the *Adinkra* symbols. Kpodonu is a blogger who writes about Anlo traditions. Also, all asterisks * represent symbols on the Cover page of the CD.

Table 1: Adinkra symbols, meanings and interpretations

<i>Adinkra symbols</i>	Meanings	Interpretations
<p><i>Nkyinkyimie*</i></p> 	Twisting	<p>Initiative, dynamism and versatility.</p> <p>Toughness and selfless devotion to service; an ability to withstand difficulties.</p>
<p><i>Sankofa*</i></p> 	Revival, return or pick it up.	A constant reminder that the future may profitably be built on aspects of the past.
<p><i>Anibere Enso gya</i></p> 	Life is war	Struggles and coping with the vicissitudes of life
<p><i>Nkonsorkonsor*</i></p> 	Chain link	Symbol of unity and human relations
<p><i>Anlo, Kotsiko: naketsi deka no dzome bi nu.⁵⁵</i></p> 	Anlo, round and serene: A single faggot cooked a meal.	<p>Extols the bravery of one individual, who performed a task meant for thousands of people.</p> <p>Upholds the individual's bravery and ingenuity.</p>
<p><i>Venovi*</i></p> 	Twins	Togetherness and diversity
<p><i>Okodee Mmowere*</i></p> 	The felons on the eagle	Strength, bravery and power

On the Right hand side in similar manner is the table below,

⁵⁵ Alex Kpodonu library. "Anlo State Symbols". Retrieved from http://alexkpodonulibrary.com/index_files/Page909.html



Figure 22: The canvas of the Cover design

Table 2: Adinkra symbols, meanings and interpretations

Adinkra symbols	Meanings	Interpretations
<p><i>Ese ne tekrema</i></p> 	The teeth and the tongue	Friendship and interdependence
<p><i>Osrane ne Nsoromma*</i></p> 	The moon and the star	Love, faithfulness and unity. Co-operation between the two is essential for success.
<p><i>Pempamsie</i></p> 	Sew in readiness	Readiness, steadfastness and hardiness.
<p><i>Akoma</i></p> 	Heart	Fondness, consistency, goodwill, and faithfulness.
<p><i>Owo foro adobe*</i></p>	Steadfastness, prudence, and diligence	Persistent and bravery
<p><i>Ntesie or mate masie</i></p> 	Wisdom and knowledge. (I have heard and kept it)	Imbibing knowledge prudently
<p><i>Akoma mtoaso</i></p>	Comprehension	Understanding and agreement
<p><i>Kintinkantan*</i></p> 	Extravagant and puffed up or not to be boastful	Warning against boastfulness, arrogance, pompousness and disregard for other people. Shows/teaches the need for humility.
<p><i>Aya*</i></p>	Endurance and perseverance	Encourages individuals and nations to be self-reliant and resourceful.

Looking at the above *Adinkra* meanings and their interpretations, “it can be deduced that there is always an aspect of communication, a somewhat proverbial message, a warning or a heed, a description, an appellation, being imparted to an audience” (Delaquis, 2013, p. 32). Among the *Adinkra* symbols, *Sankɔfa* has taken on special meaning in Ghana that calls for attention and consideration. Following Anyidoho’s submission, “in any critical survey of Ghana’s emerging national tradition in the arts, one is most likely to be struck by the constant interplay between antiquity and modernity, between past and present/future time” (2012, p. 1156). That is what *Sankɔfa*, an ancient proverbial Akan bird stands for.

Listening to the songs on *Ghanaian Classics* album, one would hear about 70% of songs arranged in popular Ghanaian Highlife style and about 30% Ghanaian art music. Additionally, art music has also been indigenised with traditional instrumentation and rhythmic patterns like *Kpanlogo*, *Fontomfrom*, and *Agbadza*. It is generally believed that original Ghanaian Highlife, which was once the gem of Ghanaian music is gradually giving place to hybridism due to modern day innovations. The GNSO in negotiating between the past and present, as well as between genres (highlife and Art music), presents what

Anyidoho describes as “the most recurrent expression of the nation’s favourite guiding principle of development” represented in the *Sankɔfa* symbol (2012, p. 1157).

Furthermore, other related *Adinkra* symbols, *Nkonsorkonsor* (Chain link) and *Ɔsrane ne Nsoromma* (the moon and the star) express the significance of unity and human relation, and co-operation in fostering peace and nation building. There is a popular adage that says; “charity begins at home.” In negotiating mutual understanding and peace in national development, the GNSO presents what I call “ethnic syncretism” of membership. That is, musicians coming from different ethnic groups (namely Gã, Akan, Fante and Ewe) in

Ghana and foreign nationals (Germans, Togolese and Nigerians). As a united body, they entertain, educate, and speak to diverse social issues that have implications on the nation as a whole. Consequently, as Alam indicated “nationalism takes root in a society for the purpose of linking traditional modes of social organisation with the new roles forged by the modernisation process” (1980, p. 375). This, in short, is about the unity force that drives social groups in the pursuance of a definite goal. *Nkonsornkonsor* emphasises teamwork or communality, rather than individualism. Hence, affirmed in the text of the third and fourth lines of the stanza two of the national anthem. From its inception, the GNSO pursued this agenda as a united body working together to achieve a common goal of promoting music education and projecting Ghanaian nationalism and Ghanaian art music locally and internationally.⁵⁶ Through this project, people will also get to hear about the GNSO for the first time both in Ghana and overseas.

Another *Adinkra* symbol on the CD cover page, *Nkyinkyimiie* (twisting) represents toughness and selflessly devoted service. Thus, it expresses the ability to withstand difficulties. In its developmental trajectories, the orchestra has gone through several political upheavals but it is still in active business. Before 2018, members of the orchestra expressed their frustrations about lack of rehearsal space, low salaries, and late-night performances without means of transportation. In the midst of all the twisting life experiences and difficult times, musicians remain committed and devoted to service. Such loyalty and dedication to service is clearly spelt out in the text of the Ghana national anthem (CD, no.1). This anthem identifies Ghanaians at home and abroad.

