

A Theoretical Review towards a Compositional Model for Creating African Musical Drama: *Anansegorndwom*

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The creative aspect of art music in Ghana and Africa as a whole has focused primarily on the composition of either choral or few instrumental forms. Apart from Blege's "Kristo" and Mereku's "Asomdwee Hen", there is, however, comparatively less compositions that combine theatrical elements to an eventual performance. This article therefore sought to establish a compositional model – Anansegorndwom - for creating musical dramas which would be characteristically African to give directions to modern art music composers to create such works intended for wide audience. Through theoretical reviews, the study brings into existence a compositional model for creating musical dramas that convey Ghanaian existing indigenous stories other than the sound elements in our folk traditions through choral and instrumental forms. Indeed, the model established is an explicit demonstration of easy ways of using traditional idioms in one composition without losing both Western and African musical identities. The implication is that, it sets the pace for the creation of more African dramatic works that are significant to generate employment opportunities in music and theatre. Indeed, the modern society craves for a refreshing mode of recreation beyond work and life pressure, thus, the extremely emotional artistic form of Anansegorndwom is likely to grasp the inward emotions of this world of modern audiences as it conforms to the aesthetic demands of the Ghanaian cultural heritage. It is, therefore, envisaged that art music composers begin to use the model to add to the paucity of repertoire of African musical dramas in the 21st Century.

Keywords: musical arts; Ananse; theatre; bi-culturalism; syncretism; *Anansegorndwom*

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I. INTRODUCTION

On the African continent, music has been produced to aid society in a number of ways: traditional musicians and professional artistes have composed and performed for all events of the rite de passage (viz. birth, puberty, marriage and death rites) and also at social ceremonies such as apprenticeship graduation, installation and 'destoolment' of chiefs or kings and at traditional worship rites. Syncretism or an amalgamation of traditions has introduced traits that allow art composers in blending and/or working with indigenous cultural systems that have been the trend for the African scholar-composer in the last seven decades. This type of integration leads to, and is often synonymous with what Wiggins (2005) described as bi-culturalism.

Unquestionably, the African is endowed with rich indigenous musical resources that can be tapped for creativity to increase the existing musical arts in the 21st century. Indeed, in Ghana and within the West African sub-region, art music scholar-composers have greatly concentrated their compositions on choral idioms and few instrumental works that have utilized indigenous resources (Obresi, 2014). The stylistic features of these choral traditions—Amu-Nketia (Ghana), Phillips-Bankole (Nigeria), Solomon Mbabi-Katana (Uganda), Gamal Abdel-Rahim and Halim El-Dabh (Egypt), and David Fanshaw (South Africa) of *African Santus* fame—have dominated the art music composition scene on the continent for the last seven decades (Sadoh, 2004). In the light of this, do the art music composers have to remain sacrosanct to this trend or continue with the experimentation of choral and instrumental compositions utilizing our indigenous musical resources? Is it not about time for a paradigm shift in art music compositions in Africa? As a modern interculturalist and art music scholar-composer, my motivation has been how to change the status-quo. Undeniably, the indigenous Ghanaian story-telling and musical traditions are embodiments of rhythms, harmonies and melodies which show our identity, and which can be tapped and created into a dramatic musical artefact. Clearly, the process of composing music is idiosyncratic as Acquah (2015) described, however, it is important that composers' attention is drawn to new forms of musical creation aided by a compositional model to make it easier for composers. It is upon this fact that some theories and scholarly writings were reviewed to establish a model that could aid composition of musical drama within the African context.

II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

The review pulls out theories, creative processes as well as sources of creative materials that culminate the establishment of a compositional model for creating African musical drama which I termed *Anansegorndwom*. Etymologically, *Anansegorndwom* is from the words *anasesem* (Ananse story), *agor* (play or drama) and *ndwom* (songs). *Anansegorndwom* is therefore a musical drama created out of Ananse stories. This theoretical paper also takes into account the compositional elements and techniques that could be utilized to create an African musical drama. Therefore, the concept of Ananse story pulled out of Ghanaian folklore tradition as well as works created using indigenous musical and theatrical elements across Africa were considered for the review towards the creation of the compositional model.

