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RESEARCH ARTICLE

STYLES OF GHANAIAN CHORAL MUSIC COMPOSERS: "THE SYNCOPATION MAN"- JAMES TSEMAFO-ARTHUR

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ABSTRACT

The study of Ghanaian choral music composers and their works has become significant in recent times for scholars in composition and ethnomusicology as well as Music Education, in order to add to the dearth of literature on Ghanaian composers and their unique styles. Indeed, some few living music composers in Ghana have received attention through dissertation writing in the academic institutions. Using the concept of biography, the Cultural-historical activity theory, as well as case study design with non-directive interview and purposive sampling technique, the study takes a cursory look at the events of the life and unique style of Tsemafo-Arthur, and presented as biographical facts that have influenced his artistic creativity in music composition. It is concluded that Tsemafo-Arthur is a unique stylized choral music composer resulting from his mastery use of syncopations as an artistic device in his compositions. His usage of Fante texts as libretto for his songs, emanating from the Christian Asor Ndwom (Methodist Hymn Book), portrays the source of his textual materials. The study contributes significantly to educational function in music composition at various levels of music education.

INTRODUCTION

Research on Ghanaian choral music composers and their works has become significant in recent times for scholars in music composition, ethnomusicology as well as Music Education. Much has been said about astute scholar-composers such as Ephraim Amu, Kwabena Nketia and Nicholas Nayo and their works (Dor, 1992), the works of Annan, Dor and Kofi Badu have been studied (Amuah, 2012) while some scholars have also studied C.W.K. Mereku and his choral works (Hughes, 2014; Acquah, 2018, Acquah, *et al.*, 2022). It is not in doubt that there is so much literature on Western Art music and musicians as available from the periods of music history (eg. Medieval, Baroque, classical, Romantic, etc) which have provided so much scholarship in Western music. It is indeed, palpable to document and talk about African scholar-composers whose lives have been embroiled in musical activities - composition, performances, ethnomusicology, music education, music technology- and who have made so much impact in the music space in their African communities. That is also to say that there are quite a lot of prolific composers in Ghana whose lives and musical works have not been adequately explored in order to add to the existing literature on music and musicians in Ghana and Africa. One of these finest composers is James Tsemafo-Arthur, a living legend in the music composition space in Ghana. It is not in doubt that young scholars in music composition are left without suggestions as to how to approach, interpret and analyse art music compositions for successful musical analysis to yield a successful musical discourse. This is due to the unavailability of current research on art music compositions and composers into epochs of musical practice in Ghana, and probably, Africa as a whole.

In this regard, it becomes very desirable for research such as this to give a narrative, on a scholar-composer and a living legend, the events that have characterized his musical artistic from his childhood. In this paper, there is a highlight of the various events describing the musical practice of James Tsemafo-Arthur, the sources of his texts and a rhythmic analysis of one of his works that portrays him as "a man of syncopation" to give better understanding of his unique style in his compositions for deeper appreciation of his numerous creative works. The ultimate goal of the study was to provide interpretive ideas that stimulate musical creativity and associative thinking within the style of a choral music composer.

Related Literature, Conceptual and Theoretical Underpinnings: The study was guided by the concept of biography which gives detailed description of a person's life. To Bertaux and Kohli (1984), biographical study goes beyond the basic facts about the person such as education, work, relationships, and death. It, thus, portrays a person's experience of these life events. This is why Jacobson (2011) and Sadoh (2004) stress on stylistic and analytical approaches to studying art music composers to capture biographical sketch, historical context and approaches to musical works. In this case, this study details the musical life and style of the works of a single legend. Indeed, in biographical research, topics may constitute the study of a single life of a person who is so much embroiled with a particular field of discipline (Barry, 2020) and may be examined to include his life history writing, oral history, memoir, autobiography, and life narrative (Roberts, 2002). The implication is that it provides additional theoretical and practical insight to researchers in that discipline to enable triangulation with existing research findings on

