

## **Biography and Adventures of George Worlasi Kwasi Dor in the Discovery of Traditional [Musical] Elements in Choral Music Compositions**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper presents George Worlasi Kwasi Dor (b.1954) as a relatively contemporary Ghanaian younger composer who is endowed with the talent of writing music compositions, exploring traditional [musical] elements to fuse with Western harmonic principles. It is expected as a projection into his family and educational background, musical endeavors as well as titles he had achieved. His intention is to present his compositions to the understanding and appreciation of his audiences both “home” and abroad. Having been born and bred a Ghanaian, Dor is an Associate Professor of Music at University of Mississippi, United States of America. Through interviews and analytical study of a selection of three of his compositions which he has explored extensively, traditional [musical] elements as his source of compositional material to blend effectively with Western harmonic philosophies, the paper unravels his distinctive ways of approaching that special technique of blending, using concomitantly indigenous materials and creative procedures that define his identity as African composer.*

**Key Words:** composition traditional, contemporary, elements, music, younger, blend

### **Introduction**

This paper has two broad sections. The first concentrates on the biography of George Worlasi Kwasi Dor and the second focuses on summary analysis of three of his works. The biography seeks to deliberate on his background and general musical style and creativity. The second section examines the compositional trend with regard to the use of traditional music elements. This examination provides a summary of each piece. The analysis is based on pieces such as *Gbɔgbɔmenuwo* (Spiritual Things), *Agbemavɔminyammielɛ* (We are Aiming at Eternity), and *Dokuibɔbɔnyo* (It Pays to be Humble).

These songs were selected as a result of inherent traditional music elements. In the first piece, *Gbɔgbɔmenuwo*, Dor creatively uses the time line of *Gabada*<sup>1</sup>, to build the entire piece, while the theme of the two other songs, *Agbemavɔminyammielɛ* and *Dokuibɔbɔnyo* are drawn from *Adevu*<sup>2</sup>.

Choral groups and church choirs in the Volta Region as well as Methodist and Musama Disco Christo Church choirs all over Ghana have expressed joy over singing Dor's pieces because of how he situates metaphorical and philosophical applications of his text in parallel with biblical passages in his compositions. The use of chromatic chords and tonicizations blending with traditional music elements, rendering his pieces much more difficult to perform, leads so many choirs, especially the Methodist and the Mozama Disco Christo Church Choirs to use them as test pieces for their annual and biannual singing competitions.

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<sup>1</sup> Ewe recreational dance

<sup>2</sup> Ewe hunters' song

## **Biography**

### **The Early Years of George Worlasi Kwasi Dor**

Born in AlavanyoWudidi in the Volta Region of Ghana on the 11th of July, 1954, into the family of Seth Kwasi Dor and Lucia Afua [Nee Nyawutɔ] Dor, George Worlasi Kwasi Dor became the fourth son of his father and the first son of his mother. His father was the founder of the Alavanyo Unity Orchestra of Independence–era, and his mother was a talented alto singer in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church Choir at Alavanyo Wudidi. Dor therefore took advantage of his innate potentialities as well as the musical milieu into which he was born in order to develop musically (Dor 1986; Agordoh 2004:146).

### **His Basic Education and Early Musical Life**

According to Lewis Dor,<sup>3</sup> (2006) Dor began to learn, and develop interest in the use of traditional music elements from the time he played saxophone in his father's orchestra. Dor completed his basic school education at Alavanyo Wudidi Evangelical Primary and Alavanyo Local Authority Middle Schools. In the course of his middle school education, he sat for the Common Entrance Examination and passed. This offered him the opportunity to enter Kpando Secondary School where he met Mr. Albert Kwaku Avotri, then music master at the school. Mr. Avotri took him through the rudiments of music and prepared Dor to sit for Grade 8 of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music Examination, which he passed with ease in 1973.

At the beginning of his musical life, Dor used traditional musical elements and premiered his first work *Nye kplenyemawu* (Me and my God) in 1972, with a danceable tune, applying rhythms from traditional music and dance types. He differed in compositional style compared to his peers who were influenced by the development of Art Music in the Christian church to write choral works in the hymn style. In the same period Dor began to play on the keyboard, accompanying hymns at morning devotion at school, and at the Alavanyo Wudidi Evangelical Presbyterian Church. He later learned to play the soprano saxophone and joined his father's Alavanyo Wudidi Orchestra.