2.1 Theoretical Frameworks

“Theoretical frameworks normally involve the structure, the scaffolding, or the frame of one’s study” (Meriam, 2001, p. 45). It can be thought of as a map or travel plan and so a number of theoretical underpinnings were reviewed to establish a firm ground for the birth of the model. The theories included approaches of traditional materials in creative works (Cho Wen-Chung’s *Musical Synthesis of Syncretism*) by Chang (2001), the Theory of Interculturalism by Sadoh (2004) and Stage Theory by Wallas (1926)

2.1.1 Cho Wen-Chung’s *Musical Synthesis of Syncretism*

The theory of Traditional Materials in creative works, according to Chang (2001), was based on Chou Wen-Chung's (Chinese-American composer’s) cross-cultural experience in musical synthesis within the concept of syncretism. Syncretism pivots on the process of reinterpretation of indigenous traditions where indigenous cultures require evaluations of both foreign and native traits (Herskovits, 1964). This implies that before the final selection for adopting certain foreign traits, the natives have to go through a comparative appraisal of the traits in both foreign and native cultures, and the re-evaluation or enculturation of indigenous culture often results (Chang, 2001). He explained that this is especially true for those people who have acquired a Western-style education. Therefore, Chou Wen-Chung's cross-cultural experience and his approach to musical fusion reshaped his compositions, making his native musical resources for compositions more conscious and articulated in his musical artefacts. This inspired both Western and Asian composers to gain recognition in the use of their native cultural traits to create musical fusion. Some of these composers were Bartok (exemplified in *The Wooden Prince*), Stravinsky (exemplified in *The Rite of Spring*) and Liszt (exemplified in *Hungarian Rhapsodies*). The composers who used folk tunes and their traditional sources to create their works found their works loved and consequently inspired many other composers to write in that domain. It is with this regard that the African, and for that matter, Ghanaian musical arts scene could be loved, well appreciated and called our own when it is dominated by our folk resources.

It is worth postulating that creating a musical drama of Ghanaian fame should embody the utilization of the Ghanaian folk resources; scales, compositional techniques and blend of instrumentation in the work at the conceptual level. Thus, it could be made rationally, and specific concepts on the nature and property of musical sound could be fused through re-living the cultural experience and reinterpretation of previous experience.

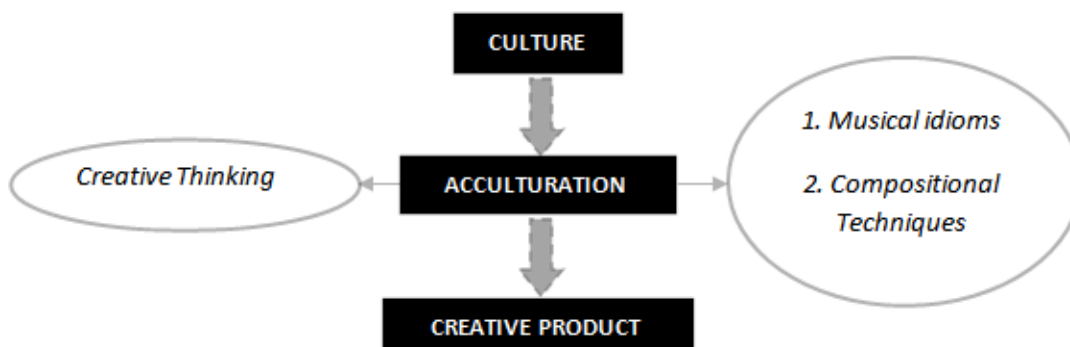
2.1.2 Interculturalism

Earlier on, Kimberlin and Euba (1995) had identified thematic intercultural activity and domicile intercultural activity within the framework of interculturalism. They explained that the former has to do with a situation where the composer of the music usually belongs to one of the cultures from which the elements of the music are derived while the latter refers to where the composer writes in an idiom acquired from a culture other than his own, even though the work he produces may not be necessarily intercultural. Dosunmu (2005) for instance commented on intercultural music as music for the new African:

New African art music is intercultural in the sense that it incorporates various aspects of African traditional culture in contemplative and functional art music created and composed by Western trained musicians in the form that may be performed by both Africans and non-Africans. (p.10)

For that reason, it is only through the use of these African material sources that we can enrich our music and contribute to the preservation of our cultural heritage that can be appreciated worldwide. “For any music called African, there must necessarily be the consideration of dance, language and rhythm elements of African origin” (Agbenyega, 2015, p. 69).

With the above thoughts of the scholars, it is palpable that cultural mixing of any musical drama in the 21st century can always occur in order to have a form of musical development that is ever-changing development in accordance with the changing times. Thus, the idea of interculturalism propounded by Sadoh (2004), in effect, could lead to an emergence of intercultural musical composition as illustrated below.