other personalities in the same field in order to improve practices and help shape future strategies. Studying James Tsemafo-Arthur and his unique compositional style certainly allows perspectives to be contextually drawn by researchers in the music field as they study other composers and their styles to expand history of music and musicians in Africa. It is likely to contribute to the practice that lends itself to innovative thinking, imagination, vision, judgement, creativity, ambition, intuition and flexibility as espoused by Ismayilova and Bolander (2022). Again, Alpers (1996) gives exposure to the depth of biographical account to include both descriptive and interpretive. The scholar groups biographies into 1. Personal biography which involves demographic, family and personality characteristics of the researched. 2. Professional biography that relates to the development of the researched career. 3. Intellectual biography that describes the education and training of the researched while 4. Environmental biography evaluates the social, political and economic conditions, during the lifetime of the researched. By this thought, this work dovetails into professional biography and intellectual biography. This is because the study seeks to document such events that have influenced the musical career of the researched and his artistic creativity which certainly include his educational experience. Furthermore, it is a general belief among pundits of music, and especially, psychologists that music begins in the womb. That is to say that before one achieves the gift of music, the mother must witness music performances, perceive and belong to musical activities which in tend, is acquired by the in-born baby. Whether this notion is true or false, some babies are naturally delighted when their mother sings or lulls them in bed or rocks them at their backs.

By this belief, the paper is underpinned with the Cultural-historical activity theory propounded by Sannino and Engestrom (2018). Scholars such as Newman, *et al.* (1989), Van der Veer and Valsiner (1991) and Wertsch (1987) had earlier on given exposure to this theory that understanding human development is a basic cultural process based on the quality of the interactions between children and adults. In this case, the musical life of James Tsemafo-Arthur is seen to have developed through interactions with adults from infancy. This thought with the biographical concept as a conduit for this study, is dominated with the professional biographical account and a bit of the intellectual trajectories. It concentrates much on the lived experience of James Tsemafo-Arthur in his musical practice as a song teacher, a composer and organist with the consideration of variety of his rhythmic perspectives and texts of his songs. Indeed, most Ghanaian choral music composers have their unique styles which are being emulated by the younger generation to expand repertoire of choral musical works. Acquah *et al.* (2022) for instance documented the profile of C.W.K. Mereku, a Ghanaian art music composer, and analysed two of his works in determination of his style and the extent of using African concepts in his music, and concluded that Mereku is very conscious in using Ghanaian indigenous elements as source materials for his compositions. According to the authors, he develops his melodies out of traditional tunes, especially, for his instrumental composition and usually follows the speech surrogate of the texts in his choral music compositions. In this regard, Mereku is seen developing texts from Ghanaian indigenous knowledge systems for his compositions. This attests to the fact that many choral music composers have their sources of their linguistic materials for their choral compositions and Tsemafo-Arthur is no exception. Undeniably, the centrality of choral music is the texts or lyrics. This is because the essence of choral music is to communicate issues to the listeners. As a result of that it is always important to craft texts that are contextual. Acquah *et al.* (2015), quoting Randel (1986), indicated that choral music is written to be sung by chorus or choir with or without accompaniment. In this case, the texts used in choral music will be relevant to send messages to the listener. "Texts are the words of genres of vocal music" (Wade 1993, p.2). It is therefore important that the entire discourse in terms of the textual material source of Tsemafo's music is known. The sound with the texts makes an effective communication in a multitude of situation. Thus, as averred by Nanbigne (2015) and Sadoh (2004), the texts of choral music express not only the inner feeling and perceptions towards the

