

YORUBA STUDIES REVIEW

VOLUME 9, NUMBERS 1&2,
SPRING & FALL 2024

Contents

Essays

- Identity, Displacement and Obscuring the Native Personality:
Towards Decolonising Indigenous Folks in Ìlàṣẹ Names**
Segun Omosule and Stephen Ajimisan 1
- Devising Yorùbá Terminology for Phonology Terms
(from letter S to letter Z)**
Bankale A. Oyetayo, Oye Taiwo and Olawale Rukayat 17
- The Poetics of Jíbólá Abíódún: A Dissection of Nigeria's
Sociopolitical Problems and Yorùbá World View**
Olágòkè Àlámú and Adekemi Taiwo 49
- Rhetorical Figures in Òndó Praise Chants**
Bankole Idowu Akinwande 79
- Law and Lawlessness in Yorubá Society: A Critical Analysis of Ààrẹ
Àgò Aríkúyẹrí and Adákédájó**
Ridwan Akínkúnmi Rabiú 93
- The Responsibilities of the Babaláwo-Ifá Priests in the Political
Activities and Judicial Administration in Ancient Yorùbá Society:
Lessons for Contemporary Nigeria**
Samuel Káyòdé Oláléyẹ and Julius Sunday Adekoya 107
- Creation, Preservation and Documentation of Oral Tradition in
Ancient Yorùbá and Hebraic Cultures**
Abimbola O Fagbe, Ucheawaji G. Josaih, and Eleazar E Ufomba 127

Ifa Concept on Environmental Pollution Olukemi Morenike Olofinsao	143
Yoruba Indigenous Music as Alternative Tool for Child Education Sunday Olufemi Akande	155
Some comments over the Yorùbá origins of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian Religions Emmanuel Ofuasia	165
A Literary Study of Tópẹ̀ Àlàbí's Lógán Tí Ó Dé Taiwo Opeyemi Akinduti	181

Yorùbá Studies Review (YSR)

The *Yorùbá Studies Review* is a refereed biannual journal dedicated to the study of the experience of the Yorùbá peoples and their descendants globally. The journal covers all aspects of the Yorùbá transnational, national, and regional presence, both in their West Africa's homeland and in diasporic spaces, past and present. The journal embraces all disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and the basic /applied sciences in as much as the focus is on the Yorùbá affairs and the intersections with other communities and practices worldwide. The journal will foster and encourage interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches dealing with a wide range of theoretical and applied topics including, but not limited to: cultural production, identities, religion, arts and aesthetics, history, language, knowledge system, philosophy, gender, media, popular culture, education and pedagogy, politics, business, economic issues, social policy, migration, geography and landscape, environment, health, technology, and sustainability.

Editors

Tóyìn Fálọlá, Department of History, The University of Texas at Austin.

Akíntúndé Akínyemí, Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, University of Florida, Gainesville

Àrìnpé G. Adéjùmọ, Department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

The Yorùbá Studies Review is hosted by three institutions:

The University of Texas at Austin

The University of Florida, Gainesville

The University of Ibadan, Nigeria

Editorial Assistants/Business Managers

U.S.A.: Luis Cataido luiscataido23@utexas.edu

Nigeria: Adeshina Afolayan adeshinaafolayan@gmail.com

All posted materials should be addressed to:

Editorial Office
Yorùbá Studies Review
Department of History
The University of Texas at Austin
104 Inner Campus Drive
Austin, TX 78712-0220

Subscriptions

The subscription rate in the U.S. and Canada is \$30 per copy for individuals, and \$150 for annual subscriptions for institutions. For overseas subscriptions, postage will be added.

For general inquiry, send e-mail to: toyinfalola@austin.utexas.edu

Please Note

Opinions expressed in the *Yorùbá Studies Review* **are not necessarily those of the editorial staff. The order of publication of individual articles does not imply relative merit.**

Essays

Identity, Displacement and Obscuring the Native Personality: Towards Decolonising Indigenous Folks in Ìlàjẹ Names

Segun Omosule
Department of English
Olabisi Onabanjo University
Ago Iwoye, Nigeria
omosulesegun@gmail.com

&

Stephen Ajimisan
Department of English Studies
Adekunle Ajasin University
Akungba Akoko, Nigeria
ajimisanstephen@gmail.com

Abstract

Fulfilment takes diverse forms and superimposing identity on supposed subjects who attempt to imitate whatever belongs to the impostor and considering it as the best standard they could imitate is the greatest form of satisfaction that a group of people that are not remotely connected could have from an overseas people. Apart from subsuming the identity of the people in the overall supremacy of the tiny people of an island in Britain, colonialism represents a subtle robbery of the possessions of the weak. Twenty indigenous surnames in the Ìlàjẹ/Ìkálẹ̀ communities of Ondo State exemplify the immediate and long-term goals of the colonialists. The names are interpreted and divorced of their underlying colonial undertones which seek to praise and arrogate positive vibrations to the subsisting relationship between the folks and those who colonized them. While deploying the tool of post-colonialism, the essay unravels the tool of diplomacy, exaggeration and arrogation of divine

capabilities to themselves as reasons for the holistic acceptance of the colonialists as next to God, superhuman and greater than the black folks.

Keywords: Decolonization, Post-colonialism, Identity, Indigenous, Colonialism.

Introduction

Identity is an insuperable locale behind the colonial project. This is indisputably tied to any quest for superiority by individuals or an entity whose goal is tied to the displacement of local identity of the colonized and possibly subsume it in the shadow and immanence of the colonialists or the invading stream of rampaging leeches on the host with a minimal level of symbiotic benefits to the supposed “subaltern” as the parasites annex everything without any flesh left in the host. The picture of an extraordinary being that the colonists presented to the local people probably informed the urge to elevate the invaders beyond what they were and to be equated with gods to whom they directed their prayers even to the extent of praying to be blessed with the corpses of the invaders as all their needs would be met therefrom. The political aspect of this campaign or religious diplomacy is that, while the blacks are forbidden from praying in the names of their dead ancestors because they are demonic foundational deities or tutelary spirits of the demonic ancestors of the blacks, they are entreated, coaxed to pray in the names of the unknown ancestors of the white supremacists who do not know them (blacks) while alive. Little wonder, despite the pious nature of the blacks, it seems that prayers are not answered on the soil of the blacks. Does it not sound funny or ironic? Funny or ironic as it may seem, that is the simple syllogistic truth. The ancestors of the white who never knew you or your ancestors while they were both alive cannot bless you or grant your supplications in death. Like in the opinion of Spivak, *Can the Subalterns Speak?* The Subalterns can and do speak against oppression but are speaking in the tongues and languages of their oppressors and their ancestors who misconstrue their speaking for a collective approval of the injustice against them and their all. It is to this extent that the awe with which the folks beheld the parasites that threaten to consume them could be better appreciated.

The background knowledge of the colonial enterprise and how it deploys the instrument of subjugating the supposed “objects” has exemplifications in the conscious recognition of the immanence of the colonial overlords as folks to be worshipped beyond the human beings that they were. The traces of glorification may be found in the names they bear and how they consciously but ignorantly ceded their humanity and equality for taunting the superiority of the colonists and the inferiority of the black folks. Eighteen indigenous names

have been purposively selected as manifestations of the scars left behind by the colonists and from which the folks might not recover easily.

Many Ìkálẹ̀ and Ìlàjẹ human names (anthroponymy) and names of streets or topographic locations (toponymy) still continue to propagate and celebrate colonialism, either deliberately or unconsciously. Till now, Òkè-Òyìnbó, one of the most serene and sophisticated streets (toponymy) in Òkítípupa, Ìkálẹ̀ Land named after the white man still retains its name as a symbolic glorification of colonialism, colonization, their tokens and relics. This research work, therefore, takes campaigns for decolonization to another level. It is thus a radical repudiation of long-standing impositions of colonial names on indigenous figures or geographical locations (toponymy) which is a deification of the subsisting relics of colonialism and colonization in the guise of modern, Christianized, Westernized, civilized and Europeanized onomastics. This is tantamount to hero-worshipping or celebration of one's oppressors.

Concepts and Definitions

Decolonization of indigenous names in Africa is a tasking endeavor. It involves convincing the victims that the colonial onslaught is a cause which their names glorify and that the unhealed wounds may further exacerbate the pains emerging from that gory tale of invasion of a peaceful people. It involves allowing the aura of colonialism to die with the exit of the colonial masters and whatever was associated with the era. It becomes tasking to convince the bearers of the names that they are carriers and manifestations of the project for which humanity suffers an infraction that may not be totally removed from the garments of the victims. The idea of superiority that the colonial drivers brought on the sensibility of their victims takes from them the knowledge of the evil that the encounter represented. The local folks were first dehumanized, castigated, and reduced to beasts, which was meant to pave way for the imposition of the almightiness of the white colonists. What may not have been visible to the colonized was the intention of the invaders who came in the toga of messiahs and hid their colonizing mission behind the genteel aura of the civilized. It becomes questionable why the colonized fell in love with the folks who chose to reduce their humanity. Programming the minds of the subjects was a potent instrument in the relegation of the folks in the desired elevation of the colonialists. Diplomacy was at the root of the project and might not be removed from careful manipulation of the people to achieve the desired glorification of the white skinned folks.

Iain McLean *et al* (2003) define decolonization as “the form of regime shift, a changed relationship between the colonizing power and colony, usually in the context of the end of European empires in the developing world

after the pressures of the second world war.” (136). The history of colonialism was that of manipulation, elevation of the colonists to the level of gods and whose intervention was indispensable to the uplift of the indigenous folks who were contacting the outside world at a full scale. The relics of the encounter between the colonists and the indigenous folks’ relics of which is the attempt by the study to demystify the claim of superiority is synonymous with the endeavor tagged decolonization. The folks who were considered the other were not privy to the unwholesome activities of the colonists whose friendly demeanor pointed at their humanitarian agenda alone and never the economic and ideological propensity of the project.

Ìlájẹ and Ìkálẹ fall under the Yoruba tribe subsisting in Ondo State, Western part of Nigeria. Folks in this part of the country honor their names and this they base on their household panegyrics. According to Ajao, Folashade Anita *et al* (2020), names are “emblems of identity that show lineage, professions, and history of the Yoruba group.” (487). This explains why values are attached to names so much care is exercised to prevent such precious names from being soiled. Family members have no scruple in disowning anyone who may put the name of the family at risk, especially for behaviors that they consider untoward. From the perspective of Ajao *et al*, names are “fundamental feature of cultural values.” (487).

The inference from the above is that the values that the colonized expressed in the names that reflect their respect and awe with which they hold the white imperialists. Even when ignorance cannot be ruled out in this regard, it is fundamental to the veneration of the slave master in order to be politically informed. No doubt, the colonial question is a permanent disruption of the cultural cohesion subsisting in the milieu prelude to the adventure of the colonists to the African cultural, social and political space. The ingrained stain that strikes the psychological sophistication of the individual is transparently targeted at the younger generation who are made to believe that their original is to be dreaded and abhorred. It should be imagined how the literal interpretation of the colonial diplomacy informed nomenclatures such as *Òyìnbójune* (the white man is greater than us); *Òyìnbó-ho-ẹgwà-dòpò* (the white man has made beauty or cosmetics relatively easy); *Òyìnbó-tẹ-ayé-bí-ẹní* (the white man has spread out the world like a mat), in terms of mechanization, could be accepted as a stereotypical gospel truth that is transferred from one generation to another. These and innumerable other folk names are corollaries of colonial mentalities, hence the need to decolonize the mindset of the indigenous folks that some of the things arrogated to Westernization or Christianization are nothing but mirages.

A cursory look at the foundation and origin of the preceding names *Òyìnbójune* which literally translates to “the white man is greater than us” and

numerous others show that magical performances or mystical accomplishments by one of the white men at the arena during an indigenous festival. With the connivance of the interpreter who was the mediatrix between the colonists and the folks, they capitalized on the aura of excitement to conclude that the white man was superior. Racially informed hypotheses have been adduced for the colonialism, slavery, racism, social Darwinism and racial eugenics. However, whatever may be considered to be differences in human endowments across races are not biologically informed but mere social constructs that are tied to the environments of the individual.

The conclusion from that hasty claim is a flagrant negation of the biological endowments of peoples of the world. There is no proof that the white people or the Caucasians are innately superior to the black folks. The difference in the level of advancement between the two may be tied to the time of evolution or advent, exposure to science and research; and leadership problems. Some of the claims or enshrinements of the supposedly superior colonial toga or awe are products of exaggerations and phantasmagorical conjectures which find expressions in perpetuated inferiority complexes of some black folks. For instance, when Revd. Father Conquad of the first Catholic Church in Abeokuta healed a person of malaria, he was credited and honored with the title *Oba Isegun* (king of medicine) of Ègbàland. Some Ìlàjẹ men who heard of the exaggerated and over-harped or mega-phoned success in medicine named the Catholic cleric *Òyìnbó-parí-ògùn*, which means the white man is the Alpha and Omega of medicine and healing.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this paper shall be post-colonialism. The post in post-colonialism is a reference to the aftermath of the encounter that left the indigenous people traumatized consequent upon the visitation of the colonial representatives from Britain whose goal was to extend their sphere of influence to the territories in Africa under the guise of civilizing the folks and because of their supposed inferior intellectual endowments and their own taunted superiority. It needs to be imagined what the colonialists would have told the black folks before they could come up with the conclusion of the superiority of the white race. If they still parade their delusion about their superiority in the twenty first century, there would be no doubt that they would have brought the parochial claim of Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) about the superiority of the white race in terms of the blacks' lack of imaginative power.

The agenda of the white race finds fulfilment in the Ìkálẹ̀ and Ìlàjẹ enclave to taunt the theory of the superiority of the colonizing mission. It must be paraded that the colonists were intellectually superior to the black folks if they

were to gain acceptance. Francis Galton (1822-1911) through his theory of eugenics equally became a tool for the bloated imagination of the white folks, especially as he considered the white race superior. Post-colonialism seeks to find answers to the negative narratives, reconstruct the parochial colonial structure in order to present the true and the other version from the supposed voiceless people.

Post-colonialism represents an effort at retelling the twisted tales of humanitarianism foisted on the unsuspecting black folks at the arrival of the cancer of colonialism. This struggle to revisit the legacies of the colonial project cannot be too late in redressing the wrongs heaped on the hapless folks who were visibly excited that some white folks had come to dwell with them. The mistaken identity of the visitation for unqualified development was a mistake that lingers till the moment. The amplification and advancement of the erstwhile unheard folks which is tantamount to the “other” is significantly important in educating the folks about the ills of glorifying their oppressors who saw no good in them through their names. Olaniyan (2015) provides a credible authority to the task that must be undertaken in the same manner as the colonial enterprise. According to him, “these struggles are centuries old, and as we all know, are sadly still ongoing” (639).

Application/Analysis

The colonial project of annihilating indigenous identities and implantation of theirs may be adjudged a success as exemplified by the names of the folks in the colonies. Nowhere was the relationship between the colonists and the indigenous folks brought to this alarming proportion than in the Ìlàjẹ and Ìkálẹ communities of Ondo State as the folks lost their own identities in the overbearing authority of the white folks. The success of the enterprise may be found in the influx of alien onomastics and English names that took over, usurped and continue to dominate the indigenous naming system, the practice which subsists as a manifestation of conversion into Islam and Christianity. A result of the plan to totally erase the folks from any form of recognition of their identity is the campaign to introduce English names as preferable to the indigenous names. It is not out of place, therefore, to see folks with middle English names.

With the campaign to stigmatize and demonize everything that is indigenous about the people, and consider it evil or sources of backwardness, folks began to name their newly born kids after biblical characters and the English folks in the indigenous communities. This implantation of foreign onomastic on Ìlàjẹ/Ìkálẹ communities was cocooned in the guise of “being born again” or having spiritual rebirth or renaissance. This vaingloriously vaunted rebirth

only finds expression and manifestation in just the change of name which does not in any way find reflection in the change of the inner beings or essence of the supposedly changed man and woman into new beings or creatures. This toga or myth of the politics of naming and re-christening of the changed beings have been punctured and demythologized as we constantly encounter most of the supposedly changed beings indulging in several anti-social and morally untoward acts. This is typical of the parable of changing the containers and not the contents.

The moral, social and political metamorphosis achieved in the change of name does not transcend the outward or superficial appearance of referents of the names. It therefore, suffices to submit that the purported change of names, when viewed through postcolonial theoretical binoculars, is strategically and tactfully orchestrated by "the good others"(the white folks/overlords), for the purpose of eroding and corroding the eternally collectivized identities of "the demonic others"(the black folks). This diplomatic war against the black folks was precipitated by the awareness of the white folks that a people's collective destiny is tied to their collective identity betokened by their names and onomastics. This discovery also extends to the power of one's roots and identity on his/her existence and accomplishments which can be impeded only through distorted adulterated identity. The insidious propensities of the white folks to wage wars of existence and extinction against the black folks is deliberately geared toward the thorough annihilation of the folks by carrying on alien identities that are inimical to their collective prosperity and existence.

It would be foolhardy to conclude that the colonial enterprise was solely geared towards economic pillage. It was meant to erase the subjects from their own identities and fuse them into the culture of the master through language, culture, practices and religious beliefs. The colonial project took a subtle diplomatic form though in the English-speaking West African colonies where indirect rule and as the case might be direct rule was the vogue. It was more apparent in the French West African countries where the policy of assimilation and association was imposed on the folks. The policy as it was in the British West African countries was meant to obliterate the cultures, languages and whatever effigies of self-recognition might be attainable and permissible to the black folks. Like the tool of religious indoctrination, the desire was the imposition of the way of life of the British on the people of the *Ìlájẹ* and *Ìkálẹ* communities. The first item on the list of colonially informed and Caucasoid-morphic names is *Ayéòyìnbóyọ̀nìjẹ* which translates to (the comfort of the white is worth living in). The non-recognition of the Greeks' gifts in what they take to be innocuous presents from the colonial masters may have informed the hasty conclusion that the life they had in their romance with the white was so pleasant even when they would pay dearly for these.

The conclusion in the names they gave to their children consequent upon their interactions with the colonialists was hasty, ill-informed, and out of touch with the reality of every encounter with the colonists whose mission was to steal, kill and reduce the humanity in the folks. It is characteristic of the Yorùbá folks to name themselves after their professions, the cult to which they belong to and the divinatory activities to which they are associated. Ajimisan Ola Stephen (2022) opines that Ìlájẹ names are usually full sentences that are “evolved through the morphological processes of clipping and contraction of long and full sentences into poetic, epigrammatic and epistemologically rich these...” (31). Corroborating Ajimisan (2022), a particular example of such clippings found at the Òde Ìrèlẹ̀ milieu is *Bóyìnbólòṅròfún*; a literal translation of the name simply traces the encounter of the individual with some white men at Òròfún. The history of the name showed that the man named Adéwẹ̀bi bought a gun from a white man and that cemented their relationship. To remember that business encounter, he prided himself in the relationship with the white folks at Òròfún. Ajimisan (2022) identifies indigenous Ìlájẹ names as “rich in philosophical sagacity, meaning postulations and pragmatically deep forms, capable of passing fully and creatively didactic messages and admonitions.” (31).

No doubt, the awe at which the indigenous folks saw the imperialists was quite intimidating. The result of that encounter must have informed the second notable name *Òyìnboháyédèrò* which literally translates to the white smoothens or enhances existence. The attachment of the white colonialists to this name is economically and sociologically determined. What with the level of development of the colonialists and the virgin, rural nature of the black folks, it was not outlandish for a form of veneration from a people who were hitherto not known to be exposed to western education. *Òyìnbólókáyéjá* was a form of recognition of the immanence of the white folks in view of their relative development possibly based on the presentation of gifts that were relatively unknown in the milieu. It was a marvel to behold some of the ornaments that the white folks used to dazzle the indigenous people of the Ìkálẹ̀ and Ìlájẹ communities.

Such folks who ravaged the land in their quests for slaves could not be instrumental in the peaceful co-existence of the people. They were detrimental to the harmony subsisting in the land. The task at hand by the white colonists was both intellectual and psychological warfare. It was intellectual in that they portrayed themselves as more endowed than any other race. It was psychological because they needed to conquer the individual mentally in order to inject whatever they wanted them to believe. It is better imagined if attempts are being made in the twenty first century to further the lies of superiority of one race over others what the lies could have been in the dark ages when the

indigenous folks had no means of disproving the lies that were traded and sold to them wholesale. Gayatri Spivak (2003) recognizes the violence in the collaboration of the “subject” which is a subtle reference to the leeches; and the “objects” that are at the receiving end of the colonial enterprise. The goal is the total “erasure” of the “other;” another name for the “object.” This erasure is synonymous with the total obliteration of the identity of the unsuspecting “objects” whose simple nature and accommodating disposition prevent from recognizing the invisible quest or the underhand cleft of hand and goal for the suppression of the “objects” in the relationship. As a project for the total erasure of the identity of the objects or the other, Gayatri (2003) identifies the goal of “asymmetrical obliteration of the trace of the other in its precarious subjectivity.” (2). This is akin to what Ajimisan (2021) describes in his collection of poems ‘Ngugi Wa Thiongo’s “Testament wherein he questions the black act of praying to foreign gods or deities in native tongues and praying to the native deities in foreign language” (5).

Òyìnbóhàngbà (the white improves the season) smacks of exaggeration of the nature and behaviors of the colonialists to the local folks whose sprawling edifices were destroyed all over Africa. The mindless looting of artifacts during the Benin expedition of 1897 reveals the underlying intentions of the white men. The storage of such artifacts in the museums the world over belies the desirability of the colonialists in the local environments of Africa. Another inference from the looting spree is the self-negation of the narrative of barbarity with which the African folks were dressed. One wonders if the artistic work would have appealed to the white folks if they were actually devoid of aesthetic appeal. The conclusion from that development is that the Africans were educated in their own way as to fashion artistic works that are considered worthy of monuments in world rated museums.

The folks who came with arms and ammunition could not have come with good intentions. The spoilage and malicious destruction of the palaces of the traditional rulers in their bid to steal artifacts cannot be anything but devilish. The peaceful atmosphere subsisting in the milieu was disrupted and changed to carnage, bloody murder of folks who expressed the least resistance. The ignorance of the claimant is not to be blamed on him anyway. He concluded on the basis of the divide and rule policy of the colonialists who chose to approbate and reprobate at the same time. The policy was a successful in the southwest because they found ready ally with the monarchs such as Larogbo, the indigenous ruler of Akotogbo in Ondo State who was the intermediary between the white folks and the people. He was renowned for the trade by barter with the slave traders; thereby exchanging his people for salt.

The white folks who ravaged the land in their quests for slaves could not be instrumental in the peaceful co-existence of the people. They were agents

of destabilization of the harmony subsisting in the African world. As agents of displacements, the colonialists severed relationships between fathers and their kids. They threw their humanity to the wind and herded thousands into ships that could hardly accommodate a few hundred. The mind-boggling maltreatment that the slave drivers instilled on the body and psychological sophistication of the enslaved could better be imagined. They were detrimental to the harmony subsisting in the land. The task at hand by the white colonists was both intellectual and psychological warfare. It was intellectual in that they portrayed themselves as more endowed than any other race. It was psychological because they needed to conquer the individual mentally to inject whatever they wanted them to believe. It is better imagined if attempts are being made in the twenty-first century to further the lies of superiority of one race over another. What the lies would have been in the dark ages when the indigenous folks had no means of disproving the lies that were traded and sold to them wholesale can better be imagined.