Correspondingly, the above model of intercultural composition exposes the African art music composer to have a firm background knowledge about their culture with regards to indigenous traditional music, so as to be able to maintain the idiom when creating musical piece. The composer therefore accumulates the traditional musical elements, especially, the interested musical idioms of the traditional music, and then merges with the Western compositional techniques in a creative thinking style. An effective experimentation of the acculturation stage then produces a hybridized or intercultural creative product. This model is limited to art music composition (choral and instrumental) and may not thrive for a culturally contextualised African operatic musical product.

2.1.3 Wallas' Stage Theory

The Stage Theory by Wallas (1926), based on biographical and autobiographical evidence, put forward the existence of four stages within creative activity. These are preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. This is reflected in the model of creativity by Webster (2016) and in the work of Kratus (1989). According to Wallas (1926), 'Preparation' describes the period when the initial problem is assessed and the composers choose the materials they are familiar to work with. 'Incubation' represents time away from the problem when conscious work is set to one side. This period may include passive forgetting of superficial details or previous attempts of the problem, and/or associative play between problem elements (Lubart, 2001). 'Illumination' is known as 'flash of insight' within problem-solving behaviour which is often preceded by some form of intimation that a solution to the problem is imminent. The production of new ideas requires a process of refinement, development and evaluation which Wallas termed 'verification' and this itself may lead back to the preparation or incubation stages. Burnard and Younker (2002) explicated such a model more fully in musical terms in their study of compositional process. In fact, the last of the stage theory can lead to the beginning of the process thereby making it cyclical as illustrated below.

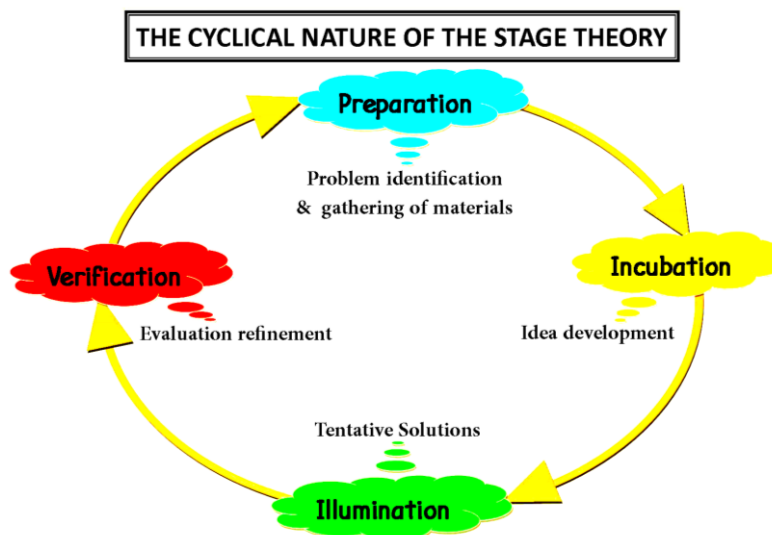


Figure 2: The cyclical nature of the stage

Unlike improvisation, composition allows time for reflection and revision of the musical product (Kratus, 1989), the theory was therefore found significant in developing a new compositional model. Nevertheless, this theory was not clear with the kind of materials needed and within which context to create the work. Similarly, it is silent on any intercultural concept which the new model sought to achieve.

2.2 Folk Songs, Folktales and Folk Dances

Indigenous songs, stories and dances are very useful in a culturally contextualized model of an African musical drama composition. Use of folk songs, folktales and folk dances were found inevitable to create a compositional model within the context of an African musical drama.

2.2.1 Folk songs

Folk songs can be regarded as songs of the folks who did not go through any formal education. Like Bronner (2002) observed, “a folk song is a lyric poem with melody which originated anonymously among the unlettered folk in times past and which remained in currency for a considerable time, as a rule for centuries” (p.32). By general convention, this definition makes it plain that the folks are the people who knew nothing about reading and writing as far as formal education is concerned. However, these folks were the composers of lyrical poems with melody. Through extemporization, these melodies were composed to express emotions, thoughts or ideas shared by the community. It is worth saying that these folk songs that have been handed down were done orally through generations and therefore, form part of the musical traditions of the people. As it goes through oral transmission, it is likely that the text could change overtime while the melody tends to remain constant. Indeed, Wells (1950) explained that “the original text may be lost while sometimes, they may be freshly created by successive singers as they make their own versions to give it a new spirit” (p.5). It is therefore significant that folksongs are used as part of the traditional source materials for creating a musical drama.