audience, they provide historical commentaries and delineates the expressive culture of an institution or community. After the independence, choral music began to grow in Ghana. Amuah (2013) for instance talked about how the establishment of schools and churches prior to independence set the pace for the development of choral music in Ghana: The establishment of schools and churches and the need to use choral music as part of church activities has been sustained [...]. The impact made by church choirs supported by schools, colleges, university choirs as well as industrial choirs cannot be over emphasized. The formation of junior and youth choirs has also been a positive endeavour in the development of choral music. The Vocal Bands and Minstrel choirs as well as other choral groups like the Western Melodic Singers and the Peace Choir have also made a boost in the promotion of this musical genre. (p.246). The narrative from Amuah (2013) is a clear indication that the formation of the various choral groups in the churches and the communities gave rise to gifted children in the churches to develop their musical ties and begin to participate in the choral activities and consequently becoming choral music composers. Similarly, scholars such as Agawu (2006), Nketia (1974), Flolu (1994) and Andoh (2011) have given exposure to how the emergence of such institutions as schools, religious groups, community groups and so on, consequent upon the works of the missionaries, contributed to musical inclination of the Ghanaian educated community. Thus, music literacy grew through the learning of Western concepts of theory, techniques of multivocal music and musical styles, thereby inspiring many music scholars to eventually reflect in the way they compose. Today, the churches are mostly the consumers of choral music compositions. The choral music composers follow rules that belong to the music theory and composition activity within the Western context and deploy these rules in their own way. The composition process is an intense personal process of meaning-making (Hogenes *et al.*, 2014). Thus, engaging in music composition activity really gives an experience of dialoguing with oneself to create the musical work. This is why the focus of this study has given an attention to a living scholar-composer to be engaged in a dialogic manner on, especially, his musical career and the unique style of his compositions.

METHODOLOGY

The study was situated within the qualitative paradigm with single case study as the design. The researched, James Tsemafo-Arthur, was chosen purposively, having portrayed prolifically, a unique style in his compositions and being a renowned church musician in Ghana. Non-directive interview was used and supplemented with musical analysis of his one of his pieces. Like Gray (2004) described, there are no preset topic to pursue in non-directive interview. Questions are usually not pre-planned rather the interviewer listens and does not take the lead. The interviewer follows what the interviewee has to say because it is the interviewee who leads the conversation as they are allowed to talk freely about the subject. Tsemafo-Arthur, in his residence, was then engaged in that conversation for over two hours, giving a narrative of his musical life, songs he has composed, his style and the source of his textual materials. Data collected encompassed his musical practice, from his childhood, some of his compositions as well as his educational life and how they have influenced him as a choral music composer. Particular attention was paid to his musical development from childhood in which the various stages of his musical compositions and chormastership were recorded, taking into consideration his styles as well as sources of his texts for his numerous compositions. With furtherance to this, one of his compositions chosen purposively was analysed rhythmically to ascertain his love for dominating syncopation as a compositional device in almost all of his compositions. Data collected were

categorized into themes crosschecked with the researched to ensure that all the information given had been rightly transcribed and objectively documented.

Analysis and Discussion of Findings: The discussion of the findings was based on two broad themes developed inductively to deal with the subject matter. These are the unique style and musical life of James Tsemafo Arthur, as independently presented.

The Unique Style of James Tsemafo-Arthur: The interview with the researched revealed that. Tsemafo-Arthur has more than 600 choral compositions to his credit, however, most of the early-stage compositions were based on the *Fante* texts of the *Christian Asɔr Ndwom* [CAN] (*Fante* version of the Methodist Hymn Book [MHB] used by the Methodist Church, Ghana). The following table shows the titles of 20 of the compositions whose texts were based on the CAN with the corresponding CAN number.