The text is as follows:

1. God bless our homeland Ghana

2. Hail to thy name, O Ghana,

⁵⁶ The goals of the GNSO stated on the first page of the liner note of the “*Ghanaian Classics*” recording.

*And make our nation great and strong To thee we make our solemn vow;
Bold to defend forever Steadfast to build together
The cause of freedom and of right A nation strong in unity:
Fill our hearts with true humility With our gifts of mind and strength of
arm
Make us cherish fearless, honesty Whether night or day, in mist or storm,
And help us to resist oppressor's rule In ev'ry need what e'er the call may be'
With all our strength and might for evermore. To serve thee, Ghana, now and evermore.*

The third and fourth lines of the first stanza represent what the orchestra stands for and can be related to the *Aya*, *Kintinkantan* and *Nkyinkyimii* symbols on the cover page. Consequently, the national anthem was used as the curtain raiser for the album, calling the attention of Ghanaians and substantiating the GNSO as a product of Ghanaian nationalism.

Okodee Mmowere (the felon of the eagle) and *Owo foro adobe* (steadfastness, prudence and diligence) literally means strength, bravery, power and persistence. The GNSO has constantly strived to represent these standards that distinguished it as “the only national symphony orchestra in Black Saharan Africa.” This identity continues to generate audiences for the orchestra.

A few other symbols on the cover page are represented as art for art's sake, and do not fall within the scope of this chapter.

4.2.4 Agama Symbols

I encountered a great challenge investigating the meanings and interpretations of the *Agama* symbols on the CD. Write ups on the *Agama* symbols are scanty. Out of the ten (10) *Agama* symbols, the producer, artist and other elderly people I consulted were able to interpret only two. These symbols are not as common as the *Adinkra* symbols. Probably

due to language barrier, people do not purchase *Agama* related items since they do not understand their meanings. Why did he use these symbols? Although the artist has no directive on what to put in the design, he came out with these symbols. However, his ethnicity (being Anlo) must have partially influenced his impression on the artwork which may not be in alignment with the ideology for this recording. For example:

Anlo, Kotsiko: naketsi deka no dzome bi nu (Anlo, round and serene: A single faggot cooked a meal) is a popular mantra of the Anlo speaking people, of the southern coast of Volta Region of Ghana.⁵⁷ This mantra articulates and extols the bravery of one individual, who successfully performs a task meant for thousands of people. Although the artist used this symbol for its aesthetic value, this can be relative to the GNSO standing tall among others.

The orchestra as an entity among all the State ensembles (including those at the National Theatre such as the Ghana Dance Ensemble (GDE)) is the only one that has achieved such feats. Similarly, *Venovi*, which represents twins in Anlo can be compared to the co-existence of the GNSO and the GDE. Occasionally, these two ensembles collaborate during programmes/performances which was evident in this recording project. The orchestra's ability to blend Western and African instruments can closely be linked to the dual identity. The Western apparels (black/white) and African prints uniform which has been mentioned earlier in the chapter can also be related to the 'twins' symbol. Furthermore, the co-existence of members of GNSO although from different ethnicities, in peace and harmony, working with a common goal in projecting Ghanaian nationalism promotes togetherness.

⁵⁷ *Anlo* is the name used to identify people who hail from the south-eastern part of the Volta Region of Ghana.

4.2.5 The “*Laimomo* Dilemma” as the Title of the Artwork



Figure 23: The Laimomo Dilemma

There are two figures on the cover page of the CD: male and female. The artist called this image *Laimomo*, which metaphorically means old firewood or ex-lover in the Gã language. The metaphor originates from the Gã adage: ‘*laimomo tsoɔ fe laihee*’ (old firewood burns better or faster than new firewood). Bruce-Konuah, the coordinator of the project mentioned to me that the *Laimomo* image has multiple meanings. Old firewood is one school of thought. He interpreted the male and female as human beings collaborating with each other for a common purpose.

This interpretation raises issues of gender parity and suggests a mixed gendered approach to life including music making, which the orchestra has maintained over the years. From a musical perspective, the adage also suggests the need for incorporating traditional musical models and resources in contemporary context. On the other hand, as love for highlife music is gradually drifting away due to the younger generation’s interest in more vibrant genres, the orchestra’s pursuit to sustain highlife music was evident in featuring highlife legends like Agya Koo Nimo, Bob Pinodo and Gyedu Blay Ambolley.

Throughout its sixty-one years of existence, the *Laimomo* principle seems to define the orchestra's repertoire and instrumentation. It is therefore not surprising that the orchestra selected popular highlife for the recording project; an initiative that advocates *Sankofa* and its interrelated *Laimomo* principles. According to the elderly people I interviewed, when highlife is performed, they remember their good old times.⁵⁸ Performing highlife, an old music genre, which was mostly enjoyed by the elite in the 1990's, by the Symphony Orchestra in a new context is an art of creativity that provides a link between the past and the modern. Highlife is also symbolic of Ghanaian nationalism deriving from the Pan-Africanist ideologies of Ghana's first President Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. In this sense, the orchestra identifies with a common product of the society in which they perform, creating a link between the group and the society.

Members of the orchestra are not familiar with the meanings and interpretations of the design on the cover page of the CD. From conversations with most of the instrumentalists, they describe the symbols as "artistic works portraying Ghanaian identity."⁵⁹ They interpret the symbols in terms of its aesthetic value. For example, all that most of them could say is that "the symbols are beautiful".