Oyinbohanwa (the white man is of good virtue) is a wrong notion of who a thief could be. The intention of the thief, as the bible claims, is to kill and steal. Whatever good intentions might be adduced to them was misinformed. What good manner could be inherent in someone who would kill without moral scruple? The picture is far from that of a well-mannered individual. Apart from the orchestrated image of the African folk who is barbaric and uneducated, the true story is that of folks who have been trained to accommodate strangers as contained in the original book of morality finding expression in Ifa. In the Ifa chapter named *Òtúrà Górí Ìrètẹ̀*, the folks are quite accommodating that they welcome strangers with open arms. The orgy that was unleashed on the black folks during the era of colonialism was tantamount to subtle terrorism. It, therefore, calls for a well sponsored project of subtle deprogramming the folks who, unconscious of the ills of the encounter, still parade names that celebrate their oppressors. Deprogramming, according to Maerloo (2020) is a form of mind control consequent upon the harsh measures unleashed on the people such as brutal killings of opponents, banishments of their traditional rulers who were held in awe and veneration, coercion, sale of false information and rape of the mind.

At the approach of a stranger, they are not unmindful of the place of the stranger in the development of the land. It is not out of place to find them, invite strangers and admonish folks to treat them with kindness, especially in the axiom that that it is the stranger that constitutes the second part of the town *Àlejòlèkèjùlú*. The presence of the white colonists must have excited them but quite unwary of their intentions to steal and kill and lord it over the folks. *Àjòjìgbòrògòdò, bá mi tún ilẹ̀ yí sẹ*, (*Àjòjìgbòrògòdò* stranger, tall stranger, help me to develop this land). This attitude of the folks is quite at a

contradistinction to the racist, unaccommodating stance of the whites in all ramifications. Ample texts exist to confirm the growing industrial organizations in the pre-colonial Africa as testaments to the widespread civilization of the people prior to the colonial onslaught on the continent, particularly the Ìkálẹ̀/Ìlájẹ̀ enclave. Chinoso, Ihuoma (2020) provides illuminating hints on the industrial developments in the western region of Nigeria prelude to the era of the colonialists. According to him, “industrial development in Yoùbáland, like in every other part of West Africa, began long before the coming of colonial powers.” (453). The above claim was corroborated by Callaway, A (1965) in his assertion that manufacturing was at a level of “import-substituting activities” (28-51). It was reported that the colonial government was selfish in legislating against the local production of some goods such as could be produced overseas. For instance, there was no effort at promoting the industrial development of the indigenous industries. Rather, as Atul Kohli (2004) reports, “the colonial government on occasions violated the norms of laissez-faire state when it actively discouraged certain types of local manufacturing activities.” (311). Folks who were protective of their industrial concerns at the expense of the local industries cannot be equated with a savior. Rather, they were driven by their personal, selfish and parochial needs.

According to Abdul R. Jan Mohamed (2003), the efforts of the colonialists at painting a rosy picture of the well-mannered stranger was for “the security of his own cultural perspective.”(18). What that may seem to achieve is the “European signification” which at best is motivated by the desire to conquer and dominate.” (18). The propelling spirit, therefore, cannot be divorced from the selfish attitude of the overall interest of the colonialists above any other interest. Armed with the mission statement of the project, it could not have been initiated without the spur to project the superiority of the invading army and the inferiority of the dominated territory, the quest was to present a larger-than-life image of the white folks and the demeaning, beastly state of the colonized. Consequently, based on what the black folks were told, it was not unusual for such conclusions to be reached knowing the subtle diplomacy at the disposal of the colonialists.

Ugbayinbohan (the season of the white is favorable) was a reflection of what the folks were told about the civilizing mission of the colonialists. The good-natured white folks who induced fear of hell on the folks and the promise of eternal life full of bliss cannot be anything but liars. The colonial project was informed by the need to sell the idea of superiority to the innocent black folks. It is unthinkable that the sojourn from the western world to Africa was simply informed by adventure. No one would spend that much and lose manpower for the sake of sightseeing. The project was a robust one from which the continent may not easily recover in view of the volume of money

it consumed, and the number of decades involved in the programming of the mind of the black folks. The concept of superiority that is the main crust of the colonial project was carefully encapsulated in the achievement of perpetual domination of the black folks through religions, education, naming system, the stereotype of the black color as representing evil just as white represents everything that is desirable in the physical and spiritual ramifications. While the black folks till today stick to the standards that the colonists left behind in terms of religion, the white folks who propagated the religions seem to have moved on. It is not an exaggeration that they have moved on so that one question whether they ever believed in the religious dogmas that they introduced to us in the first place.

Ológhò-tó-pa-òyìn bó means the wealthy black man tows the path of the white man. This name smacks of the tendentious propensities of the black folks in Ìlájẹ̀ to also attribute wealth and its sources to the white folks. In deeper sense of it, the name connotes that, that black man, the referent of the name became wealthy only because he followed the instructions and wealth creation tips of the white man and that other black folks who wish to be wealthy like him must strive to follow the path of the white man. It is outlandish for the oppressed to celebrate the oppressors. This is no doubt the case in the avowed impetus given to the white colonialists in the naming system of the folks in the Ìkálẹ̀/Ìlájẹ̀ milieu where such names celebrate the colonial oppressors. The reason might be difficult to explain but the agenda of imposition and relegation of the indigenous people might be a ready reason behind the ugly development. The drive for imposition of the trope of power is rightly directed at the aged, the young and the vulnerable in the sale of the white man's agenda. The history left behind by the colonialists was well orchestrated to achieve the perpetuation of the legacy of colonialism which could be better registered through the nomenclatures given to phenomena and the individuals who parade the affirmations that the white men were desirable in all ramifications.

Òyìn bódayépò (the white man unites the world) even though they fan the ember of *racism*. This name was coined after it was discovered that with the evolution of the Internet, the entire wide world has been amalgamated into a compartmentalized or global village that can be circumnavigated in few seconds or nanoseconds depending on the availability of Internet network. A negation of the above name is the report that the colonialists “discouraged local textile manufacturing by imposing tolls on caravans carrying local goods but not on those carrying British goods” (Carl, Lidholm, 1970: 57). Such was the competition between the British imperialists and the local folks who should be in the position to exact taxes on the foreigners but became those who bore the burden of the taxes.

Ayé-òyìnbó-yòn-ijẹ (the comfort/luxury of the white is worth living or being immersed in). *A-rú-run-bóyìnbó-ṣe-egwere* (one who claims filial affinity with the white at the sight of material wealth). This became the title of the Amapetu of Mahin Land. This is a part of the praise poetry or accolades of the Amapetu, the monarch of Mahin Land in Ìlàjẹ Local Government Area of Ondo State. The origin of the titular name dated back to the earliest periods of colonization in which the reigning Amapetu submitted to the authority of the white men operating in Ìlájeland, against the entreaties of other Ìlájẹ monarchs and subsequently instigated colonial skirmishes against other Ìlájẹ monarchs who resisted colonial domination and intrusions into traditional governance of their kingdoms. He switched his allegiance, loyalty and bond to the white men immediately they arrived Ìlájẹ Land and betrayed every iconoclastic or dissenting personality or voice. The skirmishes and betrayal culminated into the exile of the then Olúgbo, Oba Mafimisebi 1, who resisted colonial domination of his Kingdom at the expense of his life and throne in Calabar.

Òyìnbó-jù-nẹ is a name that epitomizes the exemplification of over-bearing or domineering clouts arrogated to the Caucasians by the black folks, who, all in the name of eulogizing the awe or the mystiques of the white have elevated them seemingly to the status of gods. Another of such names is *Ọlókò-l'Ọlórún* which means he who owns a boat/car is God/god. The reference to *Ọlókò* in the name is to one white man who was believed to be the first to ride both a caravan and an engine-powered boat in one anonymous Ìlájẹ settlement. The name was evolved as a panegyric for extolling the lofty and enviable feats of the said anonymous white man.

A-bóyìnbó-lò means he who hobnobs, cohabitates or fraternizes with the white men. This name constitutes cognomen, alias name or surname of some people who celebrate their exploits and accomplishments believed to be made possible or to have been garnered through their fond and timely fraternization with the Caucasians which they celebrate as a saving grace. The colonial mentality that must be dismantled is the tendency to link or anchor one's accomplishments and prosperity on the imposed fraternization with the white man and by being totally Eurocentric in all their doings. One of the infamous activities of the colonialists was the discriminatory trade policies such as the “enforced stringent regulations and exacted heavy trade licenses on the marketing of African produce” (James, Coleman, 1958: 83).

Òyìnbó-ròkun means the white man has bought or conquered the sea as his personal belongings. It is another exemplary name that presupposes the might or power of the white man to conquer, buy or dominate the sea by building on it and navigating it at will, even when it is tempestuously raging. This name portends that the white men also possess the geniality and mysticism of ruling and riding upon the wings of the vast incomprehensible sea. It follows,

therefore, that, for one to conquer the sea, one must imbibe the ways and culture of the white man. *Obinrẹn-Òyìnbó* is one of the female names with *Òyìnbó*-motif in it. It is a name that arrogates impeccable beauty to the white people alone. The name is characteristically given to a very cute, fairly complexioned lady as a way of claiming that such an immaculate beauty cannot be found in the land of the blacks but only in the land of the white.

A-yọ-ojú-òyìnbó (one who removes the eyeballs of the white man for magic or metaphysical powers) was given to a man from Feyijimi family at Ipepe in Ìlájẹland. It is the only name given as an alias name to the man in celebration of his geniality and smartness which has snowballed into the ability to either openly or surreptitiously remove the eyeballs of the white man without eliciting racial skirmishes or war. Among the list of the names analyzed, only this name shows the superiority of the black over the white. Despite the perceived entrenchment of the potency of the black magic or mystiques, from the name, it is still clear that the charms or the African Juju can be more potent only when the human part of a white man (not of a black man) is added. *Ara-oy-inbo* is also another example of such names. It means the style or fashion and innovativeness of the white man celebrated as the most perfect style or innovation in vogue, incomparable in any way to those of the blacks.

Post-colonialism is an assumption that the colonial project left some ingrained marks that venerated the unholy activities of the colonists and that such should be deconstructed and laid bare to remove the wool from the eyes of the innocent, unsuspecting folks that met with the invaders. Rather than written records in the Ìkálẹ̀/Ìlájẹ milieu, the indoctrination of the folks left an indelible mark on the psyche of the people finding expression in the names they bear and continue to celebrate thereby presenting the colonists as humane individuals unlike the thieves and plunderers that they were. Where cultural history does not exist to corroborate the colonial narratives, the negative sensitization that the white folks induced in the people informed the lies in the names that further complement the colonial ideologies.

Conclusion

Findings from the purposively selected names analyzed above for the purpose of stridently accentuating and amplifying our campaign for the decolonization of indigenous onomastics are revelatory that the onomastics of a culture is hinged on the people's belief in the power of names on the fortune and misfortune of the referents. This is because, one is what one calls oneself or what one allows others or the world around one to call oneself. Armed with this existential apocalypse, the white wage war against the fortune of the blacks by tactfully and peacefully wedging their sledgehammer on their collective

identity through naming convention and systems. The names analyzed above also reveal how some black folks have also surrendered themselves as instruments of identities by adopting Eurocentric anthroponymy and toponymy that are Caucasoid-morphic and perpetuate the gratuitous holier-than-thou clouts or supremacist tendency on the black soil even decades after freedom from colonization.

Postcolonial repositioning of the grand narrative of the colonial master as having the relegation of indigenous folks to the level of barbarity and the elevation of the white folks as indispensable in the quest for the civilization of the rural communities obviously deserves a revisit. This is achievable through the postcolonial theory of re-writing, re-visioning and reviewing the relics of the colonial enterprise which left the folks as mere amplifiers of what they should have discredited. The unwritten history of that encounter may be subtly garnered through the examination of the names and nomenclatures that bear vestiges of colonialism. The endeavor is thoroughly successful as the research is another means of uncovering the ideology of presenting the indigenous folks as barbaric and dregs of the earth who could not have survived without the intervention of the colonialists and thereby presenting the colonial project as indispensable, worthy of the pins and justified in the pockets of violence meted out to the recalcitrant folks while it lasted.

References

- Abdul R. Janmohamed. "The Economy of Manichean Allegory". In *The Post-colonial Studies: Reader*. Ashcroft Bill *et al*, (ed.). London: Routledge: Taylor and Francis. 2003.
- Ajimisan, Stephen. "Onomastics as Didactics: Admonition Motif in Selected Ìlàjẹ Surnames and the Significance in Moral Education" in *Educational Thought*. Vol 11Number 1, August, 2022. A Publication of the Institute of Education; Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko. 2022
- Ajimisan, Stephen. *Forty Testaments for our Dearest Drifting Dome*. Lagos: Caltop, 2021.
- Ajao, Folashade Anita *et al*. "Customization of Yoùbá` names on social media and its Socio-Linguistics Implications on Cultural Values" in *Yoruba Nation and Politics Since the Nineteenth Century: Essays in Honour of Professor J. A. Atanda*, Toyin Falola *et al* (ed.). Austin: Pan-African University Press. 2020.

- Atul, Kohli. *State-Directed Development, Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery*. London: Cambridge University press. 2004.
- Callaway, A. "From Traditional Crafts to Modern Industries" in *Odu: Journal of Yoùbá and Related Studies*. Vol 2, 1, 1965: 28-51.
- Carl, Lidholm. "The Influence of Colonial Policy on the Growth and Development of Nigeria's Industrial Sector" in *Growth and Development of the Nigerian Economy*, Lidholm and Eicher, (eds.). East Lansing: Michigan State University Press. 1970.
- Chinoso, Ihuoma, "Obafemi Awolowo and industrial development in Western Region" in *Yoùbá Nation and Politics Since the Nineteenth Century: Essays in Honour of Professor J. A. Atanda*, Toyin Falola et al (ed.). Austin: Pan-African University Press. 2020.
- Ian Mclean et al. *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2003.
- Gayatri, Chakravorty Spivak. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *The Post-colonial Studies: Reader*.
- Ashcroft Bill et al, (ed.). London: Routledge: Taylor and Francis. 2003.
- James, Coleman. *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1958.
- Olaniyan, Tejumola. "Postmodernity, Post coloniality, and African Studies" in Ato, Quayson, Olaniyan, Tejumola et al. *African Literature: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 2015.

Devising Yorùbá Terminology for Phonology Terms (*from letter S to letter Z*)

Bankale A. Oyetayo, Oye Taiwo, and Olawale Rukayat
Department of Linguistics and African Languages
University of Ibadan, Nigeria
tayo18bankale@yahoo.com; oyepaultaiwo@gmail.com

Abstract

In this final part of our report, which is part four (4) on the formulation Yorùbá phonology terms for their English counterparts, we discuss terms from letters **S** to **Z** of English phonology and give their Yorùbá equivalents.¹ Eighty-five (84) terms, numbered from 279 to 363, are given in this last report. 278 had been reported in three previous parts which covered letters **A** to **R**, Numbers 1 to 104 covering letter **A** to **G** were reported in part one, part two has numbers 105 to 186 from letters **H** to **O** while letters **P**, **Q** and **R** are reported in part three from number 187 to number 278. In carrying out this research, we extracted phonology terms in English from three phonology textbooks and two specialized/technical dictionaries on linguistics and phonology. The Yorùbá equivalents of these terms were devised using the *Information Processing Model* (IPM) framework. Some of the terms developed are secondary articulation *ìsénupè keji*, sibilant *afòòsépè*, Sonority Hierarchy *Ìpele Ìdún*, spirantization, *isodàfúnnupè*, stress language *èdè alátémó*, subsidiary features *àbùdá aṣègbè*, Syncope *ipàró-fáwèlì-je*, tense [+tense] *Àṣípápè/ aṣìṣanpè [+ipá]*, ternary feature *àbùdá alójúmetá*, transparent rule *òfin ahànde (à-hàn-sóde)*, unary feature *àbùdá alójúkan*, underspecification *isodotò-àyoóṣé (à-yo-sílé)*, Valency *ìye-ìwúlò*, weight-to-stress principle, *Ìlànà ìwúwo-sí-àtémó*

1 See *Yoruba – The Journal of Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria*, Volume 12:1, January 2023 and Volume 12:2, June 2023 for the first 2 of the four-part essays, and the journal *Yoruba Studies Review*, 8:2, 2023 for the third essay.

Keywords: Yorùbá phonology terms, Terminology creation, Information Processing Model

Introduction

In this final part of our research report on developing Yorùbá terms for phonology, we give the Yorùbá counterparts of English phonology terms from letters **S** to **Z** which contained a total of eighty-four (84) terms numbered from 279 to 363. In our previous reports, 278 had been reported from part one to part three which covered letters **A** to **R**. We reported 104 terms in part one, numbers 1 to 104 covering letter **A** to **G**, in part two we reported 81 terms from number 105 to number 186 which covered letters **H** to **O**, while 91 terms were discussed in part three of our report which covered letters **P**, **Q** and **R** from number 187 to number 278. At the back of our mind in carrying out this research are the principles for term creation such as transparency, clinical cognition, explicitness, term uniqueness, felicity condition, linguistic economy, consistency of form and meaning, and relation to subject field.

Research Methodology

We extracted phonology terms from the following texts: Oyebade (2008) *A Course in Phonology*, Hyman (1975) *Phonology, theory and analysis*, Goldsmith (1976) *Autosegmental Phonology*, Crystal (2008) *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*, Trask (1996) *A Dictionary of Phonetics and Phonology*. Yorùbá equivalents were devised using the IPM framework. We also consulted some user groups as well as some existing Yorùbá terminology documents such as Bámgbósé (ed.) (1984) *Yorùbá Metalanguage volume 1*, Awóbùlúyì (ed.) (1990) *Yorùbá Metalanguage volume 2*, *Dictionary of Modern Yorùbá and Quadrilingual Glossary of Legislative Terms*.

Theoretical Framework: *Information Processing Model (IPM)*

We adopted Owólabí (2004) *Information Processing Model (IPM)* for term creation. IPM is a theory that explains the linguistic configuration and the steps involved in term creation especially for a Yorùbá term. In developing the strategy, Owólabí (2006, p.44) asserts that:

While current devices for formulating new terms in native languages can be said to be somewhat viable, the way in which some of them are applied is not strictly in conformity with the principle of insightfulness which is one of the hallmarks of a linguistic approach ...

Organization of the IPM

The IPM operates in five steps that interact by feeding relationship to derive a target term. The five steps are divided into two interrelated aspects: a Semantic Aspect (SA) and the Derivational Aspect (DA). As Owólabí puts it, the SA covers the steps 1-3, while the DA covers the steps 4-5. In elucidating the model, Owólabí (2004, pp.402-404) says

Given this source we can formulate the corresponding Yorùbá term from it, step by step thus:

Step 1: This involves stating the relevant meaning(s) of the source term.

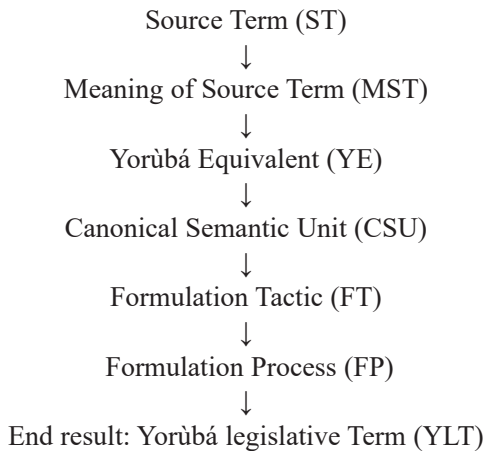
Step 2: This involves the giving of the Yorùbá equivalent(s) of the meaning(s) of the source term in step 1.

Step 3: This involves extrapolating the canonical semantic unit(s), from the Yorùbá equivalent(s) obtained according to step 2 which may be partly covert. A canonical semantic unit is the unit chosen as a “target” by virtue of the fact that it provides the basic semantic information (the building blocks) for the purposes of creating Yorùbá legislative terms.

Step 4: Involves application of the relevant tactics to the canonical semantic units obtained according to step 3 for the purposes of concatenating such units or converting them into another form.

Step 5: Involves application of the relevant processes (phonological and / or morphological) to limit the length of the concatenated structure produced according to step 4 for the purposes of obtaining the required Yorùbá term.

These steps could be summarized as follows:



ST:	elect
Step 1: MST:	to choose/select by vote for an office, position etc.
Step 2: YE:	di ìbò yàn sí ìpò
Step 3: CSU:	di : ìbò : yàn
Step 4: FT:	composition: di + ìbò + yàn
Step 5: FP:	contraction: di + ìbò+ yàn → dibò + yàn
YLT:	dibò – yàn

ST:	elected government
Step 1: MST:	a government that was chosen by vote for a political job
Step 2: YE:	ìjòba tí a di ìbò yàn láti şe òṣèlú
Step 3: CSU:	ìjòba : tí èyí tí a : di : ìbò : yàn
Step 4: FT:	composition: ìjòba + èyí tí a +di +ìbò +yàn
Step 5: FP:	contraction, nominalization by prefixation, compounding: ìjòba + èyí tí a +di +ìbò +yàn → ìjòba + à + dibò + yàn
YLT:	ìjòba – àdibò – yàn

ST:	president
Step 1: MST:	the leader of a republic, organization, etc.
Step 2: YE:	olórí orílè-èdè tí ó ni ìjòba tí kò jẹ mọ ọba tàbí ayaba, olórí ẹgbé abbl
Step 3: CSU:	olórí: orílè-èdè /ẹgbé abbl
Step 4: FT:	semantic extension, composition:: olórí + orílè-èdè / ẹgbé → Ààrẹ + orílè-èdè/ẹgbé abbl
Step 5: FP:	compounding: Ààrẹ+ orílè-èdè /ẹgbé abbl
YLT:	Ààrẹ orílè-èdè /ẹgbé

ST:	president elect
Step 1: MST:	a president that has been elected but is not yet installed
Step 2: YE:	Ààrẹ tí a di ìbò yàn sùgbón tí kò tii gun orí oyè
Step 3: CSU:	Ààrẹ : tí kò tii gun orí oyè
Step 4: FT:	composition, explication, idiomatization: Ààrẹ + tí kò tii gun orí oyè → Ààrẹ + ní ọlọ
Step 5: FP:	contraction, compounding: Ààrẹ + ní ọlọ → Ààrẹ + lọlọ
YLT:	Ààrẹ - lọlọ (lit. President in tomorrow)

Scope of the Study and Term Creation Processes

The focus of this research is to provide equivalents of phonology terms from letters S to Z into the Yorùbá language. Processes involved in term

creation are linguistic and stylistic. The linguistic devices are semantic processes, morphological processes, and phonological processes, while the stylistic processes are idiomatization, ideophonization and euphemism. Some of them are discussed briefly.