Dor has also been considered one of the most important of the young composers who followed after Amu and Nayo in his compositions in view of the fact that he has portrayed their styles of writing which they handed down to their students (this will be discussed later). In his compositions, some of these styles are: the use of the major scale and an occasional use of the minor seventh to replace the major, the writing for voices to cover the entire range, especially the close relationship between text and tune, and the use of chromatic harmony as in Nayo's works.

In his early life as a composer, Dor concentrated mostly on choral writing, and only later began to compose more orchestral works. Most choral scholars and members of National Symphony Orchestra agree that Dor's early works were closely modelled on that of Amu and Nayo. However, Dor's own musical personality was still evident. This will be described later as I discuss his musical creativity through analysis of a selection of some of his works.

### **Advanced Musical Life**

In 1973 and with his strong foundations in music theory and his exposure to his father's orchestra as a saxophone player, he gained admission to the then National Academy of Music (NAM), now the Music Department of University of Education, Winneba, initially to pursue the Licentiate in Music followed by the Diploma in Music Education programme. In his third year at the Academy, Dor composed *Mawuvemianu* (God, have mercy on us), a choral piece, applying some of the themes from the repertory of his father's orchestra. This piece was performed often by the National Academy of Music Chapel Choir because of the mature blend of traditional music elements and Western harmonic principles. Dor was successful in this application because of a strong influence from a number of teachers who taught him at various stages in his educational path: N. Z. Nayo (compositional techniques, orchestration) Geoffrey Boateng (harmony and counterpoint), Michael Amisah (harmony and counterpoint), Augustine Adu-Safo (counterpoint), Kweku Acquaaah-Harrison (keyboard musicianship, orchestration), Eric Akrofi (cello, keyboard musicianship).

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<sup>3</sup> Younger brother of George Dor

As he intended to continue to use traditional music elements in his compositions, Dor went back to his “roots” after his graduation from National Academy of Music in 1977, and taught as the Music Master of Kadjebi/Asato Secondary School in the Volta Region so that he could further study traditional musical styles while he taught. After three years of teaching in the Volta Region he left for Accra to continue his teaching profession at St. Aquinas Secondary School, in order to pursue a higher musical knowledge.

In 1986, he entered the University of Ghana, Legon to pursue a Bachelor of Music degree and studied “The Alavanyo Orchestra,” his father’s legacy. I believe this was a period when he developed a greater interest in using traditional musical elements in his compositions, because his research was “The Alavanyo Orchestra: A legacy of Europe on Indigenous Musical Cultures of Africa.”

### **His Career Development**

After a successful completion of the Bachelor of Music Degree in 1990, he was appointed a teaching assistant in the Department of Music, University of Ghana, Legon which he reportedly did with excellence. Since Dor aspired to earn advanced degrees, he applied for a Masters degree programme and was re-admitted in 1990 to the University of Ghana, Legon, where he pursued a Master of Philosophy in Music. This time, he focused his research on stylistic traits in Ghanaian and African art music composition, and directed attention to the “Trends and the Stylist Traits in the Art Composition of Ephraim Amu, Nicholas Zinderdolf Nayo, and Joseph Hanson Kwabena Nketia” (The title of his thesis).

After this study, his works of the 1990s established his reputation as an accomplished composer who explored traditional music elements for his choral compositions having studied and applied the models of Amu, Nketia and Nayo. This was the period in which church choirs and West African Examinations Council used his choral compositions extensively as test pieces for their singing competitions/music festivals and examinations respectively. Further to the explanation offered earlier as to why Church choirs used his pieces for singing competitions, the West African Examinations Council, in an attempt to make their syllabuses look relevant to the Ghanaian situation, selected Dor’s pieces for the fact that they portrayed elements of Ghanaian origin.