Table 1. Titles of Some Tsemafo's Songs with Texts from the CAN

S/N	Title of work	English Translation	CAN Number
1	Wɔnhye N' aboso hen	Crown him, the King	22
2	Jesu, me kra no dofo	Jesu, lover of my soul	29
3	Mbrɛ moduado Jesus	How I love Jesus	31
4	Woana na nguanhwefo	Who the shepherd	41
5	Dzidew	Rejoice	75
6	Anwanwado	Wonderful love	92
7	Jesus gye ndzebonyefo	Jesus receives sinners	95
8	Mm ammpamoho	Do not pass over me	98
9	Rotween aye den?	What are you waiting for?	111
10	Metse Wo ndze deedew n'	I hear Thy sweet voice	113
11	Migyina abow n'ekyir	I am standing behind the door	117
12	Gye me bra	Take my life	131
13	Jesus Siarfo	The providential Jesus	133
14	Ao, bra ma yendzi dew	Oh, come and let us rejoice	138
15	Gyedzinyi, twer No	The faithful, rely on Him	174
16	Asodzi da modo	I have a charge to keep	188
17	Gya hen	Lead us	201
18	O! Twerampon Nyame	O! Reliable God	261
19	Ma m' gyedz intsaban	Give me the wings of faith	267
20	Sɛ meba Jesus ho	When I come to Jesus	279

Certainly, there are many other songs of Tsemafo-Arthur that are not contained in this list but for the purpose of this paper, *Rotweɛn ayeden?* the title with serial number 9 was selected. The text of this song is found in CAN 111, thus, characteristically, it is the only song with triple digits of the same value in the table. It was transcribed, presented and analysed for its syncopation dominance, to portray and identify the unique compositional style of James Tsemafo-Arthur. As explained by Spencer (2018), syncopation is a variety of rhythms played together to make a piece of music, making part or all of a tune or piece of music off-beat. It is actually the interruption of the regular flow of rhythm. In fact, many of the songs of Tsemafo-Arthur, which cannot be reasonably put in this paper, contain displacement of rhythmic stresses or accents where they would not normally occur. In the following piece, displacement of accented rhythms.

Rotweɛn Ayɛ Den?

James Tsemafo-Arthur

Example 1. Dominance of syncopation in *Rotweɛn ayɛ den*

The above piece was used to represent the many pieces distinctively composed in this manner by Tsemafo-Arthur to demonstrate his sensibility of syncopations. The piece begins with anacrusic beat illustrating a syncopated rhythm from the onset of the song. Almost every part of the song is syncopated. Displacement of beats distributed for the lyrical content makes it even more interestingly syncopated. This is a distinctive feature of all compositions of Tsemafo-Arthur. Indeed, he has always maintained fidelity to his syncopation style. As Amuah and Arthur (2014) described, he is fond of using rhythmic devices such as rhythmic repetitions and rhythmic variation including syncopations, and combination of rhythms such as duple and triple motifs to create a hemiola effect. As already indicated, the texts of his earlier compositions were based on the texts in the CAN. He sets these texts to danceable tunes and anthems. His target for his compositions were mostly Methodist singing groups until when his textual sources changed to be more secular in nature. In this regard, his audiences were mostly the Methodist church who are mostly the Akan people in Ghana.

The Musical Life of James Tsemafo-Arthur

Parenthood and Childhood: From the data collected Tsemafo-Arthur was born in 1950 to a renowned master drummer called Kow Ata, and mother, Adwoa Sama, a lead traditional composer and singer, all of blessed memory. Tsemafo grew up to love music as naturally as his parents who were both traditional musicians of high repute. Tsemafo had this to say:

My father, Kow Ata, with the English name John Arthur was a dexterous master drummer of many traditional ensembles and my mother, Adwoa Sam was a traditional music composer, songstress and lead singer in many traditional musical types formed in the community.