Expansion: Extending the meaning of a term by giving it a new meaning, a shift from one concrete to the abstract or form of the abstract to the concrete.

Conversion: This involves the changing of grammatical category, also known as functional shift

Revival of old words: This involves the using obsolete words in a living language, or words from an ancestor language in which the old meaning might be retained or new meaning might be assigned to them.

Composition or Compounding: This is a situation where two or more morphemes, words, phrases are combined in order to express various foreign concepts in native languages.

Affixation: This is a process whereby an affix is prefixed, suffixed or infix to some input forms

Blending: Blends are hybrid words. They are rather like compounds except that only part of each individual word has been used.

Acronyms: Acronyms are pronounceable words formed from the initial letters of other words.

Abbreviations: Abbreviations are also formed from the initial letters of other words but this time they do not make pronounceable words, and instead the letter names are spoken.

Clipping: Clipping involves missing off part of the word to create a word with the same meaning. Either the beginning (fore-clipping), ending (back-clipping) or both ends of the original word may be removed.

Borrowing: Borrowing refers to the process of using a lexical item that is not in the lexicon of a certain language but borrowed into the language due to language contact

Coinage: Coinage refers to the creation of new term for a source term which does not have an existing lexicon in the language or whose lexicon is going out of usage.

Vowel Coalescence: Where two contiguous segments at the underlying representation disappear at the surface phonetic level to be replaced by a third segment which shares features from both of the segments that disappeared.

Assimilation: Assimilation takes place when two segments which are contiguous to each other with different modes of production become identical in some or all of the atomic features of their production.

Insertion: This is a process which occurs when an extraneous element does not present originally is introduced into the utterance usually to break unwanted sequence.

Deletion: Deletion involves the loss of a segment under some language-specifically imposed conditions.

Idiomatization: this refers to the use of idioms to formulate terms.

Ideophonization: this is where a terminologist adopts the onomatopoeic representation of the term in question to devise a name for it.

Euphemism: in making use of euphemism, a pleasant way is employed to describe an unpleasant situation.

Sample Presentation and Analysis

A total of eighty-four (84) phonology terms were analyzed from which new Yorùbá terms were developed. These terms are arranged in alphabetical order from **S** to **Z**. In adopting Owólabí's (2004) *Information Processing Model (IPM)*, we modify the framework in term for *End result* where we removed 'legislative' and retain *Yorùbá Term*.

Samples

Source Term:

Meaning of Source Term:

Yorùbá Equivalent:

Canonical Semantic Unit:

Formulation Tactic:

Formulation Processes:

Yorùbá Term:

Source Term:

Meaning of Source Term:

Yorùbá Equivalent:

Canonical Semantic Unit:

Formulation Tactic:

Formulation Processes:

subsidiary features

they are secondary features (like secondary articulation and phonation) which are not considered as the main features that distinguish phonemes.

àbùdá àwọn ìró tí wọ̀n n̄ ẹ̀ ẹ̀gbẹ̀lẹ̀yìn (bí ẹ̀sẹ̀nupẹ̀ kejì àti ipẹ̀rọ̀) tí a kò rí gẹ̀gẹ̀ bíí olú àbùdá láti ẹ̀ ẹ̀yàtọ̀ láàrin àwọn fónímù

àbùdá :ìró : tí wọ̀n n̄: ẹ̀ ẹ̀ : ẹ̀gbẹ̀lẹ̀yìn

composition: àbùdá + ìró+ tí wọ̀n n̄+ ẹ̀ ẹ̀ + ẹ̀gbẹ̀lẹ̀yìn

contraction, nominalization by prefixation, deletion, clipping: àbùdá + ìró + tí wọ̀n n̄ + ẹ̀ ẹ̀ + ẹ̀gbẹ̀lẹ̀yìn → àbùdá+ a + ẹ̀gbẹ̀lẹ̀yìn, → àbùdá+ a + ẹ̀gbẹ̀

àbùdá ẹ̀gbẹ̀

tongue body features

features that describe the position of the body of the tongue during speech

àbùdá tí ọ̀ n̄ sọ̀ bí ipò tí ahọ̀n wà nígbà tí a bá n̄ sàfọ̀

àbùdá: ipò: ahọ̀n

composition: àbùdá: ipò : ahọ̀n

contraction: àbùdá+ ipò+ ahọ̀n → àbùdá + ahọ̀n

Yorùbá Term:	àbùdá ipò ahòn
Source Term:	Tense [+tense]
Meaning of Source Term:	sounds articulated with greater effort of relevant muscles
Yorùbá Equivalent:	àbùdá iró tí a pè pèlù ipá àwòn èyà ara ifò tí ó kágún sí pè.
Canonical Semantic Unit:	àbùdá :iró: tí a : fi: ipá pè
Formulation Tactic:	composition: àbùdá+iró + tí a + fi + ipá + pè
Formulation Processes:	contraction, nominalization by prefixation, deletion: àbùdá+iró + tí a + fi + ipá + pè → à + fipápè
Yorùbá Term:	àfipápè [+ipá]

Having presented samples and the processing hypothesis used for the creation of Yorùbá equivalents of the phonology terminologies, we shall outline the eighty-five (84) phonology terms and their Yorùbá equivalents below under these headings: Source Term (ST), Meaning of Source Term (MST) their meaning, Yorùbá Term (YT) and Yorùbá Equivalent (YE) i.e., the meaning of source in Yorùbá. These terms are arranged alphabetically from **S** to **Z**.

279	scansion	In Metrical Phonology, the analysis of metrical structure (stress patterns).	<i>itupalẹ̀- ìwòn- ìwòhùn</i>	<i>Nínú fonólọ́- jì àwòn ìwòhùn, itupalẹ̀ ihun àwòn- ìwòhùn (àwòn bátàni àtẹ̀mọ́).</i>
280	secondary articulation	In a sound produced with two points of articulation, this term refers to the point of articulation involving the lesser degree of stricture, e.g. labialization, palatalization; opposed to primary articulation.	<i>ìsẹ̀nupẹ̀ kejì</i>	<i>Nínú iró tí a pè pèlù ibi ìsẹ̀nu- pẹ̀ méjì, òrò-ìperi yìí máa n tọ́ka sí ibi ìsẹ̀nupẹ̀ tí ó ní ifúnpo tí ó kéréjù, bí àpẹ̀rẹ̀ isọ̀dàfètẹ̀pẹ̀, isọ̀dà- fápẹ̀; jẹ̀ idakejì ìsẹ̀nupẹ̀ àkọ́kọ́.</i>

281	sibilant	A fricative or affricate produced with a concentration of energy at high frequencies, usually by means of a groove in the tongue, and having a characteristic hissing sound.	<i>afòòsèpè</i>	<i>Àfúnnupè tàbí àsésí tí a pè pèlú okun alágbára gan, ní òpòlòpò igbà pèlú àláfó tóóró ní ahón, tí ó sí ní aríwo òòsé.</i>
282	simplicity	A possible criterion for phonological analysis proposed by generative linguistic theory which would automatically assign factors to competing linguistic analyses that would determine which of them was the most satisfactory.	<i>iròrùnjà</i>	<i>Ìlànà tí ó ʃe é ʃe fún itùpalẹ̀ fonóló-jì tí tíòrì onidarọ̀ lingísíiki dá lábáá láti máa yan àwọn àbùdá fún àwọn itùpalẹ̀ adije lingísíiki tí won yòò sọ èyí tí ó bá dára (ye) jù nínú wọn.</i>
283	sonorant [±son]	Sounds produced without a turbulent airflow in the vocal tract.	<i>àinídiwó</i> [+idiwó]	<i>Àwọn iró tí a pè nígbà tí èémí kò ní idiwó nínú òpónà ajemòhùn.</i>
284	Sonority Dispersion Principle	A putative principle governing syllabification. It says: the sonority should slope maximally from onset to nucleus and minimally from nucleus to coda. This principle is held to integrate a number of observations about syllable structure.	<i>Ìlànà Ìyọ̀</i> <i>Ìdún</i>	<i>Ìlànà àjọgbà tí ó de ipín-sí-silébù. Ó ní pé: idún gbòdò máa yó púpọ̀ kúrò ní àbèrẹ̀ bọ sí odo silébù, ó tún gbòdò máa yó diẹ̀ kúrò ní odo sí apèkun silébù. Ìlànà yìí wà fún ʃíʃe òpòlòpò àwọn àwòfin lóri ihun silébù.</i>

285	Sonority Hierarchy	A putative ranking of segment types in order of their intrinsic sonority. The most sonorous elements are assigned the highest value, and the least sonorous the lowest value.	<i>Ìpele Ìdún</i>	<i>Ipò àjọgbà àwọn èyà ègé ní itò idún atinúhun mọ wọn. Àwọn fónrán adún jùlọ ní a máa n fún ní iwúlò tí ó gajùlọ, tí à sí máa n fún àwọn aláidún jùlọ ní iwúlò tí ó kéréjù.</i>
286	Sonority Sequencing Principle	(also sonority cycle) A widely accepted constraint on syllable structure. It says: the sonority profile of the syllable must slope outwards from the peak. In other words, the level of sonority must rise as we proceed from the beginning of the syllable to the peak and fall as we proceed from the peak to the end, in accordance with the Sonority Hierarchy.	<i>Ìlànà Tẹ̀léntẹ̀lé Ìdún</i>	<i>(Ó tún jẹ ày-ikàn idún) òtẹ́ tí ó jẹ gbígba jùlọ lóri ihun silébù. Ó ní pé: àwòrán idún silébù gbòdò yó jade láti odo silébù. Ní itumọ̀ m̀ìrán, ipò idún gbòdò gbé sókè tí a bá tí n sọ̀rọ̀ láti ibèrẹ̀ silébù tí tí dé odo rẹ̀, tí yóò sí máa wà silẹ̀ láti odo dé iparí ọ̀rọ̀ ní ibámu pẹ̀lú ipele idún.</i>
287	sound change/ law/shift	Any phonological change in a language's sound system over a period of time.	<i>iyipadà/ òfin iró/ igbéròónipò</i>	<i>Èyíkéyìi iyipadà nínú ètò iró èdè kan fún igbà (àkókò) kan.</i>
288	spirant	An older term for fricative.	<i>àfúnunupè</i>	<i>Ọ̀rọ̀-iperí àtijọ́ fún àfúnunupè.</i>

289	Spirantizat-ion	(also fricativization) Any phonological process in which a plosive is converted to a fricative: one type of lenition.	<i>isòdàfún-nupè</i>	<i>(Tí a tún mò sí isòdàfún-nupè) Èyíkéyìi ìgbésè fonólòjì nìpasè èyí tí àshè-nupè di àfún-nupè: èya àisòdalágbára.</i>
290	spreading	In some models of non-linear phonology, spreading refers to the association (or linking) of a feature or node belonging to one segment with an adjacent segment. 2. In autosegmental phonology, spreading refers to a type of rule which extends the association of a tone in a given direction, e.g. a high tone associated with an initial vowel comes to be associated with the following vowel(s).	<i>títànká</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn èyà àwòshè fonólòjì ààshabilà, títànká máa n tòka sí itàpò (tàbí isopò) àbùdá kan tàbí èwọn tí ègè kan pèlú ègè afèg-békègbé. Nínú fonólòjì ajemádá-peleni, títànká máa n tòka sí èyà òfin tí ó máa n tan itàpò ohùn ká ní idojúkò kan, àpèrè ohùn òkè tí o wà pèlú fàwèlì ibèrè máa wá so mó àwọn fàwèlì tí ó bá tẹle.</i>
291	stacking	In some versions of Autosegmental Phonology, an arrangement in which some tiers are directly dependent upon other autosegmental tiers, rather than upon the skeletal tier.	<i>tító-ìpele</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn èyà fonólòjì ajemádápele-ní, ètò nìpasè èyí tí àwọn ìpele kan gbáralé àwọn ìpele ajemádápele-ní múràn tàrà tí kii se ìpele kòòfo.</i>
292	stress language	A language with a prominent accent realized as strong stress.	<i>èdè alátèmó</i>	<i>Èdè tí ó ní àshènti atayò (àtèmó) tí ó jẹyò gégé bí atèmó alòòrìn.</i>

293	strident [+str]	Sounds produced with a complex constriction forcing the airstream to strike two surfaces, producing high intensity fricative noise.	<i>aláriwo</i> [+aláriwo]	<i>Író tí a pè pèlú if- únṣò alágbára tí ó fi tí ipá jé kí èémí kọ lu àyè méjì kan tí ó sì gbé ariwo àfúnṣupè alágbára jádé.</i>
294	subsidiary features	They are secondary features (like secondary articulation and phonation) which are not considered as the main features that distinguish phonemes.	<i>àbùdá</i> <i>aṣẹ̀gbè</i>	<i>Àbùdá àwọn iró tí wọn n ̀̀ se igbè lẹ̀yìn (bí iṣénupè keji àti ipèrò) tí a ò ri gégé bí olú- àbùdá láti se iyàtò láraàrín àwọn fónìmù</i>
295	Super foot	A term in metrical phonology for a node which dominates the two rightmost feet in a metrical tree; symbolized by Σ' .	<i>ẹ̀wón- atéńtẹ́</i> <i>agàbà</i>	<i>Ọ̀rọ̀-iperí nínú fonólójì iwọn- iwòhùn fún ẹ̀wón kan tí ó máa n gàbà lórí àwọn ẹ̀wón-atéńtẹ́ méjì apá ọ̀tún lórí igi iwòn-iwòhùn; tí a máa n tọ́ka pèlú àroko Σ'.</i>
296	superheavy syllable	In some languages, a syllable type which contrasts with ordinary light and heavy syllables in being heavier than both.	<i>sílẹ̀bù</i> <i>atẹ̀wònjù</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn èdè kan, ẹ̀yà sílẹ̀bù tí ó máa n ̀̀ se iyàtò pèlú àwọn sílẹ̀bù afíyẹ́ àti atẹ̀wòṅ lásán nípàsẹ́ pé ó tẹ̀wòṅ ju àwọn mé- jẹ̀jẹ̀ lẹ́.</i>

297	Supralaryngeal	In some versions of feature geometry, a class node dominating all phenomena within the oral and nasal cavities.	<i>òmú-à-figògón-gòpè</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn èyà jíómétírì àbùdà, èwón aṣèpín-òwó tí ó gàbà lórí gbogbo àwọn ìg-bésè nínú káà ẹnu àti imú.</i>
298	surface phonotactic constraint	A constraint upon the permissible sequences of segments which applies to phonetic forms, but not necessarily to underlying representations. Sommerstein (1977: 195).	<i>òtè fonotátíùkì</i>	<i>Òtè lórí aṣéég-bà tẹlénítẹlè ègè tí ó máa ń ṣìṣélórí àwọn ìrísí fònétíùkì ṣùgbón tí kò pọ̀n dandanlórí àwọn ìṣàfihàn ipilẹ̀.</i>
299	suspendable opposition	(Also neutralizable opposition) In Prague School phonology, the relation between two segments which contrast in some positions but which are neutralized in other positions. Ant. constant opposition.	<i>ìṣelòdì apòórà</i>	<i>(tí a tún mò sí ìṣelòdì apòórà) nínú fonólò- jì ilèwé píráàgì, ibátan láàárín àwọn ègè méjì tí wón yàtò ní àwọn ipò kan ṣùgbón tí wón pòórà ní àwọn ipò míràn. Ìdàkejì ní ìṣelòdì aláiyípadà</i>
300	Syllabification	It is the term which refers to the division of a word into syllables	<i>ipínsísílèbù</i>	<i>Èyí ní ọ̀rọ̀-ìperí tí ó máa ń tọ̀ka sí pín pín ọ̀rọ̀ sí sílèbù.</i>
301	Syllabify	The act of syllabifying	<i>pínsísílèbù</i>	<i>Ìṣe ipínsí sílèbù.</i>

302	Syllable Integrity Principle	In some versions of Metrical Phonology, a proposed constraint upon prosodic structure. It says: prosodic constituent structure cannot violate syllable structure.	<i>Ìlànà Olóòótọ́ Sílẹ̀bù</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn èyà fonólọ́jì àwọn-ìwọ̀hùn òtẹ̀ kan tí a dá lábàà lóri ihun atẹ̀rẹ̀rẹ̀. Óní pé: fọ̀nrán ihun atẹ̀rẹ̀rẹ̀ kò lẹ̀ rúfín ihun sílẹ̀bù.</i>
303	syllable structure	In a particular language, or in languages generally, the requirements and constraints which determine the shapes of possible syllables, usually formulated in terms of sequences of consonants and vowels, but also in terms of onset plus rhyme, or onset plus nucleus plus coda.	<i>ihun sílẹ̀bù</i>	<i>Nínú èdè kan pátó tàbí gbogbo èdè lápapọ̀, àwọn ohun a-fẹ̀ àti àwọn òtẹ̀ tí wọn máa n mọ̀ írísí àwọn sílẹ̀bù tí a máa n sáábà ẹ̀ ẹ̀ àgbékalẹ̀ wọn ní ọ̀pọ̀lopọ̀ igbà ní ilànà tẹ̀lẹ̀ntẹ̀lẹ̀ kọ̀n-sónàntì àti fáwẹ̀lì, ẹ̀gbọ̀n àti ní ilànà àbẹ̀rẹ̀ pẹ̀lú àfikún odo, tàbí àbẹ̀rẹ̀ pẹ̀lú àfikún odo àti apẹ̀kun pẹ̀lú.</i>
304	syllable template	In Autosegmental Phonology, a template invoked to account for syllable structure.	<i>ìwòşe sílẹ̀bù</i>	<i>Nínú fonólọ́jì-àjẹmádápelení ìwòşe tí ó n şàlàyé ihun sílẹ̀bù.</i>

305	syllable weight	A metrical property by which syllables are divided into two (rarely three) classes differing in the number of moras they contain and hence in their degree of metrical prominence. In terms of weight, light syllables differ from heavy syllables; the difference is fundamental in many languages.	<i>iwọn silébù</i>	<i>Àbúdà iwọn- iwóhùn nípasẹ̀ èyí tí a pín silébù sí ọ̀wọ̀ méjì (kàì sáábà jẹ̀ méta) tí wọn yàtò ní iye mórà tí wọn kó sínú àti ní ọ̀sùwọn ìtayo iwọn- iwóhùn wọn. Ní ilànà iwọn, àwọn afúyẹ̀ silébù yàtò sí atẹ̀wọn silébù; iyàtò nàà sé pàtàkì púpọ̀ jù nínú ọ̀pọ̀lọ̀pọ̀ èdè.</i>
306	Synaeresis	The combination of two adjacent vowels within a single word into a single syllable.	<i>sínàrésì/ isọ̀fáwẹ̀lì- méjì-dì- silébùkan</i>	<i>Ki kó fáwẹ̀lì fẹ̀g- bẹ̀kẹ̀gbẹ̀ méjì nínú ọ̀rọ̀ kan pọ̀ sí silébù kan.</i>
307	Syncope	A term used to refer to the deletion of a vowel within a word.	<i>ìpàró- fáwẹ̀lì-jẹ̀</i>	<i>Ọ̀rọ̀-ìperí tí a lò láti tọ̀ka sí ipajẹ̀ fáwẹ̀lì nínú ọ̀rọ̀.</i>
308	systematic phonemics	A level of representation in generative phonology which sets up a single underlying form capable of accounting for the phonological variations which relate grammatical structures (e.g. words).	<i>fónémùkì elètò</i>	<i>Ìpele ìṣàfihàn kan nínú fonòlọ̀- jì onídàrọ̀ tí ó máa ń ṣe àgbékalẹ̀ ìrísí ìpilẹ̀ ẹ̀yọ̀ kan tí ó lẹ̀ ṣàlàyé àwọn èdà fonòlọ̀jì tí wọn tan mọ̀ àwọn ihun gírámà (e.g. ọ̀rọ̀).</i>

309	systematic phonetics	A level of representation in generative phonology which provides a narrow phonetic transcription of the systematic features of pronunciation, i.e. excluding those which would be attributable to performance factors. It is related by the rules of the grammar's phonological component to the systematic phonemic level of representation.	<i>fònétíìkì</i> <i>elétò</i>	<i>Ìpilẹ̀ ịsàfihàn kan nínú fonóló-jì onidàrò tí ó máa ń pèsè idàko fònétíìkì (ní tóóró) àwọn àbùdà ètò pipè, ní kíkún tí ó máa ń yọ àwọn èyí tí wọn ma jẹ mọ àwọn aṣojú ịṣe (eré). Ó tan mọ ipelè ịsàfihàn fònémíìkì pèlú àwọn òfin ọmọ-inú fonólójì girámà.</i>
310	systole	The shortening of a long syllable. Ant. diastole.	<i>ìgékúrú</i> <i>sílèbù</i>	<i>Gígé sílèbù tí ó gùn kúrú, idàkejì rẹ̀ ni ifàgùn sílèbù.</i>
311	tail	In some analyses of intonation, any syllables that come between the nuclear syllable and the end of the tone unit. The syllables following the nuclear tone	<i>Ìrù</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn itupalẹ̀ iwọ̀hùn kan, èyíkéyì àwọn sílèbù tí ó bá máa ń jẹyọ láàárín odo sílèbù àti iparí idá ohùn. Àwọn sílèbù tí ó tẹ̀lẹ̀ odo ohùn.</i>

312	template	1) In phonology or morphology, a general, schematic, skeletal representation of some class of forms consisting of a set of positions into which elements of specified types may be inserted to produce valid forms. 2) A term used in metrical phonology for an abstract tree structure which defines the basic structural possibilities of syllables in a language.	ìwòṣe	<i>Nínú fonólójì tàbí mofólójì, isàfihàn lápapò, àwòrán, kòḍfo ọ̀wọ̀ àwọn irisi tí ó máa ń ní àkójopò àwọn ipò nínú àwọn èyí tí à lè fí àwọn fónrán àwọn èyà àsọ̀dọtò bọ láààrín láti ṣẹ́dà àwọn irisi aṣéégbà. (2) Ọ̀rọ̀-iperi tí à lò nínú fonólójì iwọn-ìwòhùn fún ihun igi afòyemọ̀ tí ó máa ń sọ àwọn ihun aṣéégbà àwọn silébù nínú èdè.</i>
313	tense [+tense]	Sounds articulated with greater effort of relevant muscles.	<i>Àfipápè/ afiṣanpè [+ipá]</i>	<i>Ìró tí a pè pèlù agbára àwọn iṣan tí ó ṣe kókó</i>
314	terminal feature	In feature geometry, a feature which occurs at the bottom of a tree, so that no other features depend upon it.	<i>àbùdá agbèyìn</i>	<i>Nínú jíómétírì àbùdá, àbùdá kan tí ó máa ń jẹyọ ní isàlẹ̀ igi, tí àwọn àbùdá mírán kò ní lè gbáralé e.</i>
315	ternary feature	A distinctive feature which may assume any-one of exactly three values.	<i>àbùdá alójúmẹta</i>	<i>Àbùdá apààlà kan tí ó lè ní èyíkéyìí àwọn ìwúlò mẹta ọ̀tọ̀ọ̀tọ̀.</i>