After a successful completion of the Master of Philosophy programme in Music in 1992, he was appointed lecturer in the Music Education Department of the University College of Education of Winneba, where he taught, among other courses, Music Theory and Composition and also supervised and organized the performance of students’ final compositions, emphasizing the use of traditional music elements in his teaching. It was this era when his zeal to use the said elements in his compositions was realized. In his class he discussed with his students the great works of Amu, Nketia and Nayo that had been modeled along the lines of traditional music elements and encouraged them to write in that vein which, as emphasized by Beeko,

The University of Education, Winneba (National Academy of Music) offers a theory and composition course that embraces both Western and African compositional resources, a bi-musical programme that provides a good ‘grounding’ for any composer of contemporary art music. The instructors have included N.Z. Nayo, Michael Amissah and Augustine A. Safo who were later followed by Cosmas W.K. Mereku, George W. K. Dor, and George W. Addo. In the endeavour to equip students with strong compositional technique, they imparted instruction in harmony on sixteenth and eighteenth century conventional counterpoint as well as African compositional procedures that have been laid down by our predecessors. (Beeko 2009:34)

### **His Life in the Church**

As a young boy, Dor was musically intelligent and was already assisting in teaching songs and playing the organ at his local church at Alavanyo Wudidi Evangelical Presbyterian Church. There were a number of occasions on which he also visited his brother and friend Clement Kosi Adom of blessed memory to teach songs to Hohoe Evangelical Presbyterian Church Choir. In Ghana, he consistently directed many church and school choirs for more than two decades. His ability to situate his compositions in the traditional domain of his community was a factor that compelled all churches to yearn for his leadership, crowning him as a member of local, regional, and national choral and conductors’ associations, and at times he held executive positions including the National Choir Director of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, and the Vice President of the Ghana Choral Conductors Association.

From 1980 to 1996 Dor served as the Music Director of the North La Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Accra, where he organized and directed all choirs within the local church.

His performance as the Music Director of the North La Evangelical Presbyterian Church met the admiration of all and he was therefore elevated to the post of Chair of the West-Volta Presbytery Church Choirmasters Association, and then the National Choirmaster of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in the year 1995-96.

With the same sense of purpose that characterized Dor's earlier behaviour, he established and directed the Goethe Institute Choir in Accra, Ghana from 1993-1996. During this period he set a couple of texts by German poets as simple choral pieces for his young choir. And so he trained, encouraged and admonished the group and ultimately recorded the songs composed for the said choir and named the album *WennjedereineBlumepflanzte* (If everyone planted a flower).

### **His Life at the National Symphony Orchestra**

The study at Winneba during his diploma days, when he learned to play the cello, was put to serious practice when Dor joined and was featured as a front-row cellist in Ghana National Symphony Orchestra for a period of eight years. Dor's activity with the National Symphony Orchestra did not end only with performing on the cello but he also served as a conductor and composer. For the orchestra in the **African Composers' Series**, a programme that sought to showcase the works of Africans/Ghanaians, he conducted the compositions of Ephraim Amu, N.Z. Nayo, J.H.K Nketia J.M.T Dosoo and himself. This has been described as magnificent by Dorte and Arhine:

Of all the greatest composers/conductors mentioned, George Dor deserves special mention not just because he was a former member of the orchestra, a cellist, nor because he was the first of the composers to assume duty under the initiative. It is because of the impressive contribution he made to African orchestral music during his tenure. He arguably had the most successful concert. Moreover, his compositions have ever since become some regularly performed pieces of the orchestra, not just because of their relative simplicity but also for their social relevance and artistic appeal. His **Fraternity Suit** in three movements, in which he artfully integrates the percussive sounds of the *daworunta* (the twin bell), *axatse* (gourd rattle), and drums with the rest of the orchestra is a delight to listen to. Such an experiment had only been carried out by N. Z. Nayo in the Accra and Volta Symphonies which we have already mentioned above.”(Dorte and Arhine 2010:53)

His ability to compose in the style of Nayo bringing to light Nayo's incorporation of African musical instruments in his orchestral works was a result of the fact that he performed as a cellist under Nayo at an era when Nayo was the director of the National Symphony Orchestra. Second, he served as a director of the National Symphony Orchestra and conducted in the performance of compositions including Nayo's. Third, he studied Nayo's works during the Master of Philosophy degree. No doubt there were traces of Nayo's stylistic features from his **Accra and Volta Symphonies** in Dor's **Fraternity Suite**.