Similarly, as Acquah (2018) postulated, melodies, modes and rhythmic patterns as well as the spoken phraseology of folk tunes across the major traditions in Africa are a great compositional material to achieve intercultural musical artefact. The texts show morality because most folk songs carry messages and decry antisocial tendencies in a community such as laziness, promiscuity, selfishness and willful pride in a community. Cohen (2012) for instance commented on the function of folk song on morality:

A folk song sometimes acts as social critique and serves as a vehicle for social regulation. They can also be used to extol positive virtues such as hard work, modesty, moderation and self-discipline. Folk music has been passed down from generation to generation. (p.23)

In furtherance to this comment, the folk songs may take various forms such as religious, incantations, musical, lyrics and narrative songs (Hauser, 2002) and are therefore good source materials for syncretic compositions. The review shows that folk songs are melodious, free from rigid rules of composition and very lyrical.

2.2.2 Folktales

Many scholars have given various definitions and explanations of folktale based on their orientations. For instance, while Abrams (1981) observed it as a short narrative in prose of unknown authorship which has been transmitted orally, Akporobaro (2001) observed it as an imaginative narrative in prose form. However, Quinn (2006) explained it as a story handed down orally from generation to generation that becomes part of the tradition of a group of people. Dorson (2015) also attempted to define a folktale:

Folktale embodies the highly polished, artistic story genres that have a relatively consistent finished form. Their origin, goals and themes, on the other hand, are diverse. Like novels and short stories, their sophisticated counterparts, folktales are told primarily for entertainment, although they may have secondary purposes. They are believed to be fictitious, and are cited as lies by storytellers and commentators, who mean that tales are the creation of human fantasy. (p.60)

All the definitions show that folktales have no known authors and they are usually performed orally, yet, the imaginative nature of folktales makes narrators give certain memorable experience that is intended to entertain. Regardless of its unknown authorship, folktales are stories that can be created according to one's own orientation and experience as well as the function of that story in the society. For instance, a society expresses itself through oral tales. This, in turn, reflects that society and its beliefs (Anny, 1998). Moreover, storytelling is also used in solving the problems of keeping family and community together (Kehinde, 2010). It is therefore plausible to say that folktales are replete with inherited wisdom, social, personal and moral and are the interpretation of the experiences of the ordinary person from birth to death. If it can be created out of experiences, then they can sometimes be true stories instead of its assumption of the fictitious nature. It is clear to say that folktales have various themes and different decisive factors that may form the main plots.

Also, the role of music and musical performance in story telling cannot be overemphasized. From the introduction, within the narration and at the end of the story, music becomes inevitable; however, any created

musical drama is although musically oriented, existing traditional dances could be used as punctuations in the acts and scenes. This will ensure the sustainability of the story telling tradition in Africa where listeners are involved in the action and identified with the characters in the story.

2.2.3 Folk Dances

The folk dances of any community are performed on almost every special occasion and festival to express ecstasy and reveal rich cultural heritage of the community.

Sokpor (2014) talked about contextual performances of folk dances and stated:

Dances in the African setting are performed during specific occasions such as festivals, religious activities, enstoolment of chiefs as well as cycles of life such as, birth, naming ceremony, marriage, puberty rites and funerals rites. Specific dances are performed during these life cycle activities. (p.11)

Of course, the dance is never performed out of context and each dance fits squarely into a traditional occasion of any kind (Duodo, 1994). Corroborating this Younge (2011) commented:

... in the *Adowa* dance of the Ashanti of Ghana, movements and their accompanying songs and rhythms are selectively performed under different contexts. For example, if the occasion is a funeral, the speed of the dance and music is slower and the costumes used conform to the traditional modes of the dressing for sad occasions, that is, red and black. Similarly, the selection of movements and song texts are appropriate to the occasion. On the other hand, if it is performed on a joyous occasion, the movements and music are faster and the colours of costumes are brighter and varied. (p.23)

This attests to the fact that folk dances are art forms that are consciously performed in the communities for specific occasions. Shapiro (2008) explained folk dance as the oldest art form that is very satisfying and which forms part of African dance scene. He described dance and stated that “it is an artistic expression in measuring movement of sensation of stepping, turning, swaying, stamping and leaping” (p. 7). Clearly, dance involves movement of the body to a definite rhythm of music. Meanwhile, Opoku (1964) explained dance of involving space, time and rhythm, and as motivation for the movements of the human body in space and time. This means, it involves spatial and temporal patterns in expressing ideas and emotions in time and space by the use of movements disciplined by rhythm of sound, locomotion and body-movements.