The meanings and interpretations ascribed to the *Adinkra* and *Agama* symbols, as well as the visual emphasis or "intensity of feelings" these symbols generate in viewers, suggest two main positions of thinking about art – as a socially constructed body of indigenous knowledge and, as a "sensuous perception and cognition, [which] is at once general and specific in its application" (Nketia, 2005, pp. 129, 146-147). As a body of indigenous knowledge, one cannot relate to these symbols better unless one is familiar with its integral

⁵⁸ Experiences shared by people in the ages of 45 and above through interviews. ⁵⁹

Interview with some instrumentalists of GNSO

meanings and as a sensuous perception and cognition issues relating to “aesthetic judgment, the area of human activity and ideas” in relation to a work of art is derived. Either socially constructed or a sensuous opinion, most works of art have commercial values.

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined symbols as cultural artefacts and aesthetic works of art project Ghanaian nationalism. Presenting the *Adinkra*, *Laimomo*, and *Agama* symbols from Akan, Gã, and Ewe traditions, the chapter has presented the multiple identities of the GNSO and how these identities have projected Ghanaian nationalism on a whole contributes in the promotion and commercialisation of the *Ghanaian Classics*. From interactions with orchestral members, it was obvious that members felt elated that after sixty-one years of existence, the orchestra has a first album to boast about and they are the performers in this project. While some members commended the management of the orchestra for achieving such a success, others whispered - “this album is long overdue, they can do better”.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This final chapter presents an overall summary of the study. It also offers the findings and draws conclusions based on the findings. Recommendations for further studies on similar research projects, as a way to contribute to the cultural policy in Ghana, are also included.

5.1 SUMMARY

The utmost focus of this study was to explore how the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra recontextualised, commercialised and projected Ghanaian nationalism through the recording of an album dubbed the *Ghanaian Classics*. In doing this, the study discovered the significance of the *Ghanaian Classics* recording project and how this recording had constructively promoted the works of the GNSO as a national organisation, which also stood for a national identity. The term *Ghanaian Classics* is an orchestrated style of music derived from highlife, folk and art music, and distinguished by their stylistic, formal traits as well as the contexts in which they were performed.

The first chapter provided the background to the study, including the theoretical and methodological concerns. Through an ethnographic approach, the study attempted to answer the question why it had taken more than five decades for the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra to embark on a recording project. It also highlighted some of the challenges the orchestra encountered during the recording process. Generally, the first chapter presented the research questions and objectives, the problem statement, literature review, theoretical and methodological considerations, and provided a road map that sets the tone for the main body of the study.

The second chapter discussed the concept and process of the recontextualisation. It analysed the selected songs and the motive for recontextualising them. The chapter

explored the GNSO's approach to recontextualisation based on Haninnen's concept of musical recontextualisation which discussed ideas and instances using contextual criteria, segments, boundaries and structural interpretation.

Building on the discussion, the third chapter explored the commercial dimensions of the recording project, elaborated on general copyright issues, and highlighted the orchestra's inability to protect individual orchestral works and scores.

The fourth chapter of my work scrutinised the art works on the Compact Disc and Cover design of the CD and showed how these works of art projected Ghanaian nationalism.

5.2 FINDINGS

The study revealed that the choice of songs was a way to awaken cultural memory of Ghanaians, honour highlife legends and show that the GNSO can also perform popular music. The unique selections of seasoned Ghanaian highlife artistes, and highlife tunes including traditional dance rhythms such as *Kpanlogo*, *Agbadza*, *Fontomfrom*, folksy melodic patterns and the conventional Ghanaian call-and-response form, all drew heavily on Akan and Ewe aesthetics.

Though the instruments were basically foreign, an effective inclusion of sets of percussion instruments "authentically" Ghanaian created a sense of indigenisation while invoking a strong sense of Ghanaian nationalism. This combination of the local and the foreign clearly established a syncretic or hybridised form of an ensemble with linkages to nation-building. Projecting its unique identity as physically Western but ideologically Ghanaian, the study also clearly demonstrated the GNSO's attempts to affirm nationalism at particular points of its history for other Ghanaian musicians to emulate.

The third chapter further revealed the challenges the GNSO went through in marketing and sales of the album were due to the lack of adequate Government financial support for this production and poor marketing strategies. In the midst of these challenges, the orchestra has remained focused since its inception and is determined to progress in preserving Ghanaian music. Furthermore, there was no economic dimension to this project because the album has not been commercialised. Although the songs were not original compositions of the orchestra, the copyrights of the original owner were retained.

It was discovered that the colours and artistic designs had symbolic meanings and interpretations. These meanings were understood by the majority of Ghanaians irrespective of ethnic affiliations. Drawing heavily on Akan, Ewe, and Ga aesthetics, the colours, *Adinkra* and *Agama* symbols, and the *Laimomo* figure on the cover page of the CD were not exclusively individuals or ethnic ideologies. But in fact, they were daily negotiated through interactions between individuals, groups as well as the nation of Ghana. Thus, I hold the same opinion with Reed (2004)⁵⁹ in reviewing Askew's (2002) seminal work on *Performing the Nation* when he stated that, "power negotiations and nationalist agenda are actualized through performance." Similarly, marketing negotiations and commercial agenda are actualised through performing multiple identities. The chapter also clearly demonstrates how the GNSO's selection of the colours, designs and symbolic representations on the cover page of the CD attempts to establish a nationalist identity in negotiating the multiple identities.

Based on the findings of this research, one can conclude that the *Ghanaian Classics* recording project by the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra was a great accomplishment.

⁵⁹ Daniel B. Reed (2004). *Performing the Nation: Swahili Music and Cultural Politics in Tanzania* (review). *Africa Today* 5(3) 139-140.