### **The American Years**

Dor has spent the period from 1996 to date as a resident of the United States. He was at the Department of Music and Ethnomusicology, University of Pittsburgh when he gained admission to pursue a Ph.D. degree in Ethnomusicology on a full Andrew Mellon Tuition Fellowship. While pursuing his doctoral degree, Dor served as a Teaching Fellow in the Music Department, University of Pittsburgh and taught different courses including World Music, Africa Music, Basic Musicianship and Class Piano.

In 1998 he was awarded a prestigious and highly competitive Andrew W. Mellon Pre-Doctoral Fellowship for the 1998-1999 academic year. This fellowship enabled him to travel to Ghana to do fieldwork research for his doctoral dissertation. This was as a result of his quest and interest to continue to develop his compositional techniques in general and choral music writing skills in particular. It also served as an act of balance between his Western and traditional African musical knowledge and taste, as well as his response to the need for further and deeper research into traditional compositional styles. Dor's doctoral dissertation focused on Ewe traditional vocal Music. His dissertation “Tonal Resources and Compositional Processes in Ewe Traditional Vocal Music” supports my central claim of Dor as an exponent in the use of traditional music elements in choral music.

### **Musical Style and Creativity**

Dor can be characterized as a compositional figure falling somewhere between the Western and African styles. In as much as he desires to portray his identity as an African, he does not forego using Western harmonies to write to the comprehension and appreciation of his African audiences.

By incorporating enormous African musical elements he does not forgo western harmonic usages. He has written highly chromatic music and has achieved contrasts from his colleagues through the use of modulations to related and remote keys in most of his extensive works, especially those I will be analyzing. He achieves this by the use of pivot chords and secondary dominants as well as shifting tonalities or tonicisations. This effect created in his songs has been asserted by Agordoh:

Some younger choirs in the church are beginning to feel that George's recent works have too many chromatic notes and intervals for them to perform satisfactorily. Though music for worship does not exclude the greatest complexities, it is always advisable for a composer to take into consideration the performing standard of the choirs his works are meant for. (Agordoh 2004:147)

The study of Dor's sacred choral works indicates that he normally conceives his rhythmic motifs and themes by drawing from a particular Ewe music and dance. For example in his *Midzi ha yeye* (Sing a new song) one could identify the rhythms distinct to *Akpi*,<sup>4</sup> occurring in different vocal parts and the rhythm of the master drum, *Uuga*<sup>5</sup> running through the bass line (Agordoh 2004:82). Not only has he employed the use of rhythmic structures of the master drum of *Uuga* and *Akpi*, but he has also used time lines of *Gabada* and other drum rhythms in the song *Gbɔgbɔmenuwo* (Spiritual things) and *Hadzihawo* (Singing groups) respectively.

Dor continues to activate the use of concepts established by his predecessors and tries to live within their influences. He looks at the rhythmic, harmonic and formal structures and makes an effort to emulate. In Nketia's works as showcased in *Wonyaamane a nawohuwodɔfo* (You realize your lover in times of troubles) there is the use of the dominant seventh which constitutes the root, a doubled seventh, and the mediant without the dominant. The resolution of this chord which conventionally moves the seventh to the mediant, the fifth to the root, the third to the root had deliberately been deviated. Instead, Nketia resolves one of the sevenths to the root, and the other one to the root a fourth down. This he asserts, can be called the "Ghanaian dominant seventh chord" or "Nketia dominant seventh chord" as in the case of German 6th, French 6th and the Italian 6th chords. In a presentation he made at a conference organized by the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon in September 2011 to mark Joseph Hanson Kwabena Nketia's 90th birthday celebration, Dor declared he has used this kind of dominant seventh chord in his orchestral works. The treatment of this dominant seventh chord is to satisfy the contour of the spoken text.