In Ghana, there are host of musical types which are also called dances. These musical types or dances also “serve as identity of the cultures that mostly perform them” (Acquah, 2008, p.1). Ebeli (2018) identified some of these traditional dances among the major tribes in Ghana. She identified Agbadza, Gota, Atsiagbeko, Gahu, Bɔ̀bɔ̀bɔ̀ and Apasimaka as some of the dances of the Ewe tradition of Ghana. The Akan tradition is also popular with Adowa, Apatampa and ɔmpɛ, Fɔ̀ntɔ̀mfrɔ̀m, Kete and Sikyi. For the Ga, she identified Kpatsa and Kpanlogo, even though, Kolomashi and Gome can also be identified with them. For Dagomba tradition, she identified Bamaya and Tɔ̀ra, Nagela and Bawa dances. These dances or musical types are aesthetically appealing to be adapted either creatively or indigenously and embedded in the performance structure of a musical drama as prelude, interlude or postlude, conceptualized from the structure of Western musical performance where preludes, interludes and postludes exist in larger works. For instance, the Western oratorio, which combines recitatives, arias and choruses, is preceded by an instrumental composition called overture. Similarly, the overture is also intended, especially as an introduction to the main opera. To put it simply, both opera and oratorio are considered as extended works which are preceded by the overture (Collins English Dictionary, 2014). In this regard, the sense of overture can have its adaptation in the creation and performance of a traditional musical drama where traditional dances can serve as opening to the main acts. Also, it is generally known that every folk dance has its own specific costumes and jewelry, which differ from dance to dance. Ladies beautify their bodies with cam wood, white clay to draw lines to form a pattern on their body and sometimes wear half clothes to cover their breasts, decorated with beads around their waists, thereby giving the audience a folk touch to the performance. All these give aesthetics and emotional satisfaction to the audience. The amalgamation of selected dances to precede a major work of musical drama is within the frame of multiculturalism, thereby, creating the concept of unity in diversity. This was corroborated by Romain (2002) who observed that:

Traditional dance in Ghana is being re-appropriated to build a national sense of unity and pride. Each dance might be the sole product of one ethnic group, but the dances are now shared with pride under the umbrella of being a Ghanaian citizen. (p. 12)

As a symbol of identity, dance is reflective of the constant conception and re-conception of self and society, thus confirming and sustaining the dynamism of culture (Opoku, 1964). Both songs and dances have deeper spiritual significance because if a singer or dancer is fully conscious of the spirituality of the songs and dances, they can serve as means of liberation and attainment of ultimate happiness (Gyonpo, 1997). Therefore, the adaptation of folk songs and folk dances in a musical drama does not only establish the conceptual construction of the novelty created but also contributes towards the use of relevant concepts in understanding

the broad spectrum of the drama performance within the socio-cultural life of the Ghanaian and the African as a whole.

2.3 Ananse in Ghanaian Folk Tradition

In Ghana, the Akan people have a storytelling tradition called *Anansesem* as earlier on translated as ‘Ananse stories’. The term is used to connote the body of stories told and also for the storytelling performance itself. Asante and Edu (2018) explained the etymology of *Anansesem* and stated:

Anansesem is an Akan word coined from two words; Ananse (the spider) and *asem* (word/statement). These two words put together, form *Anansesem* which means “tales or stories of Ananse” or “Ananse’s words” among the Akan people of Ghana. Undisputedly, the art of storytelling is a common African tradition among numerous ethnic groups in Ghana. (p. 349)

In this way, Ananse, the spider is described as a folkloric hero of whom innumerable tales are told and to whom all stories belong (Addo, 2013). Some scholars are of the view that the legend of Ananse goes beyond African folktale tradition. Judy and Morrisette (2008) for instance hold the view that Ananse is found in the Caribbean and African American tales as well and stated, “His presence is registered from Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Curacao, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and the Virgin Islands as well as the United States” (p.11). Nonetheless, the concept, *Anansegordwom* is situated within the context of Ghanaian and the African musical drama traditions.

Furthermore, Owusu (2016) identified story telling or epic narrative as a category of traditional, informal and spontaneous activity that exists in towns and villages which mostly involve the entire community or some sections of it. Undeniably, it is a community art where all the people present are usually performers in one way or the other. It therefore becomes a full traditional theatrical expression within the community. As a full traditional theatrical tradition, it is generally known that a storytelling session opens with a series of stirring songs. Earlier on, Berry and Spears (1991) studied African folktales and collected some versions of Ghanaian ones including the setting at which they are narrated and stated:

...the storyteller begins the talk with an opening formula, especially announcing that a tale is about to be told and the audience follows with some sort of response. At the end of the tale, the story teller brings the tale to a formal close. (p.1).