This means that children acquire some musical traits from their parents and the environments they find themselves. Bond (2011) commented on the genetic and the environmental factors of children's experience before beginning formal education:

Environmental factors play a role in musical development, particularly, in the critical period of early childhood. [...] children are not blank slates when they arrive in school; their prior experiences, models of behaviours, and genetic design have already laid foundation for their education. (p.73). In line with this, the study revealed that traditional ensembles such as *Adenkum* and *ɔmpɛ* were

the prominent ensembles in which the parents of Tsemafo participated. Undeniably, such traditional ensembles in which the parents featured prominently afforded Tsemafo, as a child, an astounding musical gift from the parents, therefore, it was not surprising to see how he acquired music as early as three years. For instance, Tsemafo revealed in his narrative that he always accompanied his mother at such performances. He commented on how he disturbed his mother to allow him to play a drum the mother herself used to play:

I troubled my mother as I always tried to seize the donno from her whenever she was performing with it. My mother could not stand the disturbances and so she always had to find an empty "Geisha" tin for me, as a substitute, so that I would stop disturbing her of the donno.



Figure 1. Donno (Source: Fieldwork, 2022)

It was obvious in the conversation that most children whose parents practice music are likely to become musicians because they acquire some set of music-supporting genes or they are also influenced by the environment of the musical family.

His Education: Tsemafo got some of his musical exposure when he enrolled in the primary school at the age of 6. He attended Otum Methodist primary in 1957 (stages 1-4) and continued at Komenda Methodist primary (stages 5-6) from 1961-1962 and gave a narrative of his musical experience at the primary school:

I learnt to master the reading and singing of the sol-fa notation at a faster rate and in primary five I was admitted into the Methodist Church Choir by Revered Markin, the first Revered Minister of the Methodist church in Komenda of Central region of Ghana. During this period, I stayed with my cousin and her husband who wanted me to attend the church of Pentecost instead of the Methodist church.

It became clear that the cousin and the husband had wanted Tsemafo to join them at the Pentecost church in order to support the church with his musical talent. This led to an opposition of his cousin and the husband, advising him to stop the Methodist church and attend Pentecost church with them. This opposition grew wild and wild because the guardians wanted him to exhibit his musical talent in the Pentecost church instead of the Methodist church. Children are often faced with opposition and negotiation to cope with the lack of control

over certain aspects of their lives (Valentine, 1997). However, in the case of Tsemafo-Arthur, the opposition was intervened by one uncle Kojo, the Organist of the Methodist Church in Komenda at the time. In this regard, the cousin and husband later agreed, though very reluctant at times, and Tsemafo had to accompany them to the Church of Pentecost occasionally. Tsemafo became an outstanding alto singer in the Middle school choir. According to him, he would always finish singing his part before being taught by his song teacher, an experience he acquired from his lower primary education. He was made to be conducting the school during singing. He also performed the cantata and drama in some occasions in the then Middle school. In his words he reiterated:

I joined the drama troupe to perform "the coming of the Golden Stool" at Komenda town hall and Elmina as well. "The coming of the Golden Stool" is a historical event that touches on how the golden stool emerged into the Ashanti kingdom.

Apart from the drama troupe, he had outstanding performances and contributions when he was with the church choir. Tsemafo was nicknamed *Alto Agyenkwa* (saviour of Alto part) as a result of his smartness in catching up quickly with Alto part, utilizing his purring voice and outstanding experience in sight singing the script, even before the song was taught, and more especially, his absence usually created a huge gap in the alto part when there was a performance. Like he said:

Even when I was seriously sick, and could not do anything, I would be persuaded to attend funeral wake-keeping to offer assistance to the alto singers.

Tsemafo commented on how he started teaching songs:

I started teaching songs at age of sixteen and has continued till now. After completing Middle School, I stayed in Otum for few years doing petty jobs, farming and fishing to support myself since there was nobody to take care of me at the time. I also formed a football club called Susubiribi" and became the first captain and later the coach. Apart from music, I loved to play soccer. In all these, I was assisting the organist in the Otum Methodist church choir in teaching them songs and helping them to learn to read music.