Even though some challenges were encountered, it is refreshing to state that at long last, Ghanaian orchestral music is produced and can be heard locally and internationally. The dream of this recording project based on the intended goal has been actualised. However, it cannot be concluded that the project was successful in its totality.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Despite the huge Western instruments that seemingly portray the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra as too “foreign”, the orchestra has consciously projected Ghanaian nationalism through the recording of the *Ghanaian Classics*. The GNSO had attempted to record over the past years but was not successful due to financial constraint. At the point where government support for the orchestra had significantly declined, the GNSO set out to record with funding from a philanthropist (Dr. Adrian Nii Odoi Oddoye Snr.). This has proven the reason why it took so long for this recording project after many years of existence. In doing this, the orchestra unveiled its unique Ghanaian identity, different from the Western style symphony orchestra of the twenty-first century.

Although the GNSO did not directly use Hannenin’s concept of recontextualisation, the orchestra’s recontextualisation explored some aspects such as ‘musical context’, ‘structural interpretation’ and ‘motives’ of this theory in the recording. The GNSO carefully and effectively selected folksy melodies, Ghanaian symbols, and rhythmic patterns and recontextualised them for a better appreciation and to project the Ghanaian nationalism that can clearly be identified by both Ghanaians and foreigners who are African music lovers or scholars each time *Ghanaian Classics* is performed. The orchestra selected pieces that exhibited their versatility and multiple identities from all parts of the country and, most importantly, proved the values they uphold as Africans and, for that matter, Ghanaians.

With the huge sums of money invested in the project, no attempt has been made to commercialise the album. From the producer's standpoint, no profits have been made from the copies produced. Five years down the line after the album was only partly launched and there has not been a sign of another recording, nor did the GNSO carry out any evaluation assessment of how many of their objectives of the project to record the first album were achieved. It is unfortunate not to be able to market their CDs since they did not set out to undertake a charity show of producing albums. Lessons will be learnt after evaluating the production plan, lapses identified, corrections made and professional advice sought from relevant agencies. Hence, one may expect subsequent production of more albums with a focused marketing strategy.

The selection of the Ghana national anthem and '*Yen ara asase ni*' which opened and closed the album respectively projected a sense of Ghanaian nationalism. The cover design of the album with included *Adinkra* and *Agama* symbols also portrays cultural diversity. Over the years, the GNSO has been an advocate of promoting a better cultural understanding amongst the people of Ghana through performance. This aim has been exemplified in the recording of the *Ghanaian Classics*. Although the members of the GNSO, repertoire, and instruments are culturally diversified, the orchestra is attuned to the nation's Pan-African ideologies and their linkages to peace and nation building.

One of the beautiful and creative ideas of the recording was the collaboration between the orchestra and seasoned musicians in the country. However, from my personal experience and interaction with most of the musicians, the high interest of the public in these packaged songs should yield corresponding financial results for the wellbeing of orchestral members.

The period between 2010 and 2020 which is left out in the development of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra as stated in the introduction, can rightfully be called the ‘Novelty Stage’ since this recording is novel. Hence, the thesis makes unique contributions to scholarship through the systemisation of the social, political, economic, gendered, and musical dynamics of the GNSO.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) The GNSO needs to partner with the NCC and the music industry to officially launch the *Ghanaian Classics* album. This will be a great avenue for the sales of the CD that will subsequently create more opportunities for sponsorship for more recording projects.
- (ii) In general, the audience of the GNSO who listened to the recording gave positive and exciting comments and feedback. They recommended that this recording should not be the last but the GNSO should have more recordings, which will also serve as a documented asset to the repertory of the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra for posterity. These recordings may be in volumes featuring legendary artistes and folk songs.
- (iii) As a morale booster, Ghanaian composers will be encouraged to write more compositions when their pieces are performed regularly. Considering the composers/directors and their works, which have been mentioned in Chapter two, it is clear that some of the works have been left untouched for a long time. In projecting Ghanaian nationalism, the popular maxim *Sankofa* (go back to the past) presents a good motivation of going back into the archive to retrieve old scores and indigenous music to be performed in new contexts namely, recontextualising these songs.
- (iv) The emphasis on the importance of record keeping especially in the life of the orchestra should be reconsidered. It is unethical for a composer to discover that

his/her orchestral compositions have been left idle, misplaced or destroyed. I could not find most of the scores of some of the songs performed in the *Ghanaian Classics*. Until the orchestra's repertoire is electronically preserved and safeguarded, the orchestra may lose its repertoire and future generations may not meet the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra's repertoire. As Taylor explored, "On the verge of a digital revolution that both utilizes and threatens to displace writing, the body again seems poised to disappear in a virtual space that eludes embodiment" (2003, p. 16). Proper inventory of the repertoire of the GNSO will improve the access to scores and the selection of pieces in the category of performances and for future recording projects. In this age of information technology (IT) musicians must learn to diversify their knowledge by preserving musical works not only performing the works.

- (v) I am afraid to express my opinion here about the recording industry and aspects of its negative effect on culture and society in Ghana. Pinodo in an interview with Showbiz declared that he will organise workshops nationwide in collaboration with the Musicians Union of Ghana (MUSIGA) and the Ghana Music Rights Organisation (GHAMRO), to educate artistes about the business aspect of the industry. This seminar will tackle key issues of "how to compose hit songs, copyright and intellectual property registration and artist marketing on the local and international fronts. The challenge is not just to compose hit songs, but songs that have infused Ghanaian identity to serve as a continuation of the African consciousness ideology. Lawmakers should ensure that copyright laws are considered carefully and implemented not only in the music industry but also in the creative arts industry as a whole.