In fact soon after the opening, the storyteller begins to perform and from this point on, the activity is serialized, and the narrative is broken up at various moments with different songs or chants called *Mbogu* (Fante version of *mmoguo*). *Mbogu* is normally only accompanied by body movements and handclapping. This feature of storytelling can be adapted in the creation of *Anansegordwom* to situate it within the context of the Ghanaian story telling tradition. So *Mbogu* in the Ghanaian story telling tradition is used in three ways: 1) as preludes to sensitize participants and prepare the story teller. 2) as interludes, forming an integral part and as a link between different segments of the story and 3) as postludes, performed after the unfolding story. In addition, Berry (1991) also commented on the themes of African folktales and disclosed that the African stories are about animal tricksters, moralizing tales, how-and-why tales and tales that instruct. These features enumerated are true as they are concerned with verifying folktale materials in the Ghanaian communities, especially, among the Akan, Ga and Sefwi ethnic groups. Similarly, they also commented on settings of telling African stories and stated, “The original settings in which stories were told involve singing, acting, using variety of voices and audience participation” (p.16). This is to highlight the theatrical nature of African folktales, and so setting folktales into a musical drama is to formalize our tales and give them new forms to suit the taste of the 21st century audience. In contrast, Berry (1991) gave the characteristics of Western folktales and stated that “Westerners are obliged to indicate vocabulary choices, style, metaphor and other literary techniques” (p.1).

Undoubtedly, it is these stories and the embedded characteristics that have been adapted by African playwrights to establish the identity of the African in their works.

Addo (2013) for instance commented on the need for this cultural identity:

African countries began gaining political independence around the late 1950’s. After independence, there aroused an urgent need to build up nations based on the indigenous cultures. National, political, social and economic structures became a necessity to replace the damage caused by colonisation. There was a need to revive a national cultural identity so as to ensure a national unity. (p.14)

In this regard, cultural nationalism became inseparable from political nationalism of post independence and that is why Mlama (1995) stated, “National identities called for political, economic, social and cultural self-determination and national cultural identity became a necessary component of nationalism” (p.23). It became important that diaspora Africans in Ghana construct their identities along a broad spectrum of pan-African ideas. This spectrum included cultural identity cutting across the arts. This wake up call for cultural nationalism was a critical ideology of the first president of the republic of Ghana, Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. This ideology made him foster the establishment of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana On the 25th of

October, 1963. The African Genius as cited in the brochure of the 30th anniversary celebration of University of Ghana. Open day of I. A. S and the School of Performing Arts on 13th March, 1992:

This institute has now been in existence for some time, and has already begun to make its contribution to the study of African history, culture and institutions, languages and arts. It has already begun to attract to itself scholars and students from Ghana, from other African countries and from the rest of the world. (p.12)

Nkrumah again orchestrated the establishment of the Ghana Dance Ensemble which was to serve as a repository for traditional dances of Ghana and to some extent, Africa. It was also to serve as a laboratory for research findings of fellows of the institute. This wake-up call affected Africans in the Diaspora as Lake (1995) stated, "In Ghana, West Africa, revealed that diaspora Africans construct their identities along a broad spectrum of pan-African identities. While most repatriates identified with their diaspora African nationalities, they also saw themselves as belonging to a wider African community (p.21). As a result, Ghanaian plays produced dealt with themes and subject matters that were often far requiring in their moral and philosophical implication (Banham, Hill, Woodyard, Piccard & Obafemi, 1994). Most of these plays were based on the Ananse story tradition to give Ghana and Africa a new identity. Examples were Efo Kodjo Mawugbe's *Ananse-Kweku Ananse* (2004), Martin Owusu's *The Story Ananse Told* (1999) and Efua Sutherland's *The Marriage of Anansewa* (1975), among others. Sutherland for instance consequently, established a concept of theatre that could be deemed as authentically Ghanaian, ushering Ananse into the contemporary stage and called it *Anansegoro*. This innovation inspired lots of playwrights across Africa to create their own version of *Anansegoro* through modifications. Asante and Edu (2018) commented on this innovation and how it has been formalized:

Through Sutherland's experimentation, she has been able to literalize the Akan folktales into a more accepted traditional literary form which has become an inspiration for most playwrights in Africa. Sutherland's contribution has also brought focus and clarity to Ghanaian theatrical presentations which promote and projects a true reflection of Ghanaian theatre. (p.353)

Indeed, *Anansesem* became a major source material for contemporary Ghanaian authors particularly after independence when national policy of reconciling national cultures led many playwrights to abandon the Western modes of storytelling format and inculcate local myths and legends in their plays (Addo, 2013). This discussion therefore serves as the background for the establishment of a new evolution in the musical arts—*Anansegorndwom*.