316	tier conflation	In Autosegmental Phonology, an analytical procedure by which two tiers are combined into one at some stage in a derivation. McCarthy (1986).	<i>ìpapò ìpele</i>	<i>Nínú fonólò- jì ajemádápele ní, ilànà itupalẹ kan nípasẹ èyí tí a tí pa ìpele méjì pọ sí ẹyọ kan ní ààyè kan nínú isẹdá kan.</i>
317	tone default	In some tone languages, a tone which is automatically assigned to any syllable not assigned tone by any other process.	<i>àsàyàn ohùn</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn èdè olòhùn kan, ohùn kan tí ó jẹ yíyan fún ara rẹ, fún èy- íkéyí sílẹbù tí a ó yan ohùn fún pẹlú èyíkéyí igbésẹ mùràn.</i>
318	tonal geometry	The organization of tonal structure within a non-linear phonological model (the nature of tonal features and the location of tonal linkage).	<i>jíómétírì ohùn</i>	<i>Ìtò ihun ohùn nínú àwòṣe fonólòjì àisabílà (isàdání- dá àwọn àbùdá ohùn àtí ààyè isopò ohùn).</i>
319	tonal stability	The phenomenon in tone languages in which a tone remains undeleted when its associated vowel is deleted.	<i>ídúròsinsin ohùn</i>	<i>Ìgbésẹ nínú àwọn èdè olòhùn nípasẹ èyí tí ohùn kan máa n dúró láìjẹ pípajẹ nígbà tí a tí pa fàwẹlì tí ó so mọ jẹ.</i>
320	tonal tier	In Autosegmental Phonology, the tier on which tones are located.	<i>ìpele ohùn</i>	<i>Nínú fonólò- jì ajemádapele- ní, ìpele lóri èyí tí àwọn ohùn wà.</i>

321	tonality	The use of tones. 2) In the Hallidayan analysis of intonation, the system of options for dividing an utterance into tone groups (intonational phrases).	<i>iloòhùn/ ipínsóhùn:</i>	<i>(1) Lílò ohùn (2) Nínú itùpalẹ̀ ìwòhùn Álùide, ètò iyàn fún pín- pín isọ kan sí egbé ohùn(àwọn àpòlà ìwòhùn).</i>
322	tone-bearing unit(TBU)	In Autosegmental Phonology, any element on the segmental tier which is capable of bearing a tone- most often a syllabic nucleus.	<i>ídá agbohùn</i>	<i>Nínú fonólójì ajemádápeléní, èy- íkéyìí fónrán lóri ipele ègè tí ó tó láti gba ohùn-(ní òpòlòpò igbà odo sílèbù).</i>
323	tone group	A term used to refer to a distinctive sequence of pitches, or tones, in an utterance. The fundamental unit of intonation, the stretch of utterance to which a single intonational contour applies.	<i>egbé ohùn</i>	<i>Òrò iperí tí a lò láti tọka sí tẹ̀lẹ̀nìtẹ̀lẹ̀ apààlà àwọn iró-ohùn, tàbí ohùn nínú isọ kan. Ídá pàtàkì ìwòhùn, ifàgùn isọ lóri èyí tí ilà ìwòhùn ẹyọ kan máa n sìsẹ̀.</i>
324	Toneless	(of a syllable or an affix in a tone language) Lacking any intrinsic tone.	<i>Àìlòhùn</i>	<i>(Tí sílèbù tàbí áfómó nínú èdè olòhùn) tí kò ní èyíkéyìí ohùn àtinúhunmọ̀.</i>
325	Tonemics	In the emic tradition of study, contrastive tones are classified as tonemes , and the study of such tones is known as tonemics.	<i>tònémìkì</i>	<i>Nínú ẹ̀kọ̀ àsà ojóun, àwọn ohùn asẹ̀yàtò ní a máa n pín sí tónìmù, atipe ẹ̀kọ̀ nípa àwọn ohùn báyẹn ní a mò sí tònémìkì.</i>

326	tone sequence	A tone-based approach to intonation which incorporates all intonational phenomena into a single sequence of pitch movements.	<i>tẹ̀lẹ̀ntẹ̀lẹ̀ ohùn</i>	<i>Ìwòye lóri-ohùn sí iwòhùn tí ó máa ní kó gbogbo àwọn igbésẹ̀ iwòhùn sí ẹyọ tẹ̀lẹ̀ntẹ̀lẹ̀ àwọn igbésẹ̀ iró-ohùn.</i>
327	Tonetics	The study of the phonetic properties of tone, in its most general sense	<i>tònẹ̀tìkì</i>	<i>Èkọ̀ nipa àwọn àbùdá fònẹ̀tìkì ohùn, ní itumọ̀ káriáyé rẹ̀.</i>
328	tongue body features	Features that describe the position of the body of the tongue during speech.	<i>àbùdá ahọ̀n</i>	<i>Àbùdá àwọn iró tí wọ̀n n ọ̀pẹ̀-júwe ipò tí ahọ̀n wà nígbà tí a bá n sáfo</i>
329	Tonogenesis	Any process of phonological change by which tones are acquired by a language which formerly lacked them.	<i>ilòhùn (ì-ní-ohùn)</i>	<i>Èyíkẹyìi igbésẹ̀ iyipadà fònólójì nípasẹ̀ èyí tí èdè tí kò ní àwọn ohùn tẹ̀lẹ̀ tí wá ní wọ̀n.</i>
330	Tonology	The phonological study of the forms and uses of tone in language.	<i>tonólójì/ imọ-ohùn</i>	<i>Èkọ̀ fònólójì àwọn irísí àti ilo ohùn nínú èdè.</i>
331	transparent rule	A phonological rule whose existence can easily be inferred from inspection of surface phonetic forms.	<i>òfin ahànde (à-hàn-sóde)</i>	<i>Òfin fònólójì kan tí a lè rí wíwà rẹ̀ nipa síṣáyẹ̀wò àwọn irísí fònẹ̀tìkì òkè.</i>
332	Trochee	A metrical foot consisting of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable.	<i>ẹ̀wọ̀n-atéńtẹ̀-anísílẹ̀bù-alátẹ̀mọ̀-àti-aláilátẹ̀mọ̀</i>	<i>Ẹ̀wọ̀n-atéńtẹ̀ àwọn-iwòhùn tí o ní sílẹ̀bù alátẹ̀mọ̀ tí sílẹ̀bù aláilátẹ̀mọ̀ kan tẹ̀lẹ̀.</i>
333	Ultima	The final syllable of a word.	<i>sílẹ̀bù iparí</i>	<i>Sílẹ̀bù iparí ọ̀rọ̀.</i>

334	unary feature	(also monovalent feature, singulary feature) A phonological element which resembles a distinctive feature but which can take no values: that is, it can only be either present or absent.	<i>àbùdá alójúkan</i>	<i>(Tí a tún mò sí àbùdá aníwúlòkan, àbùdá ẹyọkan) fónrán fonólójì tí ó máa n jọ àbùdá apààlà kan şùgbón tí ko lè gba àwọn iwúlò kankan; ní kíkún, ó kàn lè jẹ yálà wíwà tàbí àisí.</i>
335	unbounded foot	A foot containing an arbitrarily large number of syllables.	<i>ẹwón-aténté àilóònkà</i>	<i>Ẹwón-aténté tí ó ní ọpọlọpọ sílẹ̀bù àilònkà ní àinídíí.</i>
336	Underdot	The diacritic [·], placed under a character in various transliterations for various purposes.	<i>àmi-àfiyán- isàlẹ̀</i>	<i>Àmi àfiyàn [-] tí a máa n fí sí isàlẹ̀ lẹ̀tà kan nínú orisíùrìşìl èrèdì, bí şìşàfihàn.</i>
337	underlying form	(also underlying representation, underlier) A more or less abstract phonological representation of a segment, a morpheme, a word or a phrase which is posited by an analyst and from which corresponding surface forms, including any variant realizations, are derived by the application of rules.	<i>irisí ipinlẹ̀</i>	<i>(Tí a tún mò sí isàfihàn ipilẹ̀ tàbí apilẹ̀) isàfihàn gbòòrò tàbí tóóró fonólójì ẹgẹ, mófiumù, ọrọ̀ tàbí àpòlà kan tí olutúpàlẹ̀ kan dá lábàà àti láti èyi tí àwọn irisí òkè tí o şe régí tí ó ní èy-ikéyìl àwọn ijẹ́jẹ́de ẹ̀dà, tí jẹ́ şìşẹ̀dà pẹ̀lú lilo àwọn òfin.</i>

338	underspecification	The analytical procedure of omitting from underlying representations some information, usually the values of distinctive features, which will have to be 'filled in' later in order to obtain the surface form. The representations should be minimally specified, or underspecified .	<i>isọdọtò-àṣọ́lẹ̀ (à-yọ-silẹ̀)</i>	<i>Ìlànà ìtupalẹ̀ yíyọ àwọn àlàyé kan kúrò ní àwọn isàfihàn ipilẹ̀ ní ọ̀pọ̀lọ̀pọ̀ igbà àwọn iwúlò àbùdá apààlà, tí a máa ní láti bù dítí padà láìpé láti rí írisí òkè. Àwọn isàfihàn nàà gbọ̀dọ̀ jẹ̀ asọdọtò ní iwọnba tàbí kí wọn jẹ̀ asodọtò-àṣọ́lẹ̀.</i>
339	Underspecification Theory	A group of related approaches to phonological description based upon the idea that the values of certain distinctive features need not be underlyingly specified,	<i>Tiṣọ́rì Isọdọtò-àṣọ́lẹ̀</i>	<i>Egbé àwọn iwòye atán-mọ̀ isàpèjúwe fonólọ̀jì tí ó dá lóri ọ̀ye pé àwọn iwúlò àbùdá apààlà kan nílò láti máa jẹ̀ àsọdọtò.</i>
340	Under-sprea-ding	In Autosegmental Phonology, the failure of a position on the skeletal tier to be properly associated with an element on some other tier.	<i>àitánkán-dáadáa</i>	<i>Nínú fonóló-jì ajemádápelení ikùnà ipò kan lóri ipẹle kòòfò láti sọpọ̀ dáadáa pèlú fṣónràn kan lóri ipẹle mīràn kan.</i>
341	Unfooted	Syllables are said to be unfooted if they cannot be assigned a foot structure.	<i>àṣẹ̀wọ̀n-atéńté</i>	<i>A máa ń sọpé àwọn silẹ̀bù kan jẹ̀ àṣẹ̀wọ̀n-atéńté tí a ò bá le yan ihun èwọ̀n-atéńté kan fún wọn.</i>

342	Uniformity Condition	In some versions of Autosegmental Phonology, a proposed constraint upon rule application, often invoked especially to account for the resistance of geminates to phonological processes. It says: in order to change the feature content of a segment [A], every skeletal slot linked to [A] must satisfy the rule.	<i>Òtẹ̀ Ìdógba</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn èyà fonólójì ajemádápeleni òtẹ̀ tí a dábàà lóri lílò òfin, tí a máa ń sáábà lò láti dúró fún itakò àwọn oníbejì sí àwọn igbésẹ̀ fonólójì. Ò ní pé: láti yí àkóónú àbùdá ègẹ̀ kan padà, gbogbo àláfò kòòfo tí ó so mó [A] gbòdò tẹ̀ òfin yẹn lórùn.</i>
343	Unilateral	A lateral segment in which air passes along only one side of the median closure.	<i>afẹ̀gbẹ̀enu-kanpẹ̀</i>	<i>Ègẹ̀ afẹ̀gbẹ̀enu-pẹ̀ kan nípàsẹ̀ èyí tí atẹ̀gùn máa ń gba ègbẹ̀ kan ọ̀so jade.</i>
344	Unpacking	The phonological process in which a single segment in a particular environment develops into a sequence of two segments, each of the new segments typically retaining some of the features of the original segment.	<i>isọ̀dẹ̀gẹ̀-mẹ̀-jì</i>	<i>Ìgbésẹ̀ fonólójì nípàsẹ̀ eyí tí ègẹ̀ ẹyọ kan ní sàkání kan pátó tí di tẹ̀lẹ̀ntẹ̀lẹ̀ àwọn ègẹ̀ méjì, ọ̀kọ̀ọ̀kan àwọn ègẹ̀ tuntun náà sì tún ní àwọn àbùdá ègẹ̀ tí tẹ̀lẹ̀</i>

345	Upside-Down Phonology	<p>A highly distinctive approach to phonology in which words are represented in the lexicon in their surface phonetic form and phonological rules 'run backward' in order to convert surface forms into underlying forms which can then be directly related to other underlying forms. For example, <i>capricious</i> has the surface form [kə'prɪʃəs]; this is converted by successive rules to [kə'prɪʃjəs], [kə'prɪsjəs], and finally [kə'prɪ:sjəs], which can be directly related to the underlying form of <i>caprice</i> ([kəpri:s]) by the morphological rule [NOUN-(j) əs]</p>	<p><i>Fonólòjì</i> <i>Adorikodò</i></p>	<p><i>Ìwòye fonólòjì nípasẹ̀ èyí tí àwọn ọ̀rọ̀ nínú àkà-ọ̀rọ̀ ní ìrísí fònétiíkì àti àwọn ọ̀fín fonólòjì tí wọn padà séyìn láti yí àwọn ìrísí òkè sí àwọn ìrísí ipilẹ̀ tí wọn lè tan mọ̀ awọn ìrísí ipilẹ̀ mûràn</i></p>
346	Uvularization	<p>A secondary articulation in which the back of the tongue is raised towards the uvula. 2. Any phonological process in which a segment at another place of articulation is converted into a uvular.</p>	<p><i>isọ̀da-fò-lélẹ̀pẹ̀</i></p>	<p><i>Ìsẹ̀nupẹ̀ kejì nípasẹ̀ èyí tí èyìn ahọ̀n ti gbé sókè lọ sí òlélé. 2. Èyikéy-ìí ìgbésẹ̀ fonólòjì nípasẹ̀ èyí tí ègè tí ó wà ní ibi isẹ̀nupẹ̀ mûràn padà sí afòlélẹ̀pẹ̀.</i></p>

347	Valency	The number of distinct values which can be assumed by a distinctive feature. A two-valued feature is binary or bivalent; a feature with three or more possible values is multivalued, multivalent, or n-ary. A feature which can take no values, but which can only be present or absent, is unary or monovalent;	<i>iye-iwúlò</i>	<p><i>Iye iwúlò tí ó s̄ée dá lábàá p̄èlú àbùdá apààlà. Àbùdá anìiwúlò-méjì jé alójúlòdì tàbí abè-jì-iwúlò. Àbùdá tí ó ní iwúlò méta jù b̄èjè l̄ò ní anìiwúlò-òp̄ò, ab̄òp̄ò iwúlò tàbí alójú-n. Àbùdátìkò bàlè gba iwúlò kankan s̄ùgb̄on tí ó kan lè jé aní tàbí àìní ní alójúkan.</i></p>
348	Value	A specification which can (and must) be added to any distinctive feature, except a unary one, in a particular instance in order to represent the contribution which that feature is making to the nature of the segment containing it.	<i>iwúlò</i>	<p><i>Ìs̄òḍṣṣ̄ò tí ó lè (àtì tí ó gb̄òḍḍ̄ò) jé àfikún sí èyikéy-ìì àbùdá apààlà àyàfì alójúkan, nínú àp̄èr̄èr̄è kan p̄àtó láti dúró fún àfikún tí àbùdá ȳen n̄ s̄e fún idáni-dá èḡé tí ó ní.</i></p>

349	Violation	In optimality theory, a term refers to the failure of a form to meet (satisfy) a constraint. Constraint violations can be all-or-nothing (binary) or counted individually (gradient). A violation is symbolized by an asterisk in an optimality tableau. An exclamation mark symbolizes a ‘fatal’ violation, i.e. one which eliminates a candidate.	<i>irúfin</i>	<i>Nínú tíọ̀rì idára-jù, ọ̀rọ̀-ìperì tí ó n tọ̀ka sí ikùnà irísí kan láti tẹ̀ òtẹ̀ kan lẹ̀rùn. Àwọn irúfin òtẹ̀ lẹ̀ jẹ́ aní tàbí ààsí (alójúlòdì) tàbí kí wọn jẹ́ kíkà ní ẹ̀yọ̀ kọ̀kọ̀kan. Ìrúfin ní a máa n tọ̀ka pẹ̀lú àmì iràwò lóri éégúgá-jà idárajù. Àmì iyanu máa n tọ̀ka sí irúfin ‘alágbára’ èyí tí ó máa n pa adije ré pátápátá.</i>
350	visual sonority	The notion of visual sonority is used in the phonological analysis of the various features of sign language.	<i>idún aláfojúrí</i>	<i>ọ̀rọ̀-ìperì idún aláfojúrí ní a máa n lò nínú itupalẹ̀ fonólójì orísìrísì àwọn àbùdá ifàmìsọ̀rọ̀.</i>
351	vowel classification	The description of vowels in terms of phonetic parameters, most often height, backness and rounding, and sometimes also further parameters such as length or nasalization. 2. The representation of vowels in terms of distinctive features.	<i>ìpínsówọ̀ọ̀ fàwẹ̀lì</i>	<i>Ìsàpẹ̀jùwẹ̀àwọn fàwẹ̀lì ní ilàna àwọn àdání mírán bíi gígùn tàbí iránmúpè. Ìsàfihan àwọn fàwẹ̀lì ní ilàna àwọn àbùdá apààlà.</i>

352	vowel echo	The phenomenon in which an underlyingly unspecified vowel automatically takes on the identity of the vowel in an adjoining syllable.	<i>ipèpadà fàwèlì</i>	<i>Ìgbèsè nìpasè èyí tí fàwèlì àìsòdòtò ipilè máa n gba idámò fàwèlì fún ara rẹ̀ nínú silébù àsomó.</i>
353	vowel reduction	Any phonological process in connected speech which makes a vowel shorter, less loud, lower in pitch or more central in quality, or which neutralizes some vowel contrasts in unstressed syllables.	<i>idínkù fàwèlì</i>	<i>Èyíkéyìì ìgbèsè nínú isọ̀ tí ó máa n jẹ́ kí fàwèlì kùrú, jẹ́ àdún púpò, kéré ní iró ohùn tàbí dí àárín ní àwòmó tàbí tí ó máa n jẹ́ kí àwọn iyátò fàwèlì kan pòórà nínú àwọn silébù aláilátèmó.</i>
354	vowel shift	Any phonological development in a language in which a whole class of vowels undergoes a systematic change in quality.	<i>ìgba-fàwèlì-nípò</i>	<i>Èyíkéyìì idàg-bàsókè fonólò-jì nínú èdè kan nìpasè èyí tí ọ̀wọ̀ odidi àwọn fàwèlì máa n rí iyìpadà létòlètò ní àwòmó.</i>
355	Vowel Shift Principle	A putative principle governing the course of vowel shifts. It says: in chain shifts, peripheral vowels become more open and non-peripheral vowels become less open. Labov (1994: 601).	<i>Ìlànà Ìgba-fàwèlì-nípò</i>	<i>Ìlànà ajoygbà tí ó n de àwọn ìgbà-nípò fàwèlì. Ó máa n ní: Nínú àwọn ìgbà-nípò àsoyò, àwọn fàwèlì ègbègbé máa n dì àyanudièpè.</i>
356	vowel space	The space available within the oral cavity for the production of vowels.	<i>ààyè fàwèlì</i>	<i>Ààyè tí ó wà fún pípe àwọn fàwèlì nínú káà ẹ̀nu</i>

357	Weight	In phonology, a concept is used to distinguish levels of syllabic prominence, based on the segmental constituency of syllables. Syllables can be metrically heavy (H) or light (L) .	<i>iwúwo</i>	<i>Nínú fonólójì, ọ̀rọ̀-iperí kan tí a n ló láti ẹ̀yàtò àwọn ipẹ̀le itayọ̀ sílẹ̀bù lóri isọmọ-inú ègẹ̀ àwọn sílẹ̀bù. Àwọn sílẹ̀bù lẹ̀ jẹ̀ atẹ̀wọ̀n tabí afúyẹ̀ ní iwọ̀-iwọ̀hùn.</i>
358	weight-by-position	In some analyses, an analytical procedure by which a segment which would not ordinarily constitute a mora is assigned a mora in certain specified positions - for example, a consonant in syllable-final position. Hayes (1989).	<i>Ìwúwo-ní-ìpò</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn itupalẹ̀ kan, ilàna itupalẹ̀ nìpasẹ̀ èyí tí ègẹ̀ kan tí kò jẹ̀ mórà kan ní ipilẹ̀ tí a yan mórà fún ní àwọn ipò àsọdọtò kan, bíi àpẹ̀rẹ̀, kónsónánùti ní iparí sílẹ̀bù</i>
359	weight-to-stress principle	It is the tendency for heavy syllables to receive stress.	<i>Ìlànà iwúwo-sí-àtẹ̀mọ̀</i>	<i>Èyí ni iṣeṣe fún àwọn fawẹ̀lì atẹ̀wọ̀n láti gba àtẹ̀mọ̀</i>
360	weight unit	A less usual term for mora.	<i>Ìdá iwúwo</i>	<i>Ọ̀rọ̀-iperí fún mórà tí a ò kii sáábà ló.</i>

361	X-tier	A term used in autosegmental phonology to describe a conception of the skeletal tier in which the feature [syllabic] is eliminated, segments being specified for no features at all, thus contrasting with the cv-tier approach; also known as the timing unit or timing tier theory.	<i>ipele-Y</i>	<i>Ọrọ-iperí tí à n ló nínú fonóló-jì ajemádápele-ní láti şapejúwe èrò ìpele kòòfo nípasẹ̀ èyí tí a pa àbùdá [aşesílẹ̀bù] rẹ̀, àwọn ègẹ̀ tí a ó sọ dọtò fún àwọn àbùdá kankan rárá, tí wọn n wa şe iyàtò pẹ̀lú iwòye ipele KF; tí a tún mò sí idá.</i>
362	zero phoneme	A putative phoneme posited, in some analysis, which has no intrinsic phonetic content, such as a juncture phoneme.	<i>fónìmù òfo</i>	<i>Fónìmù àjọgbà tí a dá lábàà, nínú itupalẹ̀ kan, tí kò ní àkóónú fònétìkì àtinúhunmò, bíi fónìmù ikòrìtá</i>
363	zero syllable	In some versions of Metrical Phonology, a second syllable posited as existing within a monosyllabic word for the purpose of maintaining binary branching and avoiding degenerate feet. Giegerich (1985).	<i>sílẹ̀bù òfò</i>	<i>Nínú àwọn èyà fonólójì iwọn iwòhùn sílẹ̀bù kejì tí a dá lábàà pé ó wà nínú ọ̀rò èlẹ̀yọ sílẹ̀bù fún èrèdì láti dí ipẹ̀ka abẹ̀jì mú àti láti yàgò fún èwọn-atéńtẹ̀ aláidàrọ̀.</i>

Conclusion

In this paper, we discussed the formulation of Yorùbá Phonology terms, ninety-one (91) terms were formulated from English phonology terms covering letters S to Z. We made use of the *Information Processing Model* (IPM) framework and employed term creation processes such as expansion, conversion, revival of old words, composition or compounding, affixation, blending, acronyms, abbreviations, clipping borrowing: borrowing, coinage, vowel coalescence, assimilation insertion deletion, idiomatization, ideophonization and euphemism. Some of the terms developed are secondary *articulation* *isénupẹ̀ kejì*, *sibilant afòòsẹ̀pẹ̀*, *Sonority Hierarchy* *Ìpele Ìdún*, *spirantization*,

isodàfúnnupè, *stress language* èdè alátèmó, *subsidiary features* àbùdá aṣègbè, *Syncope* ipàró-fáwèlì-je, *tense* [+tense] Àfipápè/ afiṣanpè [+ipá], *ternary feature* àbùdá alójúmèta, *transparent rule* òfin ahànde (à-hàn-sóde), *unary feature* àbùdá alójúkan, *underspecification* isodòtò-àyoólé (à-yo-silé), *Valency* iye-iwúlò, *weight-to-stress principle*, Ìlànà iwúwo-sí-àtèmó,

References

- Abraham, R.C. 1958 *A Dictionary of Modern Yorùbá*. London: University of London Press.
- Agbéyangí, F. Development of Machine Translation System for Simple Yorùbá Sentences. In Adegbite et al. (eds.) 2013. *Linguistics and Glocalisation of African Languages for Sustainable Development*. Ibadan: Universal Akada Books Ltd.
- Archangeli, Diana. *Underspecification in Yawelmani phonology and morphology* (1984.). Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, MIT.
- Awóbùlúyì, O. (ed.) *Yorùbá Metalanguage*. Vol. II (1990.), Ibadan; University Press Limited
- Awóbùlúyì, O. *Yorùbá Must Not Die Out*. Faculty Lecture: The Faculty of Arts (2014.), Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. 6th February.
- Bámgbosé, A. (ed.) *Yorùbá Metalanguage*. Vol. 1 (1984.)Ibadan; University Press Limited
- Booij, G Morphological Analysis in Bernd Heine and Heiko Narrog (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Grammatical Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009, 563-589.
- Cabre, M.T. *Terminology Theory, Methods and Applications* (1990.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Chomsky, N. and Halle, M. *The Sound Pattern of English* ((1968).)New York: Haper and Row.
- Crystal, D. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* (2008). Malden: Blackwell Publishing.
- Èjèba, O. Igala Numeral System: A Proposal for Modification in Adegbite et al. (eds.) *Linguistics and Glocalization of African Languages for Sustainable Development* (2013). Ibadan: Universal Akada Books Ltd.
- Eludiora et.al *The design implementation of a calendar software system in* Adegbite et al. (eds.) *Linguistics and Glocalisation of African Languages for Sustainable Development* (2013). Ibadan: Universal Akada Books Ltd.
- Fákíndé, J.K. *Yorùbá Modern Practical Dictionary* (2003). New York: Hippocrene Books INC.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN). *Quadrilingual Dictionary of Legislative Terms* Lagos (1991).

- Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria* (1999).
- Giegerich, Hans J. *Metrical Phonology and Phonological Structure: German and English* (1985). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goldsmith, J. *Autosegmental Phonology* (1976). Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- Hyman, L. *Phonology, theory and analysis* (1975). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Kòmóláfẹ̀, O.E. Enhancing the Term Generation Power of the Information Processing Model of Term Creation. In Adegbite et al. (eds.) *Linguistics and Globalisation of African Languages for Sustainable Development* (2013). Ibadan: Universal Akada Books Ltd. 161-171.
- Labov, W. *Principles of Linguistic Change*, vol. 1: *Internal Factors* (1994). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Martinet, A. 'Un ou deux phonemes?' *Acta Linguistica* (1939) 1: 94-103. Reprinted in A. Martinet (1968), *La Linguistique synchronique: etudes et recherches*, 2nd edition, pp. 109-123. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- McCarthy, J. *OCP effects: gemination and antigemination*. *LI* 17:207-263 (1986).
- Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) 1990. *A Vocabulary of Primary Science and Mathematics in Nine Nigerian Languages. Vol. I* Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishing Co. Ltd. for NERDC.
- Ọdétáyò, J.A. *Ìwé Ìtùmò Ọ̀rọ̀ Ìmọ̀ Èdà-Àrìgbéwọ̀n Yorùbá Dictionary of Engineering Physics* (1993) Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- Ọlátẹ́jú, A. 2004. *Language Engineering and Democracy in Nigeria: The example of the Yorùbá Language* in Owólábí and Dasylyva (eds.) *Forms and Functions of English and Indigenous Languages in Nigeria*, Ibadan: Group Publishers, 417-436.
- Olúbòdé-Sawẹ̀, F. 2010. *Yorùbá Vocabulary for Building Construction*. Unpublished, Ph.D. Thesis, Adekunle Ajasin University.
- Olúpònà, O. O. 2017. *Devising Yorùbá Terminology for Human Diseases*. Unpublished, A Master's Project submitted to the department of Linguistics and African Languages, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Owólábí, K. 2004. Developing a Strategy for the Formulation and Use of Yorùbá Legislative Term in Owólábí and Dasylyva (eds.) *Forms and Functions of English and Indigenous Languages in Nigeria*, Ibadan: Group Publishers. 397-416.
- Owólábí, K. 2006. *Nigeria's Native Language Modernization in Specialized Domain for National Development: A Linguist Approach*. Ibadan: University of Ibadan

- Owólabí, K. 2011. *Ìjìnlẹ̀ Ìtupalẹ̀ Èdè Yorùbá: fònètíkì àti fonólójì*. Universal Akada Books Nigeria Limited
- Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Sixth edition 2000. Oxford; Oxford University Press.
- Oyèbádé, F. 2008. *A Course in Phonology*. Ijebu-Ode: Shebiotimo Publication
- Sager, J.C. 1990. *A Practical Course in Terminology Processing*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Sommerstein, Alan H. 1977. *Modern Phonology*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Stevens, Kenneth N. 1972. *The quantal nature of speech: evidence from articulatory-acoustic data*. In E. E. David and ~ B. Denes (eds), *Human Communication: a Unified View*, pp. 51-56. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Trask, R. L. 1996. *A Dictionary of Phonetics and Phonology*. London and New York: Routledge
- Wells, John C. 1990b. *Syllabification and allophony*. In S. Ramsaran (ed.), *Studies in the Pronunciation of English: a Commemorative Volume in Honour of A. c. Gimson*, pp. 76-86. London: Routledge.
- Wiktorija G. et al (2009) *A Linguistic-based approach to term extraction from corpora in the biomedical domain*. 1MIG INRA UR1077, Domaine de Vilvert, F-850 Jouy-en- Josas, France 2 2LaTTiCe UMR 8094 CNRS, 1 rue Maurice Arnoux, F-92120 Montrouge, France.
- Yule, G. 1985. *Tone in Tone Languages*. Cambridge University Press.
- Yusuf, O. 1992. *An Introduction to Linguistics*. Ijebu-Ode Nigeria: Shebiotimo Publication.
- Yusuff. L.A. 2008. *Lexical Morphology in Yorùbá Language Engineering*. Unpublished: A PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Linguistics and Asian Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

The Poetics of Jíbólá Abíódún: A Dissection of Nigeria's Sociopolitical Problems and Yorùbá Worldview.

Ọlágòkè Àlámú and Adekemi Taiwo

Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages

Èkiti State University, Nigeria

gatanfeani62@gmail.com; adekemi.taiwo@eksu.edu.ng

Abstract

The thrust of this paper is the critical analysis of *Àlọ́ N Lọ́*, a collection of Yorùbá poetry, written by Jíbólá Abíódún, employing poetics, as our theoretical framework. The forty-three poems in the book, divided into five parts, are our primary source of data. Using their contents as criteria, the poems have been reclassified into four groups namely: political, sociological, philosophical, and nature. We have observed in the book that Abíódún's poems are ideological, and his commitment made him dedicate his art to the advocacy of certain beliefs especially to those which are political and in aid of social reform. Apart from politics, the belief of the artist includes, moral, religious, aesthetics and their literary consequences.

Keywords: Poetry, Poetics, Ideology, Social Reform and Commitment

Introduction

Yorùbá written poetry has benefitted immensely from its oral form. Before the advent of written literature in the early twentieth century, oral poetry has been the Yorùbá earliest form of artistic expression. Performed in the king's court, the marketplace or any other open space or proscenium, oral poetry, just like live drama has three composite elements which are: the performer (the poet), the stage and the audience. The poet, with his cognitive performance, displays his verbal dexterity before a live audience, who are always present to

appraise his performance and encourage him either through clapping or gifts. The orality of oral poetry is also one of its fundamental features. Writing on the difference between oral and written poetry, Akporobaro (2005:5) observes that in oral poetry:

The emotional tones, pitch changes, dramatic gestures, facial expressions, vocal expressiveness, rhythm of delivery, melody, pause-effects which the reciter can bring into play in the course of his performance are often lost completely in the written version which has no life or phonological-aesthetic possibilities.

But despite the difference in their forms, both Yorùbá oral and written poetry have benefitted from each other and enjoy a symbiotic relationship between them. Oral literature that existed in their traditional forms is now written. It is in this light that critics according to Fáshínà in Dasylyva and Jégéḡḡé (2005: 133) branded this type of poetry as “written orature”.

There are two generations of modern Yorùbá poets. The term ‘modern’ in this sense can be taken to mean the class of poets who came around shortly before Nigeria’s independence and when the University College (now University of Ibadan) established in 1948 started graduating students in Yorùbá studies. Though, Yorùbá poetry had existed between 1927 and 1945, when Dénrélé Qbasá published his three books of Yorùbá poetry through his Ìlàrẹ Printing Press, and the emergence of Josiah Şówándé a.k.a. Şóbò Aróbíodu, whose poems were written in Àrùngbè, an Egba dialect, it was first the University trained historians and linguists such as Akińjogbín, Babalólá, Fálétí, Qlátúnjí and the rest, who really popularized Yorùbá poetry with their various contributions. Thus, we have Akińjogbín, who edited the first Yorùbá anthology, *Ewì Ìwòyí* in (1969), Qlábímtán’s *Ààdóta Àròfò* and *Ewì Oríşirişi* (1969 and 1974 respectively), and Ìşşólá’s *Àfàimò àti Àwọn Àròfò Múran* (1978) among others.

The contributions of some radio poets, to the development of Yoruba poetry, especially after Chief Qbáfẹmí Awólówò established the Western Nigeria Television and Radio services, at the eve of independence in 1959, should also not be forgotten. In this category of poets were Adébáyò Fálétí, Qlátúnbòsún Qládápò, Qlánrẹwájú Adépòjù, Yẹmí Ẹlẹbuiḡon and Àlábí Ọgúndépò to mention a few. The oral performances of these poets are adapted for television and radio, that is, the broadcast media, for commercial purposes.

It was around the tail end of the twentieth century that the staggering volumes of Yorùbá poetry from some academic poets, who decided, to either promote or develop the genre, or use it to rise to the next level of their academic career, emerged. Some of these poets are teachers of Yorùbá literature in Nigerian Universities, who floated their own publishing outlets, after the

indigenization of publishing houses took place in the 1990s. It was during this period that we witnessed the *avanlanche* of Yorùbá poetry texts in the market such as Adéléke's *Aṣọ Ígbà* (1997) and *Wá Gbó* (2001), Adéjùmò's *Ro O Re* (2002), Adébòwálé's *Ewì Àtàtá* (2003) and Atari Àjànàkú's *Orin Ewúro* (2008). Jíbólá Abíódún also belongs to this class of Yorùbá poets. The only difference between Abíódún and these other academic poets mentioned above, is that while others specialized in Yorùbá literature and are now Professors in this field. Abíódún is a Professor of Yorùbá phonology. It is imperative that his dynamism is one of the things that motivated him to delve into Yorùbá literature. His traditional, cultural background and experience at Ìmòde, a rural settlement in the present Òkè-Èrò Local Government of Kwara State, from where he hails, must have also given him some experience for his good understanding of the Yorùbá philosophy, worldview and indigenous cultural values, which are the foci of his poems and upon which his poetics is foregrounded.

Poetics and Commitment

The term poetics is derived from the Greek word 'poietikos' which means pertaining to poetry. Specifically, poetics is a systematic theory of literary forms and literary discourse. Jégédé (2005:133) succinctly describes poetics as a theory that "defines the nature of literature, in this case, poetry, its kind and forms, its resources of device and structure, its governing principles, the condition under which it exists and its effects on readers." The difference between poetics and hermeneutics is its focus not on the meaning of a text, but rather its understanding of how a text's different elements come together and produce certain effects on the reader. Poetics can be employed to interpret the aesthetics, stylistics, meaning and other qualities of a poem and how these are used to evoke meanings. The language of poetry or the language employed by most poets, specifically create images on the minds of their readers and expresses their emotions, experiences and ideas. The internal structure of a poem depends largely on the consciousness of the poet or the experiences of his environment.

The romantic theory of poetry observes that the poet feeds on emotions and sensations of anger, anxiety, despair, fear, hunger, and love which he shares with humanity. Aristotle has also succinctly described poetry as something "more philosophical and more worthy of serious attention than history; for while poetry is concerned with universal truths, history treats of particular facts" (On the Arts of Poetry: 43-44).

Writing on the effects of commitment in literature, Nwoga (1973: 39) observes that literature cannot fail to have the effect of changing men's consciousness and making them aware of what previously they had not guessed.

Nwoga views literature as a commitment conceived towards making life more meaningful and satisfying to individuals within a community and a factor of sensitivity of the poetic consciousness to the environment and life at all levels within the society of the writer.

Chinweizu, Onwuchekwu and Madubuike (1980:250) argue that the commitment of the literature an artist produces should be separated from the writer's political or social commitment which he may wish to engage in as a citizen. An artist who engages in social and political activism, according to these authors, performs this function only in his capacity as an ordinary citizen. But Goldmann (1964:8) and Àlámú (1998:34) are both convinced that it is not totally possible to separate the commitments of a writer as a citizen and what informed his writing. The combination of the personality of a literary artist and his environment, according to these authors, are always reflected in the work of the artist and his work should be seen as an integral part of his life and mode of behaviour. Literary writers whose works dwell on social causes show their commitment through the subject-matter they choose and the manner they treat such themes.

Many contemporary Yoruba poets have shown their commitment through their writings and their ideological focus on the Marxist Theory of Social Emancipation, which abhors oppression and totally support the emancipation of the poor masses. The works of Adélékè (1997), Àtári Àjànákú (1998), Adébòwálé (1998), and Adéjùmò (2002), who are all academic or 'regenerative' poets have diverse subject-matters which are their compulsive response to the socio-political ills of their society, though the advocacy for feminism is the major focus of the last two poets. The basic ideology thrust, of these new voices, in the Yoruba poetry enterprise, "is grafted on their tenacious sense of identity with the proletariat" (Fáshínà 2005). These poets perceive poetry as a weapon of social reformation and their poetry "resonate a radical ideological castigation of vices as manifested in Nigerian leaders and the political class".

Abíódún belongs to this class of poets. In his collection, *Àlò Ñ Lọ*, which is the focus of this work, he demonstrates his Marxist and revolutionary sentiments, as we shall see later, against Nigerian leaders and their oppressive stance against the masses, the proletariat. Just as Fáshínà in Dasylyva and Jégédé (2005:157) has described the poetry of Òṣundáre, Abíódún also "conceives poetry as a philosophical, witty, and lucid mechanism of conveying ideological views, for the purpose of stirring the masses into positive social action" and as a radical attack on the bourgeoisie and the capitalists in the Nigerian society.

The Poetics of Jíbolá Abíódún

Abíódún's *Àlọ́ Ní Lọ́* is a collection of forty-three poems of diverse themes divided into five parts. The failure of the titles given to the five parts for not having direct relationship with the thematic contents of the poems prompted our re- classification of the poems. Employing the thematic contents of the poems as criteria therefore, we have been able to classify the poems into four classes as reflected in the table below:

Table 1. Thematic Paradigms in *Àlọ́ Ní Lọ́*.

S/No.	Political Themes	S/No	Sociological Themes	S/No	Yoruba Philosophy and Worldview	Agriculture
1	Dèdè Ọmọ	1	Ìlú Le	1	Erùpè ni Ìwọ	1. Ọpẹ
	Dèpè	2	Agbópáá	2	Ìgbà Ara	2. Eran Ọsin
2	Ètò Ìlú	3	Ètàn Tútù	3	Àbọ̀ Ìsinmi	
3	Ayé Padà	4	Ọrun Mèsin		Oko	
4	Akọni Ọmọ	5	Asọ	4	Ori	
	Òòduà	6	Owó	5	Lára	
5	Àlọ́ O	7	Ọmọ Bẹ̀rẹ		Àyànmọ	
6	Èrú Ọba	8	Ọmọlará	6	Ọba Àwúre	
7	Àsá	9	Àlọ́ Ní Lọ́	7	Ìwúre	
	Alágbára	10	Ìtọ́jú Abirùn	8	Ọfo Lóri Ọfo	
8	Kánsẹ̀lọ́	11	Ilé Là Ní Gbá			
	Di-Kánsẹ̀lọ́	12	Wèrè Dùn Ún			
9	Asọjà		Wò			
10	Aṣeni-Báni-dárò	13	Sùúrù			
		14	Àlọ́ Àlọ́			
11	Ofọ́	15	È Yé Fenu			
12	Ìṣẹ́ Ní Sẹ́		Tẹ́mbẹ́lú			
	Dúdú	16	Alájọgbé Ló			
			Kù			
		17	Èdè Alágbe			
		18	Àjàgbé Ọkọ			
			Ejò			
		19	Ifáfiti			
		20	Nàìjá			
		21	Ìsọ́ Bábéli			

The thematic paradigms in *Àlọ́ Ní Lọ́* are: political, sociological, Yorùbá philosophy and religion and Agriculture. The political poems are those with

political themes, which promote true democratic values and practices in Nigerian history, dwelling on various emergent governments whether military and civilian. Such poems postulate policies, report political events, assess and expose bad rulers. The sociological poems deal with the various experiences from human relationships, man's behavior and interactions, while the poems under Yorùbá philosophy and religion are exposé on ethics, cosmology, ontology and existence. The poems under agriculture, deal with plants and animals. Though, this classification may not be clear-cut, as some of the poems may have their roots in other classes, but it is a fair representation of the major contents of the poems.

Right from the beginning of the text, Abíódún's dedication of the book to all human rights activists in the universe exposes the nature of his commitment and gives us an insight into the class of his polemics: "*Fún àwọn ajàfétòṣ-omònyàn nilé, lóko àti léyìn odí*" (To all human rights activists all over the world). Though, human rights encompass a wide range of rights, there are five basic human rights, according to *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. These are: right to equality, freedom from discrimination, right to life, liberty and personal security, freedom from slavery, and freedom from torture and degrading treatment. All these also form parts of the principles of the Marxist socialist theory, which condemns poverty, disease, social ills, oppression, suppression and lack of freedom, created by the ruling class and ravaging the masses. The social inequalities in the Nigerian capitalist society, bad governance and rulers are also the focal point of Abíódún's political poems. His poetics, apart from assuming a revolutionary significance, is also founded on the Yorùbá worldview and indigenous cultural values. The themes of his poems are rooted in life and human experience.

In his 'Preface', Abíódún also presents himself as a fearless reformist, who can talk the truth to people in power, without minding whose ox is gored and the repercussions:

*Bá a wí a ó ku
Bá à wí a ó rọrun
Èyí ó wù ká ẹ
A ò ní ju sínú ayé
Ká kúkú wí èyí tó jẹ òdodo
Tori bírọ lọ lógún ọdún - -*

(If we say it, we would die
If we refused to say it, we shall still surely die
No matter what our preference is
We would not be alive forever

It is better to say the truth
For if lies exist for years- -)

It is no exaggeration that right from the beginning; Abíódún takes a strong poetic stand against Nigeria's problems of disenchantment, bad leadership, turbulence and social ills, which have slowed down the development of our nation.

Political Themes

In 'Dèdè ọmọ Dèpẹ', which opens the collection, the themes of oppression and social inequality are the focal point. Dèdè, the son of Dèpẹ is helpless and cannot control his emotion in the face of oppression and consequently resigned himself to fate:

*Dèdè èéşe tó o bú sékún?
Èéşe tó o kárí sò bí ọgèdè?
Èéşe tó o káwọ gbera?
Èéşe tó ọ gbín?*

(Dèdè why did you burst into tears?
Why is your head bowed like a banana tree?
Why did you fold your arms?
Why are you silent?)

The barrage of questions seeks answers to Dèdè's countenance and helplessness. His reaction is a reflection of the oppression and the hopelessness of his situation from his oppressor(s):

*Dèdè lálágbára ọ şe é báwíjọ
Alágbára ọ se é bá sasọ
Alágbára ọ şe é bá jagun
Èyàn tó fẹ kú, ní í dojú kọbọn*

(Dèdè says it is senseless to argue with a powerful man (oppressor)
It is senseless to trade words with the oppressor
It is senseless to go to war with the oppressor
It is only someone who wants to die that faces the gun)

The symbolism in this poem should not be lost. Dèdè represents the oppressed, the masses, who daily contend with the oppression and maltreatment

of the unrepentant, belligerent, and oppressive leaders and rulers in Nigeria. This is a harsh reality of life amongst the proletariat. Abíódún deliberately chooses Dèdè as the name of that character, who is being oppressed and his parent, Dèpè to reveal the idiotic response and the foolishness of the Nigerian masses, who rather than employ revolutionary means to fight their oppressive rulers to gain their freedom and make their lives better, resign to fate and abrogate their desires. The syllable ‘dè’ in Dèdè and the name Dèpè, which is synonymous with ‘Òdè’, a Yoruba word for a stupid person, is employed by Abíódún to describe the attitudinal response of Nigerians to the oppression meted out to them by their leaders. No wonder, the last lines of the poem is a call by the poet to stir the masses into a revolutionary social action by outspokenly and outrageously calling them out to protest against the oppression of the ruling class:

Béyàn torí èyí tí ò gbin píní

Béyàn torí èyí tí ò fò ò fò

Béyàn torí èyí tí ò wí ǹnkan

Àfàimò kíyà ó mó jẹ́dà olúwa rẹ́ pa

If as a result of this someone refuses to talk

If as a result of this someone keeps silent

If as a result of this someone keeps mute

It is doubtful then, if suffering does not kill one)

The parallelism in the first three lines of this verse stresses and emphasizes the mood of the poet. ‘Eto Ilu’ condemns the military rule in Nigeria. It sees the military rule as oppressive, suppressive and coercive. The military regimes of Buhari, Babangida and Abacha, which were characterized by high levels of oppression, through the use of the gun to silence the opposition and to suppress criticism are pertinent examples. This poem, therefore, is a response to these misrules and preaches the return of the military to the barracks:

Ìbọ̀n ò ̀şe é tòlú

Ìtájèsilẹ̀ ò lè múlúú tòrò

Àgbá rírọ̀ kì í ̀sònà isinmi

Ìfẹ̀míşòfò kì í ̀sònà àlàáfíà

Ká panupò wí fónibọ̀n

Ká panupò wí fátèjèsilẹ̀

Kaakí kì í ̀şaşọ̀ ighoro

È kó kaakí padà sí b́arékè

(The gun cannot bring peace to the city

Bloodletting cannot make the city to be at peace
 Mortar shelling is not the path to peace
 Wasting lives does not create peace
 Let us unite and condemn gun carriers
 Let us unite to condemn the murderers
 Military uniform (the army) is not befitting to the civil society
 Return military uniform (the army) to the barracks

Abiódún takes a strong poetic stand against the inglorious rule of General Abacha in ‘Ayé Padà’ and ‘Àlò O’. The oppression, anarchy and deprivation of human rights witnessed during Abacha’s regime are condemned by the poet in the second poem. ‘Ayé Padà’, one of the shortest poems, is also a sad commentary on the visit of some Yorùbá traditional rulers, led by the Late Ọ̀ni of Ifẹ̀, Ọ̀ba Sijúwadé, to pacify Abacha and plead their allegiance, even in the face of his misrule. This episode generated a lot of controversies, as the majority of the Yorùbá saw this as a betrayal of trust and lack of the traditional rulers support for the agitation of the Yorùbá majority in seeing M.K.O. Abiólá claim his mandate. This poem lends its voice to this shameful debacle:

Enu àşę denu èbẹ̀
Idà wọn dọbẹ̀ ibẹşu
Abẹ̀ è ráláşę èkeji òòşà
Kò lẹ̀ pàşę fẹ́rú òòşà mó
Apàşę şe bẹ̀
Ó dagbàşę

(The mouth of authority now becomes one for begging
 Their swords become mere instruments for yam peeling
 Can you now see the king?
 Who has no more authority to command the slave of the deity?
 The man of authority has now become a slave)

Abiódún, no doubt, expresses his concern about the power obsession of General Abacha in ‘Àlò O’. Employing the popular folktale story of ‘The Tortoise and the Elephant’ as an allegory, he captures the happenings in the life of one of the most vilified Nigeria’s post-independence rulers.