5.4.1 Government Support for the Orchestra

- (i) On the government's side, there is the Ministry of Culture and Tourism which is tasked to oversee the implementation of cultural policies, but the execution of these policies is faced with power hegemony. Individuals in political positions make decisions that are best in their interest. The policy makers usually have their own affiliation or preference for certain cultural institutions over others, thereby promoting their favourites and not giving ample support to the other organisations.
- (ii) Currently, there is no one who represents musicians at the Ministry. The people at the helm of affairs are all dramatists and dancers and they mostly support their interest or sectors (personal interview with some members of the orchestra). Over the years, these have partially had negative implications on the progress, performance and production of the groups. Music lovers, music educators, and scholars need to apply for a Chair at the Ministry of Culture to negotiate issues concerning Music, the Performing Arts and the projection of national identity. To enhance performance and the revenue of the GNSO, it would be most desirable to receive Government recognition and support paralleling that which pertaineth during the Nkrumah's regime.
- (iii) As Hammond emphasised, until the copyright organisations are recognised by the international copyright community, musicians will continue to work in vain. I suggest that the Ministry of Information and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism address these copyright challenges to safeguard the nation's cultural heritage including music. On the best marketing strategy for the CD, Mr. Hammond suggested that the government should use the CD as an Independence Day celebration souvenir for the diplomatic corps and other guests. In my opinion, the publicity department of the orchestra may contact media houses for a negotiation on how the songs on the CD

could be aired on various broadcasting programmes. This kind of promotion at the national level will provide a unique variety of music to the public.

(iv) Some of the targeted customers may include the huge transport business, aircrafts, VIP buses, and so on. A well-organised launch after soliciting for sponsorship from media houses, embassies and other charitable institutions. I believe there is no harm in appealing for sponsorship. At least some may be moved to support such a worthy cause. The Ghanaian encourages herself in such circumstances of appeal by saying, '*ketewa bia nsua*' (literally no amount is too small). So far, one hardly hears the recording even on the airwaves as a form of publicity.

The thesis clearly demonstrates that the negotiation of national identity by the Ghana National Symphony Orchestra indeed is grounded on recontextualisation, nationalism and Pan-Africanism. From the last decades, the concept of Pan-Africanism has found favour with black music research, and syncretism is part of this larger ideological concept that extends beyond Ghana to other European and African-American musical forms.

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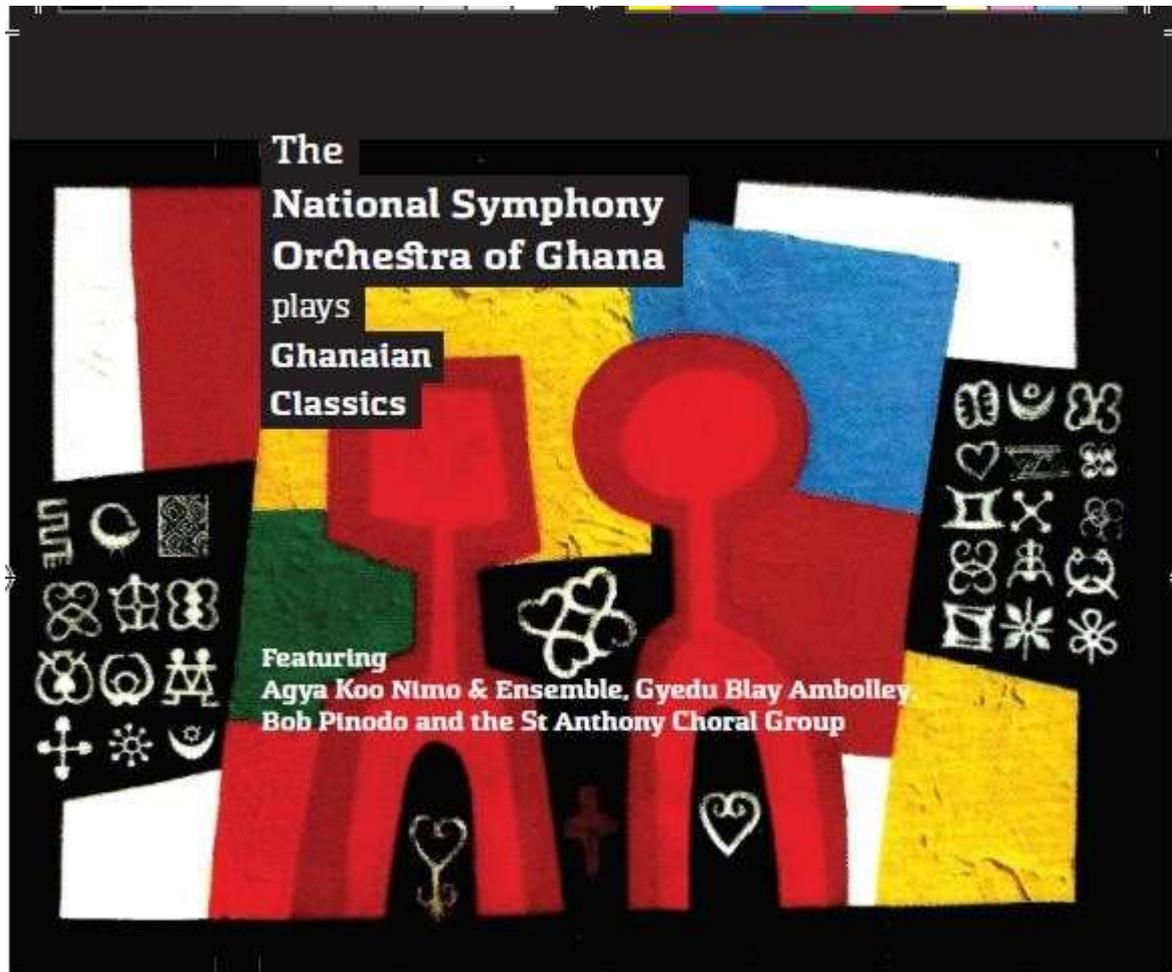
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Ghana National Symphony Orchestra: *Ghanaian Classics*. Recorded by Francis Kwakye and Jonas Hammond. Ghana 2015.