2.4 Folk Material in Intercultural Music Composition

The Ghanaian culture, just like most West African cultures, has rich and variety of precompositional models derived from the various dance forms, language, polyrhythmic structures in their music as well as musical-dramatic tradition of storytelling. Agawu (1984) observed the nature of these precompositional elements in most cultures of the world:

The precompositional resource may be a system such as the hierarchical arrangement of triads that forms the basis of Western tonality, a set of formulas that generates such genres as Gregorian chant and West African storytelling, or even a rigidly defined set of relationships such as those inherent in a twelve-tone row. (p.37)

With this, Agawu is of the view that the creative art of composition is the transformation of these pre-existing materials into new, individualized structures. Undeniably, these materials may be the structures involved in the music including melodies, harmonies, rhythmic structures, forms, performance styles and ranges. Nketia (1963) also expounded the cultural context of Akan drumming in the socio-economic and political basis to include orchestration, timbre designing, performance techniques and the communicative functions of African music such as drum text syllables, proverbs and illustrations of musical instruments.

There are several works which have received attention in this direction. *Nkradi ndwom* by Ephraim Amu, *Susu w'asem kyere* by M. K. Amissah, *Alegbegbe* by Ephraim Amu, *Neem Gom* by Kofi Badu, *Monkamfo No* by J.H.K.Nketia and the like. For instance, Wang (2016) composed an opera in a form of traditional Chinese theater that combines singing, reciting, performing, acrobatics acting, and instrumental accompanying, along with rich face make-up, costume and stage setting. In dealing with the composition, he applied the pitch material drawn from the fixed instrumental accompanying patterns, the rhythmic material and tone colour from percussion ensemble performance, to compose the theme and its development. He used contrasting patterns, the legato phrases and staccato phrases, altering the rhythm, and employing various dynamics in the work to paint the characters in the opera: majestic males, delicate female roles, acrobatics, young male and female characters in the work. Although, Wang did not use any existing story, he managed to give the work a unique traditional character. Indeed, creating a traditional musical drama does not always demand the use of existing folktales but a woven story depicting situations in the community. Wang's Beijing opera, as much as possible, was situated within the indigenous tradition. *Anansegorndwom* therefore depicts an African and Ghanaian traditions culminating impressive usages of Western compositional techniques.

In another development, Petrovic (2015) composed an orchestral suite and named it *Balkanophonia*. The work is inspired by and contains allusions to Balkan folk music, more precisely Serbian and Macedonian traditional music. He used four movements for the composition orchestrated for local and foreign instruments. Drawing upon the research of ethnomusicologists, he discussed the indigenous musical scales and harmonic principles found in the source material of Balkan traditional music and utilized in the work. The work was a hybrid novelty as he was inevitably influenced by his classical musical education and knowledge of Western art music in general, however, he strove to portray the traditional sound of the Balkan folk music by using non-Western scales, thematic materials, and harmonies typical of their traditional music. *Anansegorndwom*, the perceived concept, therefore, is a hybridization of African folk music and Western classical styles, with the goal of sharing my experiences of this rich and varied tradition with a wider musical audience and try to contextualize its place in musical repertoire and the continuum of the 21st century African art music tradition.

3. The compositional model for African Musical Drama (*Anansegorndwom*)

So far, the scholarly review pulls out a conceptual but a creative model for *Anansegorndwom* composition which may become a formal structure (framework) to guide composers who wish to direct their compositions towards the creation of traditional musical dramas.