In another instance, he allows his use of notes to perform a dramaturgical function in the songs he writes as his teacher and object of study, Nayo, did. In his song *Agbemavɔminyammiele* (We are aiming at eternity) the long notes on the syllable *tegbee* conform to the idea of the length expressed in the word which translates to "forever". In his M. Phil. dissertation he indicated that Amu spoke against the use of notes in such ways and stated: "To Amu, the prolongation of a note which was tantamount to breaking the rule of rhythm threading the path of spoken text, was only justifiable if the song plays a dramaturgical role." In support of Dor's zeal in the use of notes to depict a dramaturgical role Agordoh articulates "Dor also employed 'word painting' as a rhythmic device in his song *Xɔsetɔwomitso* (Christians arise). In this work, the top three parts sing the words *asivui* imitating the rhythm of the supporting drums. The bass line sings the rhythmic pattern of the drum pattern of *asivui*" (Agordoh 2004:83).

Dor is also noted for the creation of silent bars in his writings perhaps to mark the end of sections or to create resting times for performers. As I analyze the three selected pieces one can find a number of silent bars in them. This I argue is a device inherited from his teacher Nayo who used this device frequently in his songs.

Moreover, Dor has not been stingy in the use of words and has employed many proverbs which most members of the congregation, especially the youth, find difficult to understand. He picks appropriate vocabularies in his locality relating to the topic in question and narrates to touch the hearts of his audiences. In Dor's writings he uses a lot of themes and phrases incorporating proverbs, matching them with biblical passages to present a meaningful message to the listener. In his work *Agbemavɔminyammiele* (We are aiming at eternity) he has been too wordy using proverbs and biblical passages to express his message. In *Dukuibɔbɔnyo* (Humility is good) he substitutes names of different wild animals each time he wants to repeat the section involving the wild animals, making the work wordy.

<sup>4</sup> Ewe traditional war dance

<sup>5</sup> The master drum of *Fɔntɔmfrɔm* ensemble

In the Volta Region of Ghana there are poetic devices like humming and the use of nonsensical syllables like ‘yoo, yoo,’ ‘yee, yee,’ ‘Uuu,’ ‘Ooo’ that accompany the performance of dance types like *Avihe* and *Gabada*. In cases where Dor writes using an element from such dance/musical types he tries to import such devices to make his music sound typical of the original dance/musical type. In *Agbemavɔ* he used this device to show a vivid source of the composition. His ability to write works in contrapuntal textures cannot be overemphasized. He has composed, if not complete works in contrapuntal textures, then sections of some of his works may be contrapuntal. Evidence is found with sections in *Agbemavɔ* and *Gbɔgbɔmenuwo*.

Dor has also sounded as metaphorical and philosophical and has stood in the place of preachers in writing his choral works. In *Agbemavɔ* and *Dokuibɔbɔnyo* where he draws his theme from the Ewedome hunters’ song, he metaphorically matches a phenomenon from hunter’s experience and biblical references and provides an example as “the role of hunter’s light in brightening the hunting path is likened to that of the Holy Spirit that makes the believer’s path clear. Moreover,

‘Do not be frightened by the lion’s roar’” he further states this is “a common theme in both the bible and hunting landscapes, often used metaphorically in Christian context to mean the threats of satan.” (Dor 2005:470)

**Summary Analysis of three selected pieces by Dor**

In this section I provide a summary analysis of three selected works of Dor.

***Gbɔgbɔmenuwo* (Spiritual Things)**

*Gbɔgbɔmenuwo* (Spiritual things) is probably the earliest large scale choral work written with traditional music elements for performance by SATB singers. It was written in 1986 when he entered the University of Ghana to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music. It is one hundred and forty seven (147) measures in length and has two broad sections: the slow section in  $\frac{2}{4}$  and the brisk section in  $\frac{2}{4}$ . It was written in the Ewe language, and comes with themes and motifs extracted from the bell pattern of a traditional recreational dance, *Gabada*.

In this composition, Dor uses the rhythm of the bell pattern of *Gabada* and sets biblical texts to it. In the entire piece the rhythm has been utilized to the fullest in all the parts.

*Example 1 The pattern of Gabada first bell*



The melody of the song has been built on the major scale with occasional lowered seventh which pertains to the Akan and Ewe traditional melodies.

*Example 2 Heptatonic Scale*



Dor’s knowledge in rudiments of music guided him to situate his voice ranges in the accepted limits of the convention. The range of soprano in this piece spans from d1 to g2, alto from b to b1, tenor from e to f1 and bass from G to d1.