When General Abacha on November 17, 1993 pushed aside the Shónẹ̀kàn-led Interim Government and took over power, he immediately declared himself as the Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and

refused to accept the June 12 election result popularly believed to be won by M.K.O. Abíólá. He took some devastating steps, which make Nigeria become a pariah state in the international community. These include: the killing of Ken Saro Wiwa and the Ogoni nine, the abolishment of all existing political institutions of the Third Republic, banning all political parties and attempting to eliminate all opposition and the imprisonment of General Ọ́básanjó and Yaradua for a phantom coup. The weak economy he created and his poor human rights record, and social injustice make him very unpopular.

Abacha's regime witnessed a lot of killings, arrests and the outlawing of civil societies such as the National Democratic Coalition (NADECO) and labour unions. When he later decides to succeed himself, without resorting to any election, he creates five new political parties, and through coercion, intimidation and rent-seeking, all the parties nominate him as their presidential candidate, thereby dubiously legitimizing himself as the next 'civilian' president of Nigeria. This deception and his quest for absolute power is what Abíódún tries to re-enact in 'Àlọ́ O'. The poem condemns the politics of dehumanization and alienation offered by the vicious Abacha.

The two songs in the poem, as presented in the popular folk story of "The Tortoise and the Elephant", where the Tortoise cajoles the Elephant as the new king of the animal kingdom but plans and initiates his death, represent the attitude of the hypocritical rented crowd, who hypocritically presented and supported Abacha as the only candidate suitable to rule Nigeria:

- i) *A ó mérin ọ́ba*
Èrèkúẹ̀wẹ̀
A ó mérin ọ́ba
Èrèkúẹ̀wẹ̀

(We shall make the Elephant the king
 Èrèkúẹ̀wẹ̀
 We shall make the Elephant the king
 Èrèkúẹ̀wẹ̀)

- ii) *Erin kárelé ò wá ọ́ba*
Èrin yéyẹ, erín yeyẹ
 (The elephant, come home and be the king
 Èrin yéyẹ, erín yeyẹ)

From lines 15-24 of the poem, there are reflections of the power-drunk, Abacha, who fails to ponder, why he is the only choice to rule Nigeria, by the hypocritical few, in a country of more than two hundred million people:

Dìndìnrin ò mojú
Kò mò pé yòyò lenu aráyé
Èhànnà ò mọra
Kò mò pe òfin ni wón n̄ sìn 'un lọ
Agbára rú bo ẹranko lójú
Ó lóun n̄ rẹ é gùntẹ baba òun
Àwọn ẹni ibi n̄ ti Dẹpẹ gbòn-ón gbòn-ón
Òun nàà n̄ dagbórú dònà rú
Kó lẹ gori itẹ wàhàlà

(The stupid man is not discernible
 He does not know that human beings are not truthful
 The fool has no inkling
 He does not know he is being led to a chasm
 The animal is power-drunk
 He says he is going to ascend his father's throne
 The evil people push Dẹpẹ like a fool
 He too begins to be ruthless
 So that he can be able to ascend the difficult throne)

The poet deliberately chooses his adjectives to describe Abacha: 'Dìndìnrin' (stupid), 'Èhànnà' (mad), and 'Dẹpẹ' (stupid) as seen earlier in the etymology of Dẹpẹ. Before Abacha's sham of a transition could take place, he dies suddenly and unexpectedly. There are different accounts on the nature of his death, which is still one of the greatest unsolved mysteries of the last century. While one account has the conspiratorial theory that he was poisoned and killed, another says he died of a natural cause: a heart attack. Abíódún must have supported the first account by employing the following poetic expressions:

Èhànnà ò lẹ jọba
Lóri ọmọlúàbí èniyàn
Apààyàn ha lẹ jọba
Kílúú rójú kó rááyè?
Àmọsá, Èdumàrè á sĩşé àrà
Àwọn elédè méjì á sìn apàniyàn dé kòtò
Ká fi şètùtù fẹşè
Èşè àwọn tó sọ Nàìjá dọjìyà.

(The mad man cannot be king
 Over good people
 Can a murderer become the king
 And the city will have peace?
 But as the Lord will perform his wonders
 The people with two languages accompany
 the murderer to the pit of hell
 As a sacrifice for atonement
 For the sins of people who brought Nigeria into disrepute)

In Yorùbá cosmology, performing a sacrifice symbolizes seeking a solution to a problem. Writing on the dimensions of sacrifice, Èlèbùibòn (2014:35) observes that the advent of problems into the universe underlies the rationale behind the practice of sacrifice, especially among the Yorùbá. Sacrifice according to Èlèbùibòn, is propitiatory and this is why it is also called ‘Ètùtù’ (that which propitiates). Through the practice of sacrifice, all forms of adversaries, according to Èlèbùibòn “are rubbed off the path of man and nation and thus usher in positive fortunes of various magnitudes and complexions”. In the light of this, ‘Àlò O’ is a poetic outcry against the oppressive military regime of Abacha, who the writer uses his death as a metaphor for the propitiation of the bad fortunes his regime has brought to Nigeria.

Other political poems, which we have not been able to analyze because of space include ‘Àṣá Alágbára’, ‘Kánsélò Dì-Kánsèlòd’, ‘Asòjà’, ‘Aṣeni-Báni-dàrò’, and ‘Akòni Ọmọ Ọòduà’. In the last poem, which is also important in this political discourse, the poet urges his readers to sing the praises of some Nigerian true democrats, who have left good legacies in the history of Nigerian politics. He has catchy and interesting description of each of these politicians. For instance, Awólówò is described as:

Bàbá èlèkòò-òfè
Awo tó fòwò sawo
Akòni ṣe é kó tó jagòsílè
 (The free education man
 The priest who practiced priesthood with reverence
 The hero did well before he drew the curtain)

While Wólé Ṣóyínká is described as:

Ọmọ oṣó tó wólé
Oṣowólé ó yí ọn ká
 (The child of Oṣó who showed up
 Oṣó emerged and rounded them up)

Other Nigerian patriots mentioned in this poem are: Adékúnlé Ajásin, Àlání Akínrinádé, Gàní Fáwèhinmi, Anthony Enahoro and Bèèkòlóláí Kútì.

Sociological Themes

As we have mentioned above (under classification of Abiódún's poems), sociological poems deal directly with social problems arising from interpersonal relationships, social structures like friends and family, the poet's social experience and the societal ills. These poems are devoid of any political ideology, class struggle and consciousness. Themes such as thuggery and contract killing in 'Èrú Ọba', armed robbery in 'Ìlú Le', corruption in 'Agbópàá', good character in 'Ọba Àwúre', fake prophets in 'Ọrún Mèsìn', family planning in 'Ọmọ Bẹrẹ' and 'Ọmọlará', sex perversion in 'Ilé Là Ẹ Gbá', treachery in 'Sùúrù' and drunkenness in 'Wèrè Dùn Ẹn Wò' have been identified as social poems among others.

Killing and murdering of the innocent by thugs employed by political leaders are strongly condemned in 'Èrú Ọba'. The heartlessness of these evil doers, who do not think deeply about the outcome or repercussion of the havoc they are asked to wreak is brought into limelight by the author, who feels that these evil doers would always reap the evil they sow at the end of the day. The poet also preaches repentance to these set of people:

*Bùtúlù tí ò ñiwọ́ aburú
Inú iyà ní wọ́n ń kú sí
Abùtátù tí ò ronúpìwàdà
Kì í fọwọ́ rọrí sùn
Sùgómù tí ń gbè fọba
Kì í lóókọ ire nínú itàn*

(The evil men that fail to stop committing evil
Die in problems and pains
The wicked who does not repent
Die with regrets
The idiot who is loyal to the government
Has no good name in history)

In 'Ìlú Le', armed robbery and killings by contract killers, which are prevalent crimes in Nigeria, and which create social insecurity and fear among the citizenry are the central themes. The poet is of the opinion that any nation fraught with these vices, cannot witness any concrete development. The

message the poet tries to pass to his readers about these social menaces can be seen in the few lines that end the poem:

Bóyá a ò mọ̀
Pé ilú tókàn èyàn ò ti balẹ̀
Pé ilú tó dádé fẹ̀rù òun ìpayà
Pé ilú tí pákáleke òun hilàhílo ti jọba
Ìlú téyàn ò ti lẹ̀ sọ òótọ̀ inú ẹ̀
Bóyá a ò mọ̀
Pé ilú bẹ̀ẹ̀ ò le mókè
Ìlú bẹ̀ẹ̀ ó máa rá kòrò ni
Níbi ilú olóòótọ̀ ti ñ gòkè àgbà.

(Perhaps we do not know
 That a country where the people are not at peace
 That a country where fear and apprehension reign
 That a country where alarm and fright are at the peak
 A country where truth is forbidden
 Perhaps we do not know
 That such country cannot witness any development
 Such country will just be crawling
 Where truthful countries are developing.)

The use of parallelism with the various adjectives synonymous with fear or fright denotes the serious hazard armed robbery and contract killings contribute to Nigeria's backwardness and retarded growth.

The imagery in 'Agbópàá, an imitation of the word Ọlópàá (Policeman) evokes concrete mental images, which informs our emotional response about the Nigerian police. The imagery assumes the picture of a pot-bellied Nigerian policeman, in a black apparel, clutching either a baton or a gun at a roadblock erected for collecting money or bribes from motorists. The simile in their description has a physical similarity with their outlook:

Wọ̀n á gbé filà rù
Á dàbí àtẹ̀ ọ̀rúnlá
Aşọ wọ̀n á dúdú bí aşọ ọ̀fọ̀
Ìbọ̀n lọ̀mọ̀ iyá a wọ̀n
Wọ̀n á dì mọ̀ ọ̀n bí itàkùn dì mọ̀gi
 (They will carry the cap on their head
 It will look like the tray used to dry okro
 Their uniform is as black like a mourning dress
 They clutch to their guns

They clutch to it like a creeping plant clutches the tree)

The corruption in the Nigerian police is also rightly captured by Abíódún in the following poetic expressions:

Bó o léjọ àre
Wọn á sọ ó dèbi
Bó o léjọ èbi
Wọn á sọ ó dàre
Tórọ kọbọ, àjọ àkòódá
Ni wọn n fipá gbà lẹba ọnà
Bé ẹ mọdaràn méfà
Ẹ ẹ rágbópàá méjì nbẹ
Abánìgbófínró,
Tí n fọfín wọnú ẹrọfọ.
 (If you have a good case
 They will turn it to a bad one
 If you have a bad case
 They will turn it to a good one
 They collect thrift without contribution
 This is what they collect with force on the road
 If six criminals are arrested
 Two policemen will be involved in the disgraceful act
 The people who should enforce the law,
 Are the people enmeshed in crime?)

This poem alludes to the menace of corruption in the Nigerian police, which has reached a crescendo, and requires urgent attention by the government. The Nigerian police are always in the news for negative reasons like extra-judicial killing, extortion, unlawful arrest, robbery and all forms of evil. The relationship between them and the people they are paid to guide is sour based on their high index of corruption. There have been no Inspector General of Police, for instance, appointed by the President, over the years, who have been able to positively reform the police, because they also benefit from the corruption perpetrated within the force. Perhaps, the grave consequence this is having on the entire nation must have prompted the poet to reiterate the endemic situation and call the attention of the masses and those in authority to this social menace.

The thematic preoccupation of ‘Ọmọ Bẹẹẹ’ and ‘Ọmọlará’ is the advantages and disadvantages of family planning respectively. Family planning is an activity that enables a family to freely determine the number of children they

want to have and be able to cater for based on its resources. There are advantages of planning a family. These include spacing of children for the woman to regain health after delivery, and to help the family economically for advancement. Since parents are responsible for providing education, shelter, clothing and food for their children, family planning has an important role to play in the long-term impact on the financial situation of any family. The children that evolved through family planning are usually well trained and pride of the parents. This is the message of the poet in *Ọmọlará*:

Bó o lówó bó ò bí
Owó á dowó olówó
Bó o kólé bó ò bí
Ilé á dilé ọmọ ọlọmọ
Ámó, ọmọ tá a kó là ń pè lómọ
Ọmọ tá a tó ní ń daşọ àsírí bọ̀yàn.
 (If you have money but has no child
 Your money will be inherited by someone else
 If you build a house but has no child
 The house will become another child's home
 But, a child that is well trained will be a reliable child
 It is a child that we train that covers one's secret.)

The reverse to this situation above, is the analogy in '*Ọmọ Beęę*'. This title is derived from a Yoruba proverb: "*Ọmọ beęę, ọ̀şì beęę*" (Having too many children brings a lot of poverty). The tendency of not having enough resources to train too many children, due to lack of family planning, is very high. Such untrained children live no quality life and the parents may be unable to give them the best education. Such children are always a burden to the parents and the society:

Ọmọ ti kúnlé şóşó bí ẹmọ
Kò sáşọ lórùn ẹgbón
Ìhòhò làbúrò ń rìn
Oúnjẹ ò şe déédé
Gbogbo ọmọ gbẹ gógó bí i panla
Méjì nínú méjọ ló ń yuń sùkùù tẹlẹ
Méjì òhún ti dari sílẹ kò sówó àmútómọ mọ
 (Children are many in the house like rats
 The eldest child is naked
 The junior moves around nakedly
 Food is not constant)

All the children are malnourished)
 Only two out of eight were attending school
 The two are back at home with no money to train them again)

Lack of family planning leads to lack of dignity in a family and can cast a shadow over the future of the family and children. Developing countries like Nigeria are facing a lot of problems because of the rise in population and the challenge of poor quality of life. Illiteracy and religious belief have led to population explosion. Proper education and awareness created by this poet can be used to change the attitude of people who fail to plan their families towards living a better quality of life. In these poems, analyzed above, and the other poems classified as sociological, Abíódún dealt with the major causes of social problems which include poverty, rapid population growth, lack of education, superstitious beliefs, alcohol abuse and prostitution.

Yoruba Philosophy and Worldview

Yoruba philosophy centers on the beliefs or conceptions of the Yorùbá about the universe at large, and the world of human affairs. Abíódún's philosophical poems and the areas of philosophy they dwell on include 'Erùpè ni Ìwọ' (You are sand), 'Orí' (Head), 'Lára Àyànmọ' (A Part of Destiny) and 'Ófo Lóri Ófo' (Funeral Dirge on Untimely Death), 'Ọba Àwúre' (Good Character), 'Ìwúre' (Prayer and Religion), and 'Ìgbà Ara' (Make Hey While the Sun Shines), 'Àbọ̀ Ìsinmi Oko' (Retirement). All these poems dwell on phenomenology, existentialism, and religion.

The Yorùbá, according to Àlámú (2004: 116), believe that "most events in the life of man are decreed or destined to occur by some inevitable or inexorable necessity." Since destiny involves man's life events and the totality of his experience on earth and after-life, then it shares some characteristics with phenomenology, existentialism, religion and is therefore amenable to these philosophical approaches. The Yorùbá have 'a trimorphous conception of destiny' (Ìdòwú 1962:173). In this trimorphous conception, a person obtains his destiny in one of three ways- kneeling down and choosing one's destiny (*àkún-lẹ̀yàn*), kneeling and receiving one's destiny (*àkúnlẹ̀gbà*) and a destiny that is affixed to one (*àyànmọ*). In all these cases, and according to the Yorùbá myth, it is the soul of man that chooses his '*orí*'. And it is this '*orí*' (not the physical *orí* (head) but the inner one also referred to as the personality essence) that directs the affairs of man on earth. The excerpts from 'Orí' and 'Lára Àyànmọ' respectively have referential meanings to this Yorùbá belief:

(i) *Ta ló rán ni wáyé*

Bí ìì sàpéré;
Ta ló sìn 'nìyàn wáyé
Bí ìì sàpésìn
Ta lèdá tí i ṣadánìwáyé?
Orí lèdá, orí l'Èlédàà ẹni.
 (Who sent us to this world
 If not 'ori'
 Who accompanied us to the world
 If not 'ori'
 Who is the being that brings one to earth?
 'Ori' is the being, 'ori' is one's creator.)

ii) *Àyànmọ lèdá n pè níkú*
Gbogbo wa la yan ikú
Àkúnlẹyàn là n pè níkú
Gbogbo wa la jẹ gbèse ẹ
Ojọ a yàn la à mọ
Ojọ a dá làdìitú
Àmẹ̀nìkan ò ní mọ̀jọ ọ̀lọ̀jọ ọ.
Ojọ a bá sùn tá à jí
Ohun a yàn ló dé báwa.

(Destiny is what we call death
 We all chose death
 Destiny is what we refer to as death
 We are all indebted to death
 The day we chose to die is what is unknown
 The day we chose is what is knotty
 But no one will die on any other person's day
 The day we sleep but refused to wake up
 It is the day we chose)

'Erùpẹ̀ ni Ìwọ' and 'Ọ̀fọ̀ Lóri Ọ̀fọ̀' are lessons on the vanity of life. The first poem talks about man's quest for materialism, especially the madness for land acquisition, which has made many people forget that no matter the portions of land they own, they shall surely leave them effortlessly when they die. The poem challenges us to limit our love for materialism as it will surpass us eventually. The second poem relates with the first but has a direct link and originated from a popular bible passage in Ecclesiastes chapter one especially verse two: "Vanity upon vanity, all is vanity". The word 'vanity' originated

from the Latin word ‘Vaness’, which means ‘empty vain’ and can be described as an “excessive pride in or admiration of one’s own abilities, appearance or achievements”. This is a folly of men. The vanity in the activities of our politicians and our military cabals, who have always misdirected and lied to the ruled, is the focus of this poem.

‘Ọba Àwúre’ is the short form of the Yorùbá proverb “Ìwà ọba àwúre”(- Good character transcends goodluck charm). This can also mean character and not charm is the hallmark to a successful life. The Yorùbá place premium on good character as embedded in their concept of *omolúàbí* - a concept that connotes virtue, good character or behaviour. Some of the virtues such person, who imbibes this concept must exude include love, patriotism, respect, humility, truthfulness among others. In the Yorùbá ontology of personality, the Yorùbá in traditional thoughts, according to Yòlòyè in Ògúndèjì and Àkàngbé (2009:31), “consider personality as having four components namely: orí (the inner head/ destiny), ogbón (wisdom), iwà (character) and iṣẹ́ (handiwork). The high premium the Yoruba attach to iwà, (good character) as the greatest component of personality, which they believe supersedes all other things in life, is the message Abíódún tries to pass across in this poem:

*Ká má a rántí pe
Ìwà lowó, Ìwà ọlọ̀,
Ìwà ọba àwúre*

(Let us remember that
Good character is money, good character is wealth
Good character transcends good luck charm.)

The reason Abíódún employs ‘Ìwúre’, his last poem in this collection, and a traditional Yorùbá form of prayer, is perhaps his belief according to the Yorùbá religious philosophy that prayer can answer or solve all problems. In this poem, therefore, the poet emotively offers prayers to God and other deities for prosperity, good health, wisdom, and long life for his audience or readers. And he uses this to round-up his poetic endeavor.

‘Ìgbà Ara’ and ‘Àbò Ìsinmi Oko’ are short forms of two Yoruba proverbs: ‘Ìgbà ara là á búra’ (Make hay while the sun shines) and ‘Ilé làbò ìsinmi oko’ (It is one’s house that provides rest after labour) respectively. These two proverbs are embedded in Yorùbá philosophy and are universal truths. While the lesson in the first proverb is the needs to work hard while one is still young and have the ability, as strength must have waned at old age to do any strenuous job:

Ká rìn nígbà ẹ̀ṣẹ̀ ẹ̀ṣe é rìn
Ká sánpá nígbà apá ẹ̀ṣe é sán
Ká rẹ̀rù nígbà orí gbòṣùkà
Ká pòṣẹ̀ṣẹ̀ nígbà ará sánangun
Ewú orí ò ẹ̀ṣe é sáré ká
Ara káńgẹ̀káńgẹ̀ ò ẹ̀ṣe é pòṣẹ̀ṣẹ̀
Seélé ní ñ jẹ̀ ẹ̀eébá
Àiṣeélé ní ñ firun funfun gbàárù

(Let us walk when our legs are still strong
 Let us use our hands when we can still use them
 Let us carry loads when we can still use our head
 Let us work hard when our body is still strong
 White hair cannot be used to run around
 A weak body cannot do hardwork
 Let us plan for old age
 Lack of planning makes one struggle at old age.)

The second poem preaches that home is sweet after labor. Put in another way, it is good to prepare for retirement in one's home after service and after sojourning in any other city or country:

Èní b́aràjò
Kó rántí pélé làbò isinmi oko
Bá a bá ñ ríṣe lájò
Ká rántí pèsè isinmi sílé ẹ̀ṣe pàtàkì

(Anyone who is on a journey
 Should remember that retirement is at home after labor
 If we are successful abroad
 Let us remember that retiring at home is important)

Agriculture

The benefits of agriculture to man and the nation is the focus of Abiodun in the two poems: 'Òpẹ' and 'Eran Òsin' under agriculture. According to him, agriculture has played and is still playing its roles in the provision of food and resources to individuals and the nation at large. Humans still use plants and animals for food, labor, tools and to enhance their income.