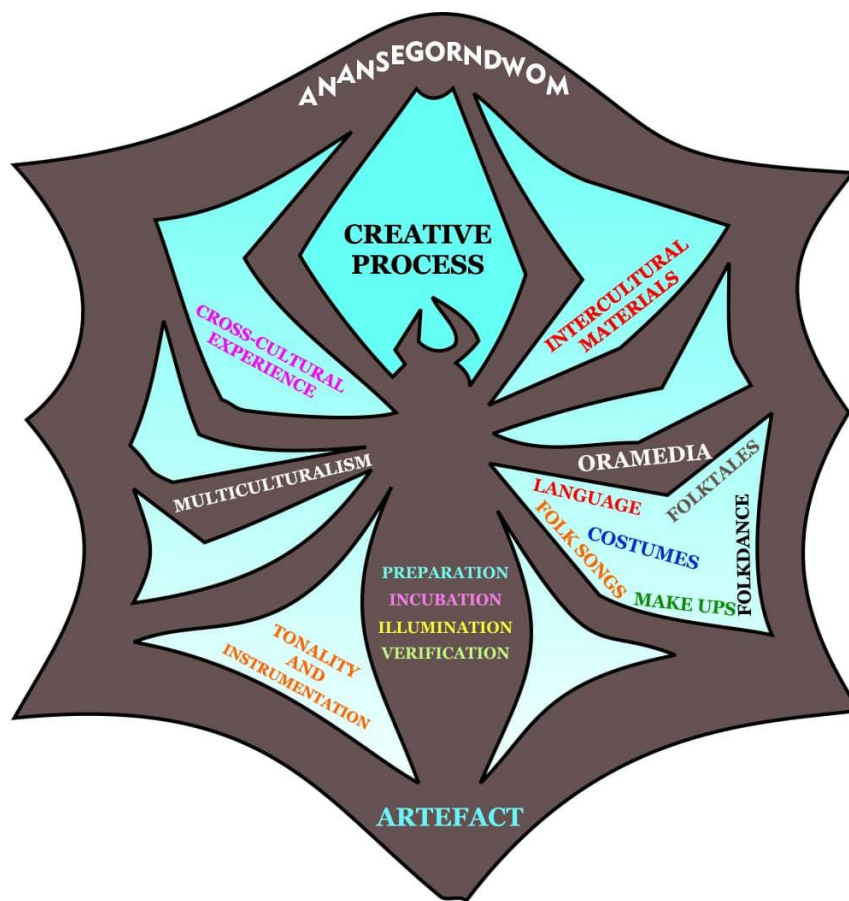


Figure 2: *Anansegorndwom* compositional model by E.O Acquah (2019)

At the onset of the creative model, there is the need for a title. This title could be carved from the plot of the story. The story could either be in a documented material, picked from the community or self-created. The intention is the musical artefact which becomes a reality through the compositional stages: preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. At the compositional stage, traditional source materials, called oramedia are needed. These may be folksongs, folk stories, folk dances as well as other traditional theatrical elements. At the left of the compositional process is the cross-cultural experience of the composer and the multiculturalism ideology which combine Western compositional style, instrumentation and tonalities (both tonal and post-tonal) with that of the indigenous modes and instrumentation for the creative work.

III. CONCLUSION

One significant, but new concept established is the compositional model that would aid the composition of musical drama in various durations and styles. Composers may not be dogmatic to the model but it would be a guide to unearth creativity in their compositions and advance the thoughts about the authenticity of musical drama in Africa. This would yield an increase in musical cinematography and filmography and expose music and theatre students to unearth their creative talents in various performing and directing styles. To put it more simply, they would be able to utilize their multi-talent abilities in their professional upliftment. It is also imperative to state that the review, with reference to the establishment of a model for creating a dramatic work in music adds to the paucity of literature in indigenous musical drama compositions in Africa. The creation of the model sets a pace for further debates in music composition and demystifies disillusion of operatic compositions in Africa. As the model ascribes, stories for the musical dramas can be created, taken from already documented folktales or collected from the field but the content needs to reflect the philosophies, expectations and historical facts of the African cultural context, as African stories articulate.

Invariably, the model sets the pace for the creation of more African dramatic works that are significant to generate employment opportunities for all within not only the music industry but the film industry. With the rapid development of modern society in the 21st century, the cultural pattern appreciated by people also tends to be simple and quick because modern people pursue for a simple and refreshing mode of recreation as well as simple excitement beyond the work and life pressure. The extremely emotional artistic form of *Anansegorndwom* is likely to grasp the inward emotions of this world of modern audiences because it conforms to the aesthetic demands of the Ghanaian cultural heritage. In effect, composers need to create their music with a traditional function in mind to maintain the idioms because, culture embodies the local idioms inherent in the traditional music and that the Western classical music elements and compositional techniques are just the acquired knowledge. Indeed, *Anansegorndwom* is a developed model that can be adopted as a framework for the composition of traditional musical dramas, either linear or nonlinear.

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