He has situated effectively two time signatures to reflect exactly the rhythm of the time line of *Gabada*. He applies a tempo mark “slowly” at the beginning of the piece, and although I expected to have indicated a new tempo mark at the  $\frac{2}{4}$  section, that was not shown.

This piece has also been built on motifs explored from the main theme



*Gbɔgbɔmewomiehiagbɔgbɔmenuwo* (Spiritual things, we need spiritual things). He applies word painting in this piece by the use of the expression *miamiamiamia* to indicate how well our activities will be watered.

In this piece Dor uses a great deal of polyphonic and homophonic textures and briefly monophony. He has also created silent measures in the piece, perhaps for performers to take a rest in the course of singing. The use of chromatic chords and secondary dominants is prevalent as known of Dor in this piece, either to aid modulation or to embellish the entire work. Dor assumes the position of a preacher in this piece and expands on spiritual things to the Christian.

His usual modulations to the subdominant and the use of secondary dominant chords to achieve variations in harmonic structures and to aid modulations are obvious in this piece. As known of Dor, he has always sounded chromatic in his compositions.

**Example 3** *The use of secondary dominants and the modulations to the Subdominant*

1. Mau na-tu tsj de mia-ia w| na w| dzi mia mia mia mia

***Agbemavɔminyamiele* (We are Aiming at Eternity)**

*Agbemavɔminyamiele* is a very popular choral piece amongst the people of the Volta Region written by Dor in 1987. Dor, indicating the motivating force behind the composition of this piece says:

My composition of this song was inspired by a particular event. After taking part in a burial service of one Gobah, a dynamic youth of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Ghana who suffered untimely and mysterious death, the themes on aiming at eternal life and the hunter's ultimate goal began to haunt me until I developed it into the song text for *Agbemavɔ*. It is philosophical in nature and speaks about the ultimate role of the hunter for SATB. (Dor 2005:464)

It is one hundred and eighty seven (187) measures in length and has four main sections and two additional varied sections, making six sections in all. The piece is composed from an existing traditional hunters' song of the Ewe people of Ghana.

The voice ranges of the parts have been set quite high putting soprano's ranges from c1 to a2, alto from a to d2, tenor from d flat to f1 and bass from A to d1. I am of the opinion that Dor wants this song to be sung loudly because besides fixing higher pitches which naturally will have to be sung loudly, he has also indicated louder dynamic marks on this piece for example *f* and *ff*.

Unlike *Gbɔgbɔmewo*, this song has only one time  $\text{♩}$  signature and has a tempo mark slow and *ad libitum* for texts to be well heard.

In construction of his song texts for this piece he has behaved like a preacher who juxtaposes biblical texts with local traditional proverbs drawn from metaphors and matches the phenomena from hunters' experiences and biblical references. This he asserts as:

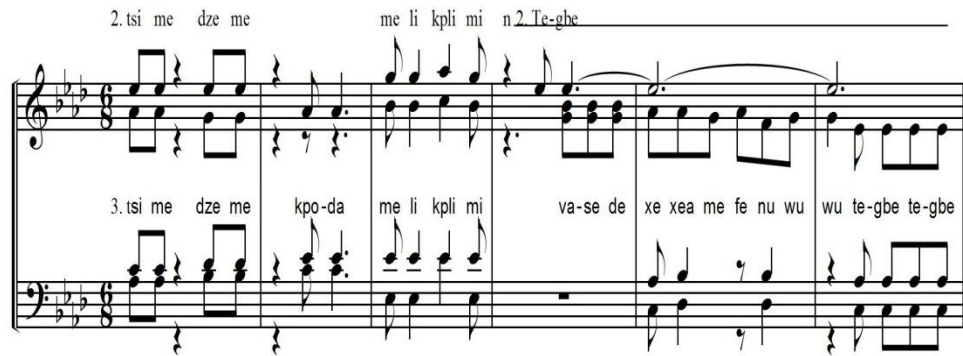
While the Ewe say, *Kale menɔa 'fetsiadeodzadzabelebele* (The brave does not remain home and narrate his hunting exploits, he must be soaked by morning dew *belebele*), James in the Bible advises that, "Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead" (James 2:17), or in Ewe, *XɔsedɔwɔnamanɔnunyeXɔse kuku* (Yakobo 2:17). The common parallelism is that practical action or pragmatism is a necessary attribute of both hunters and Christians. For James states: "Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do" (2:18), so do hunters need to produce horns of wild beats that they have killed as a testimony of their bravery.