Analysis of the Stylistic Devices in the Poems

The stylistic devices employed in Jibólá Abíódún's *Àlọ́ N' Lọ́* are discussed in this section. The poet makes use of different stylistic devices to add flavor to the poetry and even pass his message across to the readers. It is crucial to recognize and to affirm the enduring importance of poetry, this anthology of poems is very much about how to deepen and to articulate our appreciation of his poetry. Matterson and Jones (2011:3) opine that appreciation of poetry involves observation of the poet's craft, the poet as a shaper of words, and the skill of putting words together in memorable and significant ways. Abiodun's poems are full of different stylistic devices that add aesthetic values to the poems. The devices shall be divided into two parts:

- i. The General Features
- ii. The Characteristic Features

The general features of oral poetry found in Abíódún's poems are repetition, parallelism, wordplay, metaphor, simile, personification, and allusion while the characteristic features of Yorùbá oral poetry are *oriki* (praise/panegyric poetry), *ẹ̀sẹ̀ Ifá* (Ifá divination poetry), *òwẹ* (proverbs) and *àlọ́* (folktales).

Repetition

According to Olatunji (1984:17), repetition is the basis of parallelism and tonal counterpoint. Repetition as a literary term is the using of the same word or phrase two or more times in a poem or prose. Repetition can be lexico-structural, lexical or semantic. Lexico-structural repetition is either full or partial. Full repetition is the repetition of the whole sentence structure alongside all the lexical items occurring in it. In *Naija (Nigeria)*, the poet while complaining about the deploring state of the nation reiterates the below sentence at the end of each stanza of the poem:

*Eégún n' forí jó,
Onílù n' fẹ̀sẹ̀ lùlù,
Mùtùmùwà n' fẹ̀yìn wòran
À n' ọ̀yẹ̀ lọ náà nù-un
Erú n' di baálé,
Ìwòfà n' jogún lọ̀dè,
Ọ̀mọ̀ àlẹ̀ n' gbàse ọ̀mọ̀ ọ̀kọ̀ se
À n' ọ̀yẹ̀ lọ náà nù-un*

The masquerade dances with his head
 The drummer eats drum with his leg
 All and sundry are watching through the back
 We are enjoying the world just like that
 Slave is becoming the family head
 Servant is taking inheritance in the home
 An illegitimate is taking over the duties of a legitimate child
 We are enjoying the world just like that

Full repetition is used here to re-emphasize the theme of the repeated sentences, in order to draw the attention of the reader or audience to the main point or idea the poet is re-iterating.

Partial repetition, like full repetition, is used to lay emphasis, but the emphasis assumes a somewhat different dimension. The ideas contained in the repeated parts of the sentences are intensified. For instance, in the example below, the idea of rebuking the military to desist from using force to govern the citizen in the right way is reemphasized.

*Ká panupò wí fónibon,
 Ká panupò wí fátàjèsilè*

(Let us unite and condemn gun carriers
 Let us unite to condemn the murderers)

*Òmùgò ò mò páyè là n dé lówó
 Òmùgò ò mò páyè là n dé lólá*

A stupid does know that one gets into the before becoming rich
 A stupid does know that one gets into the before becoming wealthy

The example above the varied items “*fónibon*” and “*fátàjèsilè*” (gun carrier and blood shedder) are figuratively used to refer to military men respectively as antonyms. In the second example, the varied items “*lówó* and *lólá*” are figuratively used to refer to riches and wealth respectively as antonyms.

Another form of repetition is when only a lexical item is repeated. The poet may repeat words as often as he desires within a sentence and in sentences that are not structurally identical. The repeat may occur in different clause, as in:

*Nàìjá n forí rìn kò bááyé yóókù mu mò,
 Nàìjá kèyìn sáyé, ó dojú kọ ‘parun,*

Nigeria walk on her head and become different from other people of the world

Nigeria lag behind, she faces destruction.

‘Naija’ which occur in the first line is repeated in the second line. Lexical repetition is used for emphasis in the above example because what is being emphasized is the fact that happenings in Nigeria is totally exceptional.

Parallelism

Parallelism occurs mostly when proverbs are used in poetry and it is a general feature of Yorùbá poetry. Bamgbose (1969) as cited in Olatunji (1984:26) defines parallelism as:

A juxtaposition of sentences having a similar structure, a matching of at least two lexical items in each structure, a comparison between the juxtaposed sentences, and a central idea expressed through complementary statements in the sentences.

This is evident in the poem below:

Béèyàn torí èyí tí ò gbin pínín,

Béèyàn torí èyí tí ò fò ọ́ fò.

Béèyàn torí èyí tí ò wí nkan,

Àfàimò kíyà ó mò jẹ́dà olúwarẹ́ pa

(If as a result of this someone refuses to talk

If as a result of this someone keeps silent

If as a result of this someone keeps mute

It is doubtful then, if suffering does not kill one)

The three sentences are structurally similar, while the items ‘gbin pínín’, (*must not talk at all*) ‘fò ọ́ fò’, (*must not speak*) ò wí nkan’ (*not say anything*) matches each other semantically. The relation of the three lexical items is to bring out the implication of synonyms, which means no one dares speak or talk to the government. It is the same idea that is repeated in each sentence.

Wordplay

Wordplay is the juxtaposition of lexical items which are somehow similar in shape, to produce an effect of verbal dexterity. The commonest form of word play in Abíódún’s poem for example is in:

Àrìyá tán, ó wá kùiyà
Ilè ilérisì dilè èérisì

(The party has ended, it now remains suffering
 The promised land has turned to dirty land)

The play is on the contrast between ‘yá’ and ‘yà’, which are also tonal contrast. They differ by tone while ‘èérisì’ and ‘ilérisì’ also have wordplay on the meaning of the two words.

Allusion

Allusions are made to myths, legend, historical events and the Yoruba belief system in Abíódún’s poem. For instance, in:

Bàbá èlèkò-òfè

Bèyèni-Bèkò, omọ Kùtì
 (The free education man

 Yes-No, Kuti’s child

Allusion is being made to some Yorùbá heroes. He alludes to the chronicle of free education in Nigeria by Chief Ọbáfẹmi Awólówò, who gave opportunity to people during his reign to be freely educated. He praises all the good deeds of these great activists of that time which includes Anthony Enahoro, Wọlé Sọyínká, and Bèkò Kùtì, who were the patriots at a time that fought for democracy in Nigeria.

Allusions are made to the Yoruba folktale on ‘The Tortoise and the Elephant’. The poet begins the poem by singing the refrain of the song used in the folktale. He also makes reference to the story by comparing the way, the animals deceived the elephant as the same way Nigeria’s politicians deceive the masses when canvassing for their votes and how they plot the killing of their opponents to retain their positions.

A ó mèrin jọba

Gòngòsú ò mètàn
Kò mò pé òfin ni wón n sìn ‘ún lọ
 (We shall make the Elephant the king

The idiot does not know deception
 He does not know they are accompanying him to the dungeon)

Personification

Personification is a literary device where non-human things are endowed with human attributes and feelings. Olatunji (1984:49) describes it as “a kind of anthropomorphism”, and instances of this device abound in Abíódún’s poetry. For example:

Aṣo wọn á dúdú bí aṣò òfò
Ìbọn lòmọ iyá a wọn
Wón dì mó ọn bí itàkùn dì mọgi
Ọmọ ire dà nínú ibọn
Ọmọ ire dà lára ọmọ iyá

Their clothes are as dark as mourning clothes
 Gun is their siblings
 They round about it like the way is attached to the tree

In these lines, an inanimate object, *ibon* (gun) is personified. The poet refers to gun as the siblings of the policemen. Town is being described as a crawling town; it is only a child who used to crawl. While condemning the deplorable state of the economy of Nigeria, the poet says; such a town will be crawling where a loyal country develops and thrives.

Pé ilú bẹ̀ẹ̀ ó máa rákò ní,
Níbi ilú olóòtọ̀ ti ń gòkè

(That such town will be crawling
 Where a truthful town will witness development)

Metaphor

Metaphor means the description of an object, action or situation in a terminology proper to another. A metaphor at times consists of the substitution of one noun for another. For example, in:

Eni a ní kó bá ni sọlé,
Tó wá dàgbà òfọ̀n-ọ̀n síni lọ̀dè

(A security personnel employed to secure the house

Has now become a big rat inside the house)

Here, a security personnel is being compared to òfón-òn (house-rat). These types of rat are always difficult to kill and they are destroyers which simply mean that the security personnel have turned to thieves.

Simile

Simile is an overt comparison which describes one object as being similar to another. In Yoruba language, a simile is always marked by ‘bí’ (like). In:

*Ó n pàṣá bí otí.
Agbára n gun àṣá,
Ó n gun àṣá bí Ṣàngó gùnniyàn*

It intoxicates the hawk like an alcohol
Power is intoxicating the hawk
It is intoxicating the hawk just as when Sango takes over a human being.

Here, power is said to be intoxicating the hawk like an alcoholic wine, while it is also said to intoxicate hawk like the carrier of Sango deity. The poet also compares the police uniform to mourning cloth because a bereaved person normally wears a black dress while mourning, in:

Aṣo wọn a dúdú bí aṣo òfò

(Their clothes are as dark as mourning clothes)

Oríkì (Praise/Panegyric Poetry)

One of the deciding factors in assessing the competence of a poet is ability to use *oríkì*. It is a poetic phrase used to describe or praise. It can be used to define its subject and this is usually done by maximizing the attributes which the Yoruba society considered to be good qualities of the subject. The physical description of the subject may be described as in:

*Òwóruru fà ruru,
Ajagajigì wọ rúrú.
Égún tí abàwọn gbègèdè
Àkùkọ gàgàrà,
Tí ì jẹ kẹkeré ó kọ.
Alájàgbé abikà nínú bí òbọ,*

Jágilégbò, apàniyàn bí ẹni pewúré
 Òwóruru pulls harshly
 Ajagajigì pulls harshly
 (The masquerade with widespread net
 The big cock
 That does not allow the small one to crow
 The truck owner who is wicked like a monkey
 The herbalist who kills people like killing goat)

The physical appearance of a trailer is being described above while the oríkì also described the atrocities the vehicle brand commits on the highway. The economical usefulness of the palm tree is described in its oríkì below:

Òpẹ igi ajé
Òpẹ igi orò
 (The palm tree a wealthy tree
 The palm tree that creates wealth)

The poet uses the description to encourage farmer to plant palm tree because of its economic benefits.

Ọfò (Incantation)

Yoruba believe in the power of the spoken word. There are many incantations which are not accompanied by herbal preparation but operate by sheer power of being spoken. In this situation, the spoken names, the origins and incidents alluded to, the symbolic correspondence between the name of an agent and some external activity and the forces of incantatory agents are believed to work the desired effect once the wishes of the enchanter are spoken. An example is in:

Ebi kii pagún wálé
K'Édumàrè bá wa lébi sígbó.
Ojò kii sàisàn bósù
Ká máa fara gbàrùnwẹ àisàn.
Àbòtán nigbá n bo ahun,
Káàbò Olúwa máa bá wa gbé.
Ojú àsá kii ríbi,
Ká máse ríbi nílé.

(The vulture is never hungry while returning home
 May God drives away evil from us
 The day does not fall ill to meet the month
 May we not suffer illness?
 The tortoise is fully covered with shells
 May God continue to guard and protect us
 The face of the kite does not witness any evil
 May we not witness evil in our dwelling place?)

Summary and Conclusion

In this work, we have shown that there is a close relationship between arts, the artist and his society as the concept of commitment in literature postulates. Abíódún has demonstrated this in *Àlọ́ Ní Lọ́*. As a committed writer, his poems are conceived as an effort towards improving lives of his readers and masses and making their lives more meaningful. Abíódún's work is a factor of his poetic consciousness to his environment, which is founded on politics, social issues and on Yorùbá worldview and philosophy. One of the merits of this work is its submission that literature, poetry in this instance, by its nature is a social art committed to human values and a genuine devotion of a writer to a cause and his convictions through advocacy of certain beliefs which may be political or ideological.

Within his poetic consciousness, Abíódún has shown us that the main causes of social problems in Nigeria are: poverty, rapid population growth and inadequate parental care, alcohol abuse and political corruption. The effect of these problems if not curbed, according to this poet, include general disorder, moral decadence and lack of development.

References

- Abíódún, J. *Àlọ́ Ní Lọ́*. Ìlọ́rin: Majab Publishers (1997).
 Adébòwálé, O. *Ewì Àtátà* Lagos: Abimas Nigeria Ltd (2003).
 Adéjùmò, G. *Rò Óo Re*. Lagos: The Capstone Publications (2002).
 Adélékè, D. *Aṣọ̀ Ígbà*. Abẹ̀òkúta: Visual Resources (1997).
 Adélékè, D. *Wá Gbọ́*. Ìbàdàn: Hope Publications (2001).
 Àjànàkú, A. *Orin Ewúro*. Ìbàdàn: Ìbàdàn Cultural Group (2008).
 Akínjógbin, A. *Ewì Ìwòyí*, Glasgow: Collins (1969).
 Akporobaro, F. *Introduction to African Oral Literature*. Lagos: Princeton Publishing Company (2005).
 Àlámú, O. 'Commitment and Drama: A Critical Study of the Plays of Akínwùmí Ìṣòlá' *Journal of Nigerian Languages and Literatures* (6) Lincorn

- International, Department of African Linguistics Unterschleissheim/ Munchen, Germany (1998). Pp. 34-40.
- Àlà mú, O. 'The Concept of Destiny in the Yorùbá Cosmology: A Study in Yorùbá Phenomenology of Existence and Existentialism' *Journal of Association of Nigerian Languages Teachers I* (2004) pp. 116-133.
- Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa, J and I. Madubuike (1980) *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers.
- Èlẹ̀ buiḅon, Y. *The Healing Power of Sacrifice*. Oyo: Lahoo Production (2014).
- Fáshínà, N. 'Polemics, Ideology and Society: Níyì Ọ̀súndáre, Odia Ofeimum and Aig-Imoukuede' Dasylyva, A. and O. Jẹ́gẹ́ dẹ́ (eds.) *Studies in Poetry* (2005). Ibadan: Sterling-Horden Publishers.
- Finnegan, R. *Oral Literature in Africa*. Kenya: Oxford University Press (1970).
- Fọ́lórúnṣọ́, A. *The Written Yorùbá Poetry (1949-1989) –A Study in the Sociology of Literature* (1998). Unpublished Ph.D Thesis Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Ibadan.
- George, I and E. Ukpong 'Contemporary Social Problems in Nigeria and Its Impact on National Development: Implication for Guidance and Counseling Services' *Journal of Education and Social Research* 3(2) (2013) 'pp. 167-173
- Goldmann, L. *The Hidden God*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul (1964).
- Ìdòwú, E. *Olódùmarè: God in Yorùbá Belief*. London: Longman Group (1962).
- Ìṣọ̀lá, A. *Àfàimò`ati Àwọn Àrọ̀fọ̀ Mìràn* . (1978). Ìbàdàn: University Press Ltd.
- Jẹ́gẹ́ dẹ́, O. 'Poetics in Contemporary Nigerian Poetry' Dsylyva, A. and O. Jẹ́gẹ́ dẹ́ (eds) *Studies in Poetry* (2005). Ibadan: Sterling Holden Publishers (Nig) Ltd. pp.133-151.
- Nwoga, D. 'Obscurity and Commitment in Modern African Poetry' Jones, E (ed) *African Literature Today* (1973). Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd. Pp.26-45.
- Ọ̀basá, D. *Ìwé Kìínì Àwọn Akéwì*. Ìbàdàn: Ìlàrẹ̀ Press (1927).
- Ọ̀basá, D. *Ìwé Keji Àwọn Akéwì*. Ìbàdàn: Ìlàrẹ̀ Press (1934).
- Ọ̀basá, D. *Ìwé Kẹta Àwọn Akéwì*. Ìbàdàn: Ìlàrẹ̀ Press (1945).
- Ọ̀lábímtán, A. (1969) *Áádọ́ ta Àrọ̀fọ̀*. Ìbàdàn: Macmillan Publishers.
- Ọ̀lábímtán, A. (1974) *Ewì Oříşírísí*. Lagos: Longman.
- Ọ̀lábímtán, A. (1974) *A Critical Study of Yorùbá Written Poetry (1848-!948)* Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of African and Asian Studies, University of Lagos.
- Ọ̀látúnjì, O. (1984) *Features of Yoruba Oral Poetry*. Ibadan: University Press Ltd.
- The United Nations Organization. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

Yòlòyè, A. (2009) 'The Philosophy of the Nigerian Education System and Relevance to the Concept of the Yorùbá Ọmọlúàbí' Ọgúndèjì, A and A. Àkàngbè (eds.) *Ìgbimọ Àgbà Proceedings of the Seminar on Ọmọlúàbí Its Concept and Education in Yorùbá Land*. Ìbàdàn: Ìbàdàn Cultural Group. pp.29-55.

Rhetorical Figures in Òndó Praise Chants

Bankole Idowu Akinwande

Department of English

Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Nigeria

wanduscole@yahoo.com; akinwandebi@aceondo.edu.ng

Abstract

The study examines rhetorical figures in Òndó praise chants with a view to providing a detailed analysis that contributes to the understanding of the linguistic and cultural intricacies inherent in this particular form or genre of praise chant. Among others, the study identifies the rhetorical figures employed in the linguistic construction of "Oríkì Òndó". It analyses the cultural nuances and symbolism encapsulated within the rhetorical devices used in the praise chant. The study further explores how specific rhetorical figures contribute to the rhythmic and aesthetic qualities of "Oríkì Òndó" in a distinct manner. To achieve these objectives, the study involves in-depth analysis of recorded Òndó praise chants, interviews with practitioners. Data are analyzed using Fahnestock's (2011) principles of Rhetorical Style. Findings show that the "Oríkì Òndó" is a reservoir of rhetorical richness, employing various figures such as metaphor, hyperbole and symbolism. Findings further reveal the fact that the chants not only showcase a mastery of language but also serve as a cultural repository, encapsulating the essence and identity of the Òndó people. The study concludes that the "Oríkì Òndó" stands not only as a testament to the past but also as a living art form that continues to resonate and evolve within the cultural fabric of the Yòrùbá people.

Keywords: Rhetorical figures, Òndó, praise chants, linguistics, cultural intricacy

Background to the Study

Òndó praise chants, a traditional oral art form, have been an integral part of the rich cultural heritage of the Yoruba people in Nigeria. These praise chants

are not mere words; they are the threads of a rich cultural tapestry. In the vibrant Yoruba tradition, they resonate with a distinctive beauty and cadence that transcends the boundaries of language. The chants, often recited or sung in various ceremonies, including weddings, funerals, and communal gatherings, have been a medium through which the Yoruba people express their emotions, history, and communal identity. Adekunle (2022) avers that through this art form, they remember their ancestors, celebrate their heroes, and honor their deities. *Òndó* praise chants are, in essence, a living archive of Yorùbá cultural memory, a testament to the enduring nature of oral traditions in an increasingly digital age (Lawal, 2018).

The study of rhetorical figures in *Òndó* praise chants is a fascinating exploration of the linguistic and artistic elements that underpin this traditional form of expression. It seeks to uncover the intricate use of language and stylistic devices in these chants, shedding light on the artistic and cultural significance of these oral traditions. While *Oríkì* as a genre has been subject to scholarly exploration, a focused inquiry into the rhetorical figures specifically within "*Oríkì Òndó*" remains a relatively uncharted territory. This study seeks to address this gap in the existing literature, providing a detailed analysis that contributes to our understanding of the linguistic and cultural intricacies inherent in this particular form of praise chant.

Justification for the Study

The significance of this research lies in its potential to contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage, linguistic studies, and the appreciation of traditional art forms. Understanding the role of rhetorical figures in "*Oríkì Òndó*" not only enriches our comprehension of Yorùbá cultural expressions but also underscores the importance of preserving and promoting these forms in a rapidly changing world.

Significance of the Study

Òndó praise chants are a repository of Yorùbá culture, history, and traditions. By examining the use of rhetorical figures within these chants, this study will contribute to the preservation and documentation of this cultural heritage, ensuring that it continues to be passed down to future generations. Also, the study of rhetorical figures will provide insight into the Yorùbá language's nuances and the mastery of expression through these oral traditions. It offers a unique opportunity to analyze how language can be creatively employed to convey emotion, identity, and values. Similarly, *Òndó* praise chants are a form of artistic expression that often goes beyond mere words. This study will delve into the artistry of these chants, exploring how rhetorical figures are used

to create vivid imagery, evoke emotions, and captivate the audience. On the whole, the study will investigate how rhetorical figures in Òndó praise chants facilitate effective communication and social bonding within the Yorùbá community. These chants are often used to build connections, express gratitude, and foster a sense of unity and identity among community members.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

- (i) How are rhetorical figures employed in the linguistic construction of "Oríkì Òndó"?
- (ii) What cultural nuances and symbolism are encapsulated within the rhetorical devices used in the praise chant?
- (iii) Do specific rhetorical figures contribute to the rhythmic and aesthetic qualities of "Oríkì Òndó" in a distinct manner?

Research Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Identify the rhetorical figures employed in the linguistic construction of "Oríkì Òndó".
- (2) Analyze the cultural nuances and symbolism encapsulated within the rhetorical devices used in the praise chant.
- (3) Explore how specific rhetorical figures contribute to the rhythmic and aesthetic qualities of "Oríkì Òndó" in a distinct manner.

The Power of Rhetorical Figures

At the heart of these chants is the power of rhetoric. Rhetorical figures, also known as figures of speech or stylistic devices, are the creative tools that transform ordinary words into extraordinary expressions. They give life to language, making it a dynamic force that resonates in the hearts and minds of the listeners (Conley, 1994). In Òndó praise chants, rhetorical figures are deployed with a precision and artistry that elevate the chants from mere words to profound, emotional experiences. These figures breathe life into descriptions, add depth to narratives, and create a sense of cultural continuity that binds generations together (Stoller, 2004).

Methodology

Given the exploratory and interpretive nature of the study, a qualitative research design will be employed to analyze the rhetorical dimensions of Òndó praise chant. To achieve these objectives, the study will involve in-depth

analysis of recorded `Ondó praise chants, interviews with practitioners, and a review of relevant literature on Yoruba culture and linguistic studies. 10 `Ondó praise chants will be collected at random from 6 prominent `Ondó traditional chiefs, called `Eghàè in `Ondó parlance. The instrument used to collect data is interview. Selected `Ondó traditional chiefs shall be purposively selected for interview. The study will be anchored on a corpus of 10 interviews. The research will draw upon linguistic, cultural, and literary analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the use of rhetorical figures in these chants. Fahnestock's (2011) principles of Rhetorical Style is adopted for the study. Fahnestock's (2011) 'Rhetorical Style' emphasizes the contribution of rhetorical figures to the expression of emotions and thoughts in texts. By shedding light on the artistic and cultural dimensions of `Ondó praise chants through the lens of rhetorical figures, this study contributes to the broader discourse on oral traditions, cultural preservation, and the power of language in expressing identity and emotion within indigenous communities.