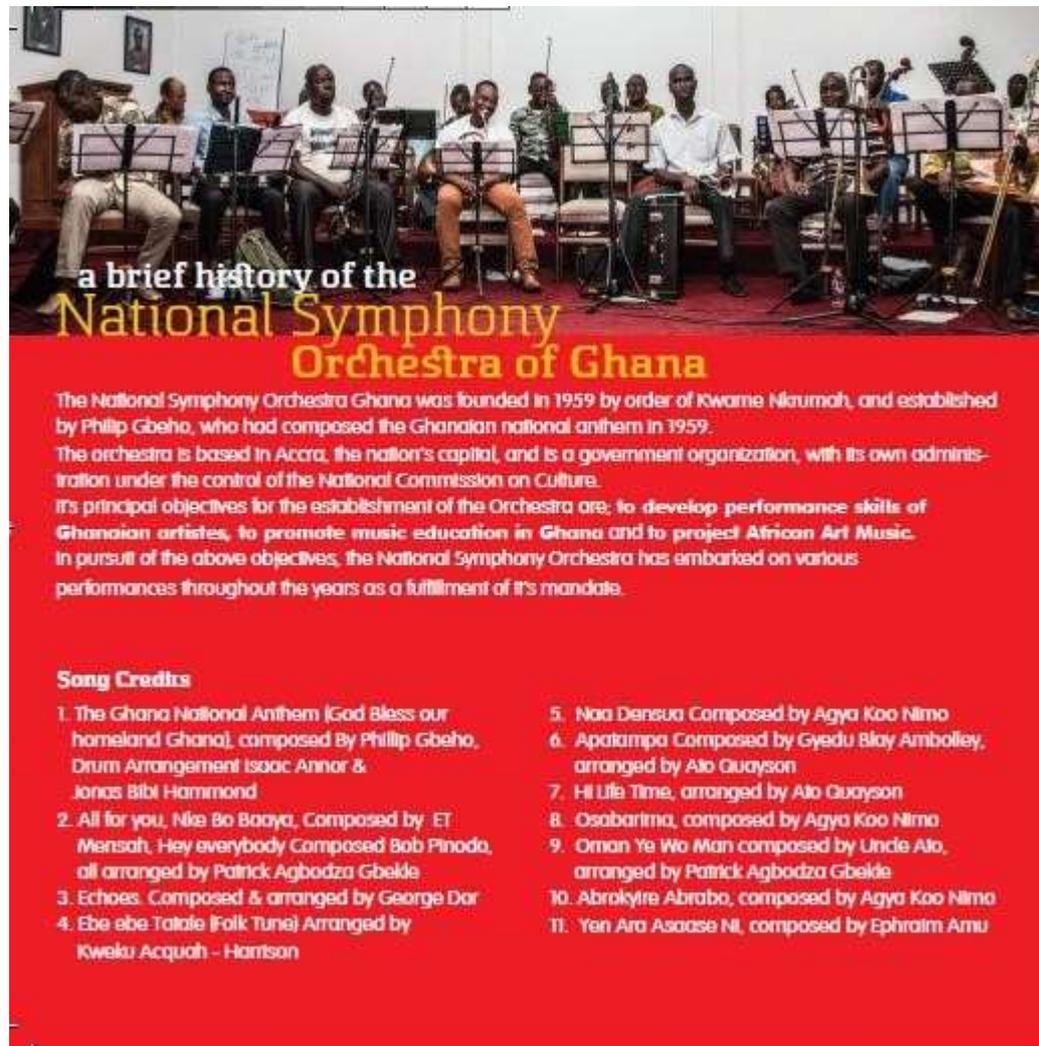
APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Pages from the Enclosed Booklet in the Sleeve of the CD Album



Cover page

Appendix 2: Members of the National Symphony Orchestra on their various instruments

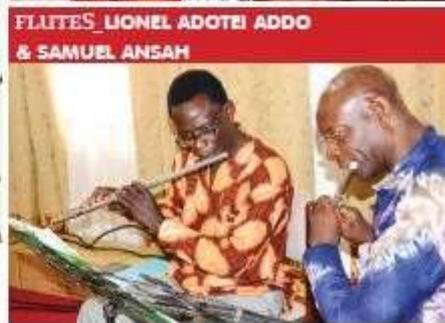
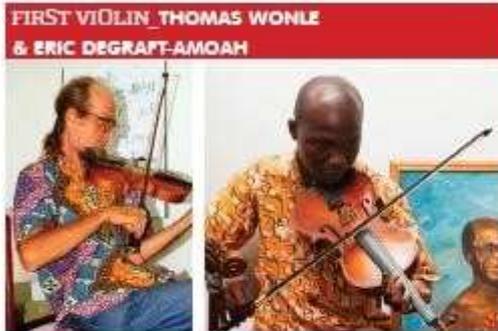


Under song credits 2. Hey everybody composed by Bob Pinodo

Appendix 3a: Instrumentalists of the GNSO

Line up of Orchestra

JH Nketia Conference Hall
Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon
4th September 2015



Appendix 3b: Conductors and some instrumentalist of the GNSO

Line up of Orchestra



Appendix 4: The Producer's Cut



Producer/Engineer's Cut

Just before my Summer Holidays in Ghana in Summer 2015, Alotey Bruce-Konuah contacted me in Berlin and asked if I would be interested in Recording/Producing the National Symphony Orchestra of Ghana. I said yes, knowing I finally had the chance to put some Pan African attitude to this Orchestra. An Introduction to the Director Isaac Annoh set the ball rolling. My Vision was Simple. Make this first ever professionally recorded work of this historic Ghanaian Orchestra sound Rootsy and Organic just as I believe Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah would have envisioned it.

I suggested to put in Fontomframs, Gome and other Percussion elements, Invited Agya Koo Nimo and his ensemble to feature with some classic Palm Wine compositions of his.