This Ewe proverb *Kale menɔafetsiadeo* is the text of an *adeha* (hunters' song) that I have used as my recurring theme (sonic and verbal) throughout *Agbemavɔ* (Dor 2005:466)



The textual layout of *Agbemavɔ* is varied. Dor has combined monophony, homophony and polyphony in this piece as well as call and response using two voices for the call to be responded by all voices. I observe he tries to imitate African vocal practices which have no rehearsal session to agree on performance style. Performance is done spontaneously resulting in varied shades of textures.

In *Agbemavɔ* he does word painting bringing the meaning of some of the words in the singing to bear by the use of the length of note values. An example is to offer notes of long durational values to the word *tegebe* (forever). He has created a large scale form by the thematic ideas he develops.



***Dokuibɔɔnyo (It pays to be humble)***

Dor was inspired to employ a theme from *adevuan* Ewedome hunters' song *Alawa da mezoakplefe o* (The wild animal does not walk with its claws out), for this piece. This is the theme that recurs throughout the piece. He has located acceptable pitches for all voices in this piece. The range for soprano spans between d1 and g2. That of alto is from b to b1. The tenor is between g and f1 and bass range is from G to d1. Considering these ranges, I realize the pitches are quite high. In this piece he mentions names of animals and substitutes a new animal each time he repeats a section with the names of animals creating a rondo form. He distributes and uses harmonic variations at each of the phrases, and draws on call-and-response formal frameworks and distributes the names of the animals amongst the parts for the call phrases. For the episode in the song he uses Jesus Christ's humility as an example for Christians, thereby reinforcing the same message of humility conveyed earlier in the hunters' song.

The texture is predominantly homophonic with call and response, changing names of animals for the call phrases.

***Conclusion***

In relation to the analytical parameters I used in examining the selected compositions of Dor, I wish to assert that the major scale is very useful when composing with traditional musical elements. In a situation when one is writing using traditional elements from the Northern Ewe community the lowered 7<sup>th</sup> degree of the scale is naturally welcome, culminating in the use of the heptatonic scale.

Vocal ranges could be located as high or as low as the singers of the composers intended performing group is capable of doing. Naturally the chest voices is recognized as the singing range for the African/Ghanaian vocal performer, but for a blend of African and western elements head voice to accommodate higher pitches are appreciated but should be situated in the conventional practice.

Depending on the source of traditional music elements of the piece a particular composer will be working, and the choice of texts, the organisation of melodic structures can be done using motives or themes. Motivic structures are suggested for use of brief themes whilst thematic structures are recommended for use of multiple themes as it manifests in the selected pieces. In writing for tonal languages such as Northern Ewe, composers must observe the phonemic tone and tune relationship as well as relative lengths of spoken syllables as will be indicated in the units of the composition. Melodies must resemble the choice of the traditional musical type that a composer employs.

The use of varied textures is recommended, but must be applied carefully to depict the traditional practice of the musical type a composer decides to write on.



A perfect blend can be achieved in application of both western and African perspectives. To present an edifying piece worthy of performance in the sanctuary, biblical passages can juxtapose the traditional texts. Form in African music and especially with the pieces I analysed has been created out of performance situation and by the context of the songs and the source from which the themes have been drawn. A critical study of the performance situation of selected traditional musical types will inform composers on the form to write on. The following compositional procedures are suggested for a careful application in composing in the trend under discussion: sequences, repetitions, tonicisation/transpositions and modulations.

It is recommended that composers such as Dor should be made objects of study in our schools. Besides learning to compose in his style, the younger generation would also learn of the indigenous words/phrases proverbs and appellations that may fall out of use and become unfamiliar to future generations. This will contribute to promoting the philosophy of *Sankofaism*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Go back and retrieve from your roots