History of Òndó-Èkímògún

The history of Òndó-Èkímògún sprang from the Palace of Aláàfin of Òyó in the ancient city of Òyó when the wife of Aláàfin Oba Olúaso bore him twins, a male called Òréré and a female also called Olú which is forbidden in the palace of every Oba in Yorùbá land. The then Aláàfin of Òyó loved the twins' mother called Olori Olú so much and on hearing the news of the twins he lamented that this was a mysterious child "èsè-omo-rèè" which later transformed to Òsemàwé as Oba's title in Òndó kingdom (Adekunle, 2022). The Aláàfin Oba Olúaso ordered that the twins and their mother be taken out of Òyó, he also gave an instruction that one stroke of facial mark should be cut on each cheek of the twins as *kese* or *ibàrà mú* mark. The single facial stroke mark became an established custom in Òndó town till today. Olori Olú and the twins were accompanied by the Aláàfin of Òyó's warriors' leader called "Ìjà" or "Ùja" to a place called Epin in the then Fúlání kingdom.

They later returned to Òyó after the death of Aláàfin Oba Olúaso in 1497 AD. The new Aláàfin Oba Onígbojí ordered them out of Òyó in 1498 AD with Aláàfin's warrior leader to the direction of Ilé-Ifè. They continued the journey until they reached a place called "Ìta Ìjámà" from where they also arrived at Èpè where Ìyànghèdè of Èpè received them with joy. This is how Òndó are referred today as "Èkímògún ará Ìta Ìjámà, a fi ide agogo m'omi". After a brief stay at Èpè, they desired to look for a permanent settlement. As they left Èpè, they arrived at a place which is today called Ilè Olùjí, where Olori Olú Aláàfin's wife slept for days and did not wake up " Ilè tí Olú sùn tí kò jí". After another short stay Olori Olú and Princess Olú the female twins left the town

with one Ògúnjà from Èpè, leaving Prince Òréré behind in Ilè Olùjí and continued the journey until it ended at the foot of a hill known in Òndó up to the present day as “Òkè Àgùnlà.” This is also how Òndós are referred today as “Òpón inú odi Ògúnjà.” At the hill they spotted a smoke rising from below; they followed in that direction down the hill and met a man whose name was Èkìrì, who was neither a farmer nor a hunter (Owomoyela, 2005).

Èkìrì later led them to a place called Orìdèn where they tried to erect sticks to their yam so that the yam plantation could flourish, as instructed by an Ifá Oracle before they left Èpè. They were happy and exclaimed “Èdó dú dó to Èdó do to Ìdí èdó” and finally transform to Òndó in 1510 AD. Princess Olú the female twins finally became first Oba Púpúpú of Òndó in 1516 AD while Prince Òréré, the male twins became the first Jegun of Ilè Olùjí. The other historical facial marks are cut unto the right breast of the descendant of past Òsemàwés from the male lineage to Òtúnba titles. All Òtúnbas title bearers in Òndó are headed by the Olótú Omo-Oba in Òkè-Òtúnba quarters in Òndó kingdom. The Òndós are known to be traders, farmers or merchants; their staple food is Iyán made from yam, and they have their own peculiar dialect and very hard working. It must be noted however that Òndó emigrant settlers also founded towns like Ìgbádó, Ìgbíndó, Ajùè, Ìgbúròwò, Òdìgbó, Òró, Imorun, Ilú Nlá, Erinlá, Ìgùnshin, Aràròmí, Aràròmí Òbù, Ajébándélé, Àgbábú, Òbòto, Bólórundúró, Fágbo, Tékùilè, Òwenà, Òkè-Òpa, Aíyesàn, Lájé, Òkà, Òkè-ìgbó, etc. The Òndó warriors of that time were Ago, Taagba and Jomunlá known as High Chief Jomu till today and that chieftaincy title is family hereditary (Adekunle, 2022).

The first Òsemàwé’s palace was built by Oba Àìrò, the first son of Oba Púpúpú who became Oba in 1530 AD. Oba Adéùgà Fidípòtè 11 built the first modern palace in Òndó when he became Oba in 1935 AD while Oba Festus Ìbídàpò Adésànyè – Osúngbédélólá 11 built the best recent Oba’s palace in Òndó when he became the 43rd Òsemàwé of Òndó Kingdom in 1992. The Òndó chieftaincy titles are the Ìwàrèfà, Èkulé, Elégbé, Òtù headed by the Òsemàwé while Ùpójì female chiefs are headed by Olóbùn Oba Obìrin in the Òndó Kingdom. Popular festivals in Òndó are Odún Oba, Odún Ògún, Odún Òramfè, Odún Mokò, Obiton, among others. The Òndó embraced Roman Catholic Christianity in 1875 under the CMS Missionary worker Rev. Bishop Phillips and accepted by Oba Ayíbíkítíwodì while Oba Jímékùn accepted the CMS Anglican Communion in 1884 and Islam in 1888.

The first Ondo Rev. Father John Akinwale was ordained in 1947 while the first Ondo Anglican Bishop was Rev. D.O. Awosika and Rev. T.O. Olufosoye was the first Archbishop of the Anglican communion of Nigeria while Alhaji Muhammed Alimi was installed the first Imam of Ondo in 1888.

Data Analysis and Discussion

I will rely on the data below for my discussion of the rhetorical figures in Ondo praise chant:

Ondo kingdom; the king's domain called EKIMOGUN

A land with very rich origin, where the 11 o'clock tribal mark on our faces is for

PRESTIGE

A people from Ijama, who drink water with a bell made of GOLD

A place where "Lókíli", "Obi" ati "Gbànja" are the god's delicacies

Where our extremely high SELF-ESTEEM is mistaken as pride by foreigners

-And our JOVIALITY is mis-seen as promiscuity by the same

A land distinguished by serene ambience, unparalleled elegance and intense beauty

Where women are naturally endowed and worthy to behold

And men are full of strength, dignity and valor

They say we are stubborn, I say that's because we are not Cowards

We daily kill 7 Goats for 7 Boasts to eat Àsun

Make 7 Wiggles to 7 Wiggles when we dance Ujó-Obitun

We put 7 Cowries in 7 Dowries, to marry a single woman

Eat 7 Kolanuts, give 7 Walnuts, on the day they asked her to prepare *àsun*

We have 7 Lives with 7 Wives, and keep them indoors on Odún-mokò

We do not joke with pounded yam and okra soup with lots of spices (like locust

bean), bush meat, and periwinkle.

Our Èfó must be garnished with *lúkotokiki* and when we see Àlààì (lói Aso), our heart rejoices.

I am not only AFRICAN, not only NIGERIAN, not only YORÙBÁ, but also an original unadulterated Ondo-blooded Man.

The True Son of Lugard, Obámúwàsàn, Òsèshà bonén shodún

OMO LÍSÀ-LÙJÀÀNÚ, ÀSHO, ÒJÁLÍLÚLÍ BÒ TÈÈ, ÒJÁMO N'ÓKÓ DÒDÒDÒ, MÁ B'OJÀ MA B'OÉ, ÀLÙJÀÀNÚ DÉÉÉÉ...

The land of peace and harmony

The land of enduring character

The land of abundance

The land of joy

The land of bright future

The original praise chant in Ondo dialect	The original praise chant in Standard Yoruba
<p>-Òndó Èkímògún, Ulú Oba Èkímògún -Ilè yó kún fàsà; detí mulà mejì ójú sèye -Ará Ijámà; Omo é mágogo ide momi -Ilè yeti mú "Lókili", "Obi" ati "Gbànja" safè - Ilè yó gbajúmò dāwon koolólò ri gbajúmò né bi igbéaga</p> <p>-D'āwon yée somo ndo ti ka àwàdà sí ifékufeara - Ilè yó nēwà bí eegbin, de náfiwé, dó dēè gbajúmo - Ulú y'āwon obien ti mejì sewà, d'ewà d'ogùn àmútòunwà k'āwon moge won -Ulú y'āwon òdòmokùnṅen ti kún fún opin, uyi àti agbàa yẹ mú susè -È i āwon òdòmokùnṅen won yigbi, sùgbón ẹn ẹn sojo</p> <p>- Ulú yẹ ti pèkéègbè méje y'òde méje átí j'Àsun</p> <p>- Ulú yẹ ti tàkòtó nēè méje sí ùkòtó nēè méje d'ẹmú jó Ujò-Obitun</p> <p>- Ilè Púpúpú iyetimú eyo-yó méje sinú oyó-orí méje átí gb'omidan kan péré náyà - Ilè ye ti je obi méje, de yani n'āsàlá méje, n'íjò e bée s'ásun - Ilè iya tini emi méje yemu te obien méje nórùn nínú yèwù nójó Odún-mokò - Ulú ye timu iyán ati obelá-lásèpò pèlu eangbé ati ipée sawàda. Bó dèn se obe gbánúnnùn, dèdèkìna - Ulú ye timu lùkotokíkí sobe Èfò ati fi da baa ri Àlààì (lói Aso), okàn wá kun fáyò</p> <p>-Omo 'ndo ee se omo Afrikà nukan, Omo Óndo ee se omo Nàijirià nukan, Omo Óndo eese omo Yoùbà nukan, Omo `Ondo jé omo Èkímògún gidi, iyó ní èjè Óndó náa.</p> <p>-Omo Óndo je omo bibi Lugard, Obámúwàsàn, Òsèshà bonén shodún -OMO LÍSA-LÛJÀÀNÚ, ÀSHO, ÒJÁLÍLÚLÍ BÒ TEÈ, ÒJÁMO N'ÓKÓ DÒÒDÒÒ, MÁ B'OJÁ MA B'OÉ, ÀLÛJÀÀNÚ DÉÉÉÉ...</p> <p>- Ulú yó kún fún alááfia àti irépò - Ulú yuwà jé ewà - Ulú yó je àjesékù -Ilè yó ní ayò Ulú yó ní ojò uwájú rere</p>	<p>-Òndó Èkímògún, Ulú Oba Èkímògún -Ilè tí ó kún fún àsà; tí a tin mulà mejì sójú sèye -Ara Ijámà; Omo a fagogo ide momi -Ilè tí a tin fi "Lókili", "Obi" ati "Gbànja" safè - Ilè tí ó gbajúmò dēbi pé āwon koolólò ti ri gbajúmò yí bi igbéraga -Ti āwon ti kìn se omo Óndo ti ka àwàdà sí ifékufeara - Ilè tí ó lèwà bí eegbin, tikò láfiwé, tí ó sí gbajúmo - Ìlú tí āwon obirin fẹjì sewà, tí ewà jé ogùn àmútòrunwà fún āwon omoge won -Ìlú tí āwon òdòmokùnrin ti kún fún opin, iyì àti agbàra láti sisè -Wón ní āwon òdòmokùnrin won yigbi, sùgbón won kò sojo - Ìlú taa ti n pa ewúré méje fun òde méje láti je Àsun</p> <p>- Ìlú ta tin tàkòtó lèè méje sí ùkòtó lèè méje láti jo Ujò-Obitun - Ilè Púpúpú ta tin mu eyo-owó méje sinú owó-orí méje láti gbé omidan kan péré níyàwò - Ilè taa tin je obi méje, tan wini ní àsàlá méje, n'íjò e bée s'ásun - Ilè taa tini emi méje lati fi te obirin méje lórùn nínú iyèwù lójó Odún-mokò - Ìlú taa tin fi iyán ati obelá-lásèpò pèlu eangbé ati ipée sawada. Bó dèn se obe gbánúnnùn, dèdèkìna - Ìlú taa tin fi lùkotokíkí sebe Èfò ati pe ta aba ri Àlààì (lói Aso), okàn wá fò fáyò -Omo Óndo kìn se omo Afrikà nikan, Omo Óndo ---kìn se omo Nàijirià nikan, Omo Óndo kìn se omo Yorubà nikan, Omo `Ondo sít ún jé omo Èkímògún gidi, tí ó ní èjè Óndó lára. -Omo Óndo je omo bibi Lugard, Obámúwàsàn, Òsèshà bonén shodún -OMO LÍSA-LÛJÀÀNÚ, ÀSHO, ÒJÁLÍLÚLÍ BÒ TEÈ, ÒJÁMO N'ÓKÓ DÒÒDÒÒ, MÁ B'OJÁ MA B'OÉ, ÀLÛJÀÀNÚ DÉÉÉÉ...</p> <p>- Ìlú tí ó kún fún alááfia àti irépò - Ìlú tí iwà jé ewà - Ìlú tó je àjesékù -Ilè tí ó ní ayò Ìlú tí ó ní ojò iwájú rere</p>

Table 1: The data of Ondo praise chant in Ondo dialect and Standard Yoruba

Metaphor, Hyperbole and Yymbolism in Ondo praise chant

Òndó praise chant is replete with rhetorical figures, such as metaphor, hyperbole, and symbolism, among others. In our data, these rhetorical devices are extensively deployed. This is because Ondo praise chants are expressive in form. These expressive forms are not merely words set to verse; they are the repository of history, the chronicle of beliefs, the celebration of heroes, and the means through which emotions are conveyed with an elegance that is uniquely Ondo (Okpewho, 1992). The rhetorical devices play a pivotal role in shaping the artistic and communicative dimensions of the praise chant. These rhetorical figures serve as the threads that weave together the cultural narrative, elevating "Oríkì Ondo" to a nuanced and captivating form of artistic expression.

Metaphor

Metaphor involves describing one thing in terms of another to suggest a resemblance or similarity. In the Oríkì of Ondo, phrases like "land of prosperity," "land of peace and harmony," and "land of enduring character" are metaphors. These phrases use the concept of "land" to symbolize the positive qualities and characteristics associated with Ondo. The *oríkì* expression, "A place where "Lókìlì", "Obì", "Gbànjá" are the god's delicacies" is an exemplum of metaphor. "Lókìlì" is an animal that is considered sacred in the Ondo cultural viewpoint. The English name for the animal is "dog". This animal is one of the animals considered special in various parts of Ondo kingdom, which embody spiritual powers or extraordinary capabilities. Thus, *lokilii* is highly valued and revered in its place in nature. This animal is of religious and aesthetic relevance to Africans (Nkiruka Jane Uju Nwafor (2019)). For instance, it is the general belief in Ondo that dog is *Ogun*'s favorite meat. Thus, during Ògún festival, dogs are usually mercilessly immolated.

The Ondo people do not in any way regard dog as a pet as the western people do. Ondo people seldom eat dog meat but they frequently sacrifice dogs to appease *Ogun* (the god of iron). Hence, their neighbors nicknamed them *Òndó aj'ajá*, that is, Òndó the dog eater. The sacrifice of dogs is the climax of the *Ogun* ritual and by this, the blood flows into the shrine. Hence, dogs become objects of pride for the Ondo people. *Ogun* is central to Ondo traditional worship, and that is why the principal metaphor in the Ondo's praise chant "*Ekimogun*" is named after *Ogun* (the god of iron). *Ekimogun* simply means 'the people that are known and referenced with *Ogun*'. No wonder the *Ogun* festival in Ondo is usually an elaborate one, in which Ondo indigenes from far and near come together to celebrate. "Ogun" is the pride of Ondo's identity. Most prominent people in the kingdom are named after *Ogun*. Examples are seen

in names such as “Ògúnbàmerù”, “Ògúndélé”, “Ògúnsakin”, among others. The preponderance of metaphor in the praise chants shows the affirmation of the cultural identity of Òndó people.

Meanwhile, “*Obi*” is the Òndó name for kolanut. Kola nut is the seed of certain species of plant of the genus *Cola*, placed formerly in the cocoa family *Sterculiaceae* and now usually subsumed in the mallow family *Malvaceae*. Over the years, studies have extensively documented the significance of Kola nut across various ethnic dichotomies in Nigeria. It is mostly planted and harvested for sales in large quantity by the Yorúbás in the Southwest Nigeria, mostly consumed by the Hausa and Kanuris in the North and mythically celebrated and ritualized by the Igbo of Southeast Nigeria (Odo, et al, 2023). Among all the ethnic groups in Nigeria, kola nut serves different purposes. Kola nut is seen as an object that depicts life, progress, and peace. In Òndó cosmology, it is used for prayer during ceremonial occasions or festivals. The king uses kolanut as an element of prayer during the *Odún Oba*'s (king's festival) festival, while individuals use kolanut to pray during traditional ceremonies such as naming, wedding, housewarming, birthday, among others. There are varieties of kolanut in Òndó. *Obi àbàtá* and *Gbànja*, are the most popular ones. The metaphor of *obi* is a serious one in ondo culture. This is reflected in some Ondo proverbs. “*Obi a bikú séyìn, bàrùn séyìn*” (Kolanut is a magical power that impedes death and illness).

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is an exaggeration for emphasis. In the Oríkì, phrases like "land of abundance," "land of joy," and "land of a bright future" can be seen as hyperbolic expressions, emphasizing the richness and positivity of Òndó. The *oríkì* expression “A people from *Ìjámà*, who drink water with a bell made of GOLD” speaks volume in this regard. Many years back, history has it that a favored wife of the Oòni of Ife, specifically, Odùduwà was delivered of a set of twins. As of that time, it was an abomination to have twins. When such things happened, the expectation was that the twins and their mother should be killed. However, because the mother of the twins was a favored wife of Odùduwà, the progenitor of the Yorúbá race, he decided to save her. He hid her for some time and then sent them (the wife and the twins) out with a large retinue of his trusted chiefs, juju men and warriors, together with the crown, beads, the royal walking stick and all the insignia of the office of a king. The person that led them was called *Ìjá* and the first place they settled after leaving Ife was *Ìjámà*, which means the land discovered by *Ìjá*, who was the leader of the warriors. That *Ijama* is one of the cognomens of Òndó. Whereas the phrasal expression “...a bell of gold” is an exaggerated way of describing the

unparalleled elegance and intense beauty of the Ondo kingdom, which is a land distinguished by serene ambience.

According to history, while the favored wife of the king and the twins, with a large retinue of the king's trusted chiefs, were leaving Odùduwà's palace in search of a new settlement, the king gave them the best cup in the palace, made of gold, and requested them to always use the cup to drink water, when the need arose. This was a special cup and not just anyhow container, which further describes the elegance of the Òndó people, which some neighboring towns have incessantly misconceived as pride. Gold jewelry is one essential art form by which the people of Òndó express their sociocultural identity and distinctiveness. Gold is considered extremely valuable, rare, and a treasured item from Òndó worldview. The reference to gold in the above hyperbolic expression suggests the richness and quality of the people of *Ijama*, who only could drink water with a cup made of gold.

Symbolism

Symbolism is the representation of a concept through symbols or underlying meanings of objects or qualities. This is widely deployed in Òndó praise chant as a testament to the past a living art form that continues to resonate and evolve within the cultural fabric of the Òndó people. For instance, the symbolic expression "We put 7 Cowries in 7 Dowries, to marry a single woman" is deep in meaning. Throughout human history, number seven has held great importance in many ancient cultures and religions. In mathematics, the number is considered a prime number, meaning that it's only divisible by itself and the number one. Seven is widely considered to be one of the most sacred numbers. After the number three, seven is perhaps the number that is filled with the most religious significance around the world.

There are seven deadly sins, seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, seven virtues, seven days of the week, seven arts and sciences, and seven colors of the rainbow. In the Bible, the world was created in six days and God rested on the seventh. The number 7 holds great symbolism in Òndó culture and tradition as well. It is seen as a sign of luck, fortune, and completion. It is a symbolic representation of completeness and perfection-physical and divine. It suggests that the Òndós are perhaps the most industrious, richest and educated tribe in Southwestern part of Nigeria. They are innovators, industrious, successful and intelligent sets of people. "Cowry" as known to the West Africans, especially in the Yorùbá language phrase "*owó eyo*", was one of the world's most popular and widely used kinds of payment. The modest shell, on the other hand, found its way into West Africa's cultural fabric, taking on a deeper symbolic and ritualistic meaning that has never been completely lost. Undisputed, the

cowrie is an element of spiritual connection to the soul and identity of the Òndó people. The cowry is used at traditional celebrations by fortune-tellers and diviners.

The cowrie, a symbol of the past and culture, has since become represented by some financial institutions with elaborate decorations of the cowrie in their buildings to commemorate what used to be signifying trade and culture. On the other hand, “dowry” is the transfer of parental property to a daughter at her marriage (i.e. ‘inter vivos’) rather than at the owner’s death (mortis causa). Dowry contrasts with the related concepts of bride price and dowry. While bride price or bride service is a payment by the groom or his family to the bride’s parents, dowry is the wealth transferred from the bride’s family to the groom or his family, ostensibly for the bride. On the whole, “cowries” and “dowries” are both symbols of wealth and wellness. The wealth symbols further explicate the luxury and refinement of the people of Ondo.

Similarly, the expression, “We do not joke with *iyán ati obelá-lásèpò pèlu eangbé ati ipée*” is striking. “*Iyán*” in Ondo dialect, popularly known as pounded yam, is a West African dish made from yam that has been boiled, peeled and pounded until it becomes smooth and elastic. It is often served with a variety of stews or soups including okra soup. Okra soup is a popular West African soup made with okro, pepper, and other ingredients. What is striking about “*obe-ilá-alásèpò*” is the use of local Ondo spices such as “*èrà ògìrì*” (decayed melon), “*lèún*”, “*láfà*”, “*irú*” (locust beans), and other local ingredients. It is often served with pounded yam as a dipping sauce. The “*obe-ilá-alásèpò*” is usually very delicious with inviting aroma, when prepared with the complete local spices. Together, “*iyán*” and “*obelá*” make a delicious and sumptuous meal. In recent years, non-Ondo people have adopted the local spices in preparing okra. The Òndós are known for this meal, among the Yoruba tribes. “*Eangbe*” is the Ondo name for bush meat. In preparing the *Iyán* and *obelá-lásèpò*, bush meat is preferred. It is believed that *eran-ìgbé* adds sweetness to the okra soup. Even when it was widespread that bush meat had a link with the Ebola virus, Òndó people could still not do without eating *eran-ìgbé*. “*Ìpée*” (periwinkle) are small snails that are usually small in size. They are fried like dry fish. When applied to the *obe-ilá-alásèpò*, they taste like cow liver. All these symbols point to the Ondo cultural unique identity.

The expression “7 Lives with 7 Wives and keep them indoors on *Odún-mokò*” alludes to the supernatural embellishment of the culture of the Ondos. “*Odun-moko*” is an annual festival in Ondo Kingdom, where women (indigenes and aliens) are forbidden to go out from 5.a.m. in the morning to 6 p.m. in the evening. During the celebration of the festival, women across all age grades are barred from coming out in the morning of the celebration till evening when the celebration would have come to an end. The festival dates back

to over 655 years ago. The festival is said to be the last festival among the over 44 traditional festivals usually celebrated annually in the kingdom. As a result of the compliance by the women, virtually all commercial and business activities are almost paralyzed. Women who own business as well as those on paid employment in several government and privately owned companies stay away from their workplaces.

Similarly, activities in all the four major markets of the kingdom located at Mofere, Sabo, Odosida and Agbogboke are also closed temporarily except for the presence of traders of Hausa and Igbo extractions (males) who open their shops. Apart from the low economic activities at the markets, the usual hawking activities by women are also affected, as none of those who usually embrace such selling in activities could be seen in the town. Although, the festival is usually observed all over Ondo city, it was however learnt historically, that its