The technological and Logistical Challenges were Immense, it took 3 Months of organisation and cancellations, but through Fortitude, Patience... and the collective efforts of a great team I put together we got there.

I feel this record marks the beginning of a renaissance of the majesty of Ghanaian folk and Popular dance Music, and promise to continue with a series of remakes of the glorious era of Post-Colonial Ghanaian Music.

A Big Thank you to my partner Dr. Adrian Oddoye (Executive Producer) for believing in this dream and making it possible, Est and Kofi Gbedemah for your kind support and many many others too Numerous to mention... FORWARD EVER !!!

ALFRED JONAS DOWUONA-HAMMOND JNR



Appendix 5: The Project Team

Project Team



DR ADRIAN ODDOYE
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER



JONAS BIBI HAMMOND
ENGINEER / PRODUCER



"If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." African Proverb

The story of this historic recording, the first in the life of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ghana is a story about not going alone, but going together with other forward thinking, patriotic, passionate children of this great nation of ours.

So the process chain of names reads like a flow chart thus: Nii Sai Doku, Dr Osei Agyeman, former Director of the National Theatre and now the Head of Theatre Arts at the University of Ghana, Isaac Annor Director of the National Symphony Orchestra Ade Sawyer, Jonas Bibi Dawuona-Hammond and Dr Adrian Oddoye.

B.A.S.S (Basics Arts & Sound Studio), subsidiary of B.A.S.I.C.S International (N.G.O), social intervention program for kids in Chorkor, founded by my wife Ms Patricia Wilkins was the venue of the first recording experiment of the Orchestra with the resources available. What we started that day, 2 years after my initial contact with Isaac Annor was the underpinning bedrock of what has become this historic document of our cultural identity. I hope this project would inspire others to start believing in this cultural renaissance

ALLOTEY BRUCE-KONUAH
PROJECT COORDINATOR

Appendix 6: The Production Credits

Production Credits

THE NATIONAL SYMPHONIC ORCHESTRA OF GHANA
Featuring Agya Koo Nimo & Ensemble, Gyedu
Blay Ambolley, Bob Pinodo, and the St. Anthony
Choral Group
Recorded Live at the Kwabena Nketia Conference Hall
of the Kwame Nkrumah Institute of African Studies,
University of Ghana, Legon on the 4th September 2015

MR KWAKYE
Head Recording Engineer

JONAS BIBI HAMMOND
Computer Recording

EMMANUEL A. LARBI
Assistant Technician

ALLOTEY BRUCE KONUAH
Project Coordinator

JONAS BIBI HAMMOND ASSISTED BY
SAMUEL YEBOA
Post Production/ Editing at
Zaria Studios, Berlin

PHILIPP HECK & JONAS BIBI HAMMOND
End mixing and mastering at Bauer Studios
Ludwigsburg, Germany

JONAS BIBI HAMMOND
Producer

DR. ADRIAN NII ODOI ODDOYE SNR.
AKAI HOUSE CLINIC
Executive Producer

DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR: ISAAC ANNOH
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: KWESI KWAYSON
National Symphony Orchestra of Ghana
EGYA KOO NIMO and ENSEMBLE
EGYA KOO NIMO
Solo/Acoustic Guitar

GEORGE SPRATZ
Solo/Acoustic Guitar

A ZARIA MUSIC "GHANA" PRODUCTION ©2015

SARAH YEBOAH
EBENEZER NII KWEI-KUMAH QUAYE
Photography

EFO SELA KODJO ADJEI
Cover Artwork - *Lalmomo Dilema*

ALLOTEY BRUCE-KONUAH
alotey@accra10mi.com
Design & Art Direction

MR. JOSEPH ANATI
Institute of African Studies
(For your patience and invaluable logistical
support throughout the day of recording)

KWAME NKUMAH INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON, ACCRA

Appendix 7: The original art design of “Laimomo Dilemma” on the canvas



Appendix 8: The Art Designer



To the right is Sela Kojo Adjei in white hat, the artist of the “Laimomo Dilemma” art work

Appendix 9: Some “Agama” symbols that were in the art design



Appendix 10: ‘African Airs’ of the National Symphony Orchestra

No.	Title of pieces	Composers/Arrangers
1.	Fraternity Symphony Suite (three movements)	George Worlasi Kwasi Dor
2.	Money controls the world	George Worlasi Kwasi Dor
3.	Echoes	George Worlasi Kwasi Dor
4.	Fantasy on an Adowa Song	George Worlasi Kwasi Dor
5.	We are all involved	Dosoo arranged by George Worlasi Kwasi Dor
6.	<i>Akwaabadwom</i>	Ephraim Amu arranged by George Worlasi Kwasi Dor
7.	<i>Wonya amane</i>	J.H.K. Nketia arranged by George Worlasi Kwasi Dor
8.	<i>Alegbegbe</i>	Ephraim Amu
9.	<i>Yen ara asaase ni</i>	Ephraim Amu
10.	God bless our homeland Ghana	Philip Gbeho
11.	<i>Kasa</i> (three movements)	Ato Quayson
12.	<i>Monkanfono</i>	J.H.K. Nketia arranged by Ato Quayson
13.	Sympathy	Ato Quayson
14.	<i>Totrobento</i>	Ato Quayson
15.	Hi life time	Ato Quayson
16.	<i>Apatampa</i>	Ato Quayson
17.	<i>Sasankroma</i>	Folk song arranged by Ato Quayson
18.	<i>Me do wo</i>	Ato Quayson
19.	<i>Mala</i>	Ato Quayson
20.	<i>Adanse kronkron</i>	J.H.K. Nketia arranged by Ato Quayson
21.	<i>Kpanlogo</i>	Ato Quayson
22.	<i>Kasapreko 1&2</i>	Ato Quayson
23.	<i>Guanamamera</i>	Emisson Dzokoto
24.	<i>Neeen gom</i>	Nick Badu Okwabran arranged by A. Quayson
25.	<i>Ghanaman</i>	Emisson Dzokoto
26.	<i>Ebe ebe Talale</i>	Folk song arranged by Kweku AcquahHarrison
27.	<i>Monkamfo no</i>	J.H.K. Nketia arranged by Scott Benin
28.	Suite for orchestra No. 3	Fred Onowero Suake
29.	Accra Rhapsody	Hammond Acquah
30.	Play time	Hammond Acquah
31.	<i>Fontronfrom</i> Prelude	Nicholas Z. Nayo
32.	Volta Symphony	Nicholas Z. Nayo
33.	<i>Meele mii yaa</i>	Nicholas Z. Nayo
34.	<i>San bra fie</i>	J. H. K. Nketia
35.	<i>Wonye anane, na wohu wodorfo</i>	J. H. K. Nketia
36.	<i>Kalē</i>	Ken Kafui
37.	<i>Domko mayi</i>	Ken Kafui
38.	<i>Atenbenben Kwesi</i>	Oscar Sulley
39.	<i>Dzigbodi</i>	Emisson Dzokoto
40.	I’m beginning to see the light	Emisson Dzokoto
41.	Missing you	Emisson Dzokoto
42.	Fly me to the moon	Emisson Dzokoto