This suggests that he actually had his daily bread from his musical practice in spite of the various studies that have revealed that some musicians are insecure in their profession (Coulson, 2012; Hoedemaekers, 2018; Parker *et al.*, 2021). Ostensibly, his love of music and his continuous involvement in the musical activities sustained his music profession. In 1973, for instance, Tsemafo joined Prestea Methodist Church choir and later became the assistant organist after learning to play the harmonium within six months under the tutelage of the then Choirmaster, Mr. Dennis and the singing band master, Mr. Conduah. The Choirmaster/Organist, also put him in-charge of some societies near Prestea Methodist Church while assisting him in Prestea. This kind of collaborative work was very helpful to him. Thus, the collaborative process of give and take could lead to music compositions that could not be made by single persons (Hogenes, 2014). This collaboration and apprenticeship resulted in some compositions of Tsemafo-Arthur that were based on the amalgamation of ideas and skills of those he worked with.

According to Tsemafo, at the time the quasi-religious groups, giving rise to Vocal Bands sprang up with some performances in the town and he became one of the music instructors in the Prestea Vocal Band. He reiterated his participation in those musical groups:

I also joined the Prestea Minstrel Choir and consequently assisted the director for Prestea Dramatic choir on invitations. I was really ever ready to teach songs.

Undoubtedly, Tsemafo-Arthur really loves to compose and teach songs. Furthermore, he formed a junior choir for the Methodist church, and their performances became a top talk of the town. He handled many singing groups within that period including Enyan

Denkyira Methodist Choir, Osedze Minstrel Choir, Enyan Denkyira Vocal Band and Minstrel Choir, Breman Essiam Love Local Band, and many more. His flair for teaching songs endeared him to be invited to many singing groups for assistance. Such groups, as earlier stated, was as a result of the works of the missionaries as indicated by some scholars (Agawu, 2006; Andoh, 2011; Flolu, 1994 & Nketia, 1974).

Furthermore, Tsemafo was invited to many places in Ghana to assist teaching and accompanying songs. For instance, he left for Prestea and worked as a pupil teacher under the invitation of his uncle, D.D. Akomfodze in 1977 to assist the Methodist church in playing their keyboard for them.

As he narrated, he said this:

Later, I left Prestea to spend two years in Denkyira, and from there, I was invited to teach songs in Hwidiem in the Brong Ahafo Region. I was not allowed to return to Denkyira because the Church offered me free accommodation and arranged for a teaching appointment at their Methodist Primary School. I accepted the offer and stayed with them, especially, when I realized that the singers in the church were very serious and they showed a lot of goodwill to me.

Clearly, he lived on his musical prowess, getting free accommodation and teaching appointment consequent upon his musical career. In this regard, Tsemafo-Arthur agreed for him to be transferred from Prestea to Hwidiem. The church in Hwidiem found his interpretation of songs awesome, his good sense of humour, patience in teaching songs and the many contributions he had made to the growth and success of Hwidiem Circuit Choirs. He improved the performances of the circuit choir as he was determined to do so. Mr. Tsemafo-Arthur was asked whether he had some music tutorial background. He had this to say:

Well, as at the time I was in Hwidiem, I had not received any formal education in music but it was a self-taught. However, the District became very proud of me as a result of my services to many of the choirs in the districts, moving from circuit to circuit, society to society to teach songs.

Tsemafo-Arthur also explained why he was so loved by many people: *Anytime I taught any song anywhere, many people would troupe into the church hall just to have a glimpse of me: Observing my antics, voice quality and the patience I applied in handling singers. I did not ever make my rehearsal at choir practice boring. My secret is that I loved rhythms. Every aspect of my song teaching involved syncopations. The rhythms in my voice and many instructions given were rhythmic and it put a lot of fun in my choir practices.*