43.	My life-time	Emission Dzokoto
44.	To love somebody	Torto Laryea
45.	Love Saturday night	Torto Laryea
46.	Time to say goodbye	Torto Laryea
47.	<i>Wona wedi kan</i>	Eric DeGraft-Amoah
48.	<i>Naa Densua</i>	Koo Nimo arranged by Pascal Zabana Kongo
49.	<i>Abrokyiri Abrabo</i>	Koo Nimo arranged by Pascal Zabana Kongo
50.	<i>Osabrima</i>	Koo Nimo arranged by Pascal Zabana Kongo
51.	The Ghana National Anthem	Phillip Gbeho
52.	All for you, <i>Nke bo baaya</i> & Hey everybody	E.T. Mensah arranged by Patrick Agbodza-Gbekle
53.	<i>Oman ye wo man</i> series	Patrick Agbodza-Gbekle
54.	Selections for NSO	Patrick Agbodza-Gbekle
55.	Maria	Patrick Agbodza-Gbekle
56.	<i>Akli do go Kame</i> series	Patrick Agbodza-Gbekle
57.	Summer time	G. Gershwin
58.	<i>Yeda Nyame Ase</i> 1&2	R. E. Taylor

Appendix 11: Dzigordi melodic line

The image displays a musical score for a melodic line in 12/8 time, key of D major. The score is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece begins with a 12-measure rest, followed by a melodic line consisting of 24 measures. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth, quarter, and half notes, as well as rests. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Appendix 12: Hi life time melodic line

The image displays a musical score for a melodic line in 2/4 time, written in a single system across three staves. The key signature is one flat (Bb). The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, an eighth note A4, and a quarter note Bb4. The second staff begins with a measure rest, followed by a quarter note Bb4, an eighth note A4, and a quarter note G4. The third staff begins with a measure rest, followed by a quarter note G4, an eighth note F4, and a quarter note E4. The melody concludes with a quarter note D4, an eighth note C4, and a quarter note Bb4.

Appendix 13: Apatampa 1st violin score

APATAMPA

Violin I

Arr, by Patrick Ato Quayson

The musical score for Violin I of Apatampa is presented in a single system with eight staves. The time signature is 6/8. The score begins with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The first staff contains measures 1 through 7. The second staff starts at measure 8 and includes a first ending (1.) and a second ending (2.) leading to measure 16, with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The third staff contains measures 17 through 29. The fourth staff starts at measure 30 and includes a dynamic marking of *f*. The fifth staff contains measures 31 through 44. The sixth staff starts at measure 45 and includes a dynamic marking of *mp*. The seventh staff contains measures 46 through 51, with a section labeled "Fugue" beginning at measure 52, and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The eighth staff contains measures 53 through 65, with a dynamic marking of *f* at the end.

2

APATAMPA



Appendix 14: Osabarima score

OSABARIMA

Gaddiel Robert Acquah
Arr. Kweku Acquah-Harrison

Soprano

S

S

Appendix 15: Yen ara asase ni score from Ghana Praise

17 AH 394 YENARA ASASE' NI IM EPHRAIM AMU (1899-1995)

The musical score is presented in five systems, each consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef). The music is written in a minor key (one flat) and features a complex, polyphonic texture with many beamed notes and rests. The first system includes a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system continues the polyphonic texture. The third system shows a change in the bass line. The fourth system includes a repeat sign and a key signature change to major. The fifth system concludes the piece with a final cadence.

Appendix 16: Ebe Ebe Tatale 1st violin score

TATALE

KWEKU ACQUAAH-HARISON

The musical score is written in treble clef, 2/4 time, and B-flat major. It consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a whole rest followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff starts at measure 9 and features a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, including a triplet. The third staff starts at measure 18 and continues the melodic development with eighth and quarter notes. The fourth staff starts at measure 27 and shows further melodic progression. The fifth staff starts at measure 32 and maintains the rhythmic pattern. The sixth staff starts at measure 37 and continues the melody. The seventh staff starts at measure 43 and concludes with a quarter rest. The eighth staff starts at measure 50 and features a whole rest followed by a melodic phrase.

2

TATALE

Musical score for 'TATALE' in G major, 2/4 time. The score consists of five staves of music, numbered 54, 63, 72, 81, and 90. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The melody is written in a single voice on a treble clef. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and accidentals (sharps and naturals). The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the fifth staff.