This is to say that his constant involvement in the musical activities helped him to improve himself professionally. That is why Chaffin *et al.* (2005), aver that practice makes man perfect and that expert practice, memorization and continuous practice in musical performance uncover the intimate connection between memorization and interpretation, thereby improving standards in musical abilities. Also, in 1982, Tsemafo attended Bereku Training College and still continued to teach his songs and that of others at weekends and holidays. While at Training College he received the National award of Entertainment Critics and Reviewers Association of Ghana (E.C.R.A.G.) with Good Shepherd Methodist Church Choir, North Kaneshie in Accra. In 1985, his songs were mostly found being performed by choirs on the national Television. It is clear that he crisscrossed the Ghanaian terrain and contributed a lot to the College and Ghana:

I became very popular during my days in the College as a result of my gift in music. At the Training College, I became the Choirmaster/Organist and used my sonic experience to make enormous contribution to the college. I led hymn singing of the college and championed the musical life as well. The Paramount Chief of Bereku invited me several times to his house because of his love for music. I really helped the community too, and not only the college.

After training as a professional teacher, he worked at Shama Methodist Middle school and worked with some Methodist art musicians such as E. C. Billson Senior, E. C. Billson Junior, Entsua Mensah and Herbert Sam. He became the Director of music for Sekondi Diocese and later transferred to Rev. Grant Methodist Middle at Effiakuma, where he was also appointed as church organist for Effiakuma Methodist Church. According to Tsemafo, he later became the Metropolitan Music Organizer for the schools in Sekondi-Takoradi district. He discharged his duties to the admiration of teachers, and the school pupils within the district. He composed the song *Ma m' Dɔkon ma monom* to be used as a marching song by the Metro Directororate of Education. In 1992, he left Sekondi to pursue Diploma in Music Education at the erstwhile National Academy of Music (NAM) in Winneba. By 1997, he had obtained his first degree in music. He later won a scholarship to pursue Master of Philosophy degree in Music at the University of Ghana, Legon. For his high school teaching career, Tsemafo said that he taught in Fijai Secondary School from 1997 to 2000. There, he used his musical experience to make the school win choral competitions several times, even at the national level. He taught music at the then Komenda Teacher Training College from 2003 to 2010 and became the head of Music Department from 2005 to 2007. Later, he joined the faculty members as a music lecturer at the Methodist University College, Ghana in 2010 till his retirement in 2020. Currently, he is pursuing his Doctor of Philosophy in music at the University of Education, Winneba, although, he has retired from active service.

CONCLUSION

In this study, it is clear that biographical concept coupled with cultural-historical activity theory can be used complementarily and through a scientific presentation to unravel the artistic endeavours of a living legend such as James Tsemafo-Arthur. Like Apitzsch and Inowlocki (2000) asserted, in social science research, biographical interviews help to understand what has led to the status of a person. Infact, people are more comprehensibly understood when they explain themselves how one thing led to the other. It is worth stating, therefore, that music composers got their training from various backgrounds. While some are genetic, some are self-taught and learn their craft through practice and indirect study while some are from educational experience. The latter shows that some people study music in college, and earn the various degrees in Music. Most music composers are also influenced by their parental trait and training when they are children. They continue to play throughout their lives and eventually learn to write their own music. Tsemafo-Arthur was musically skillful from home with experience from his parents and from his formative years at the primary school, where he started his composition activities. Throughout his life, he is so much involved in musical practice and that helped him to make a meaningful living. His training in music, undoubtedly, has provided him with life-long career. His love for rhythms and syncopations stems from his childhood where his parents introduced him to the rhythmic patterns of *Donno*. Indeed, it is worth concluding that Tsemafo-Arthur is a unique stylized choral composer who demonstrates the mastery of artistic devices in his compositions. He remains one of the prolific choral composers whose texts emanate from the CAN. He is significantly recounted as a great choral music composer in the Methodist Church, Ghana and the Ghanaian choral scene. His voice and antics for teaching songs, playfully, is worth emulating. As a result of his syncopations, his works remain to be showy and stylish. This is to say that his compositions feature nothing but complex rhythms and use of syncopation that identify him distinctively as many people call him "the syncopation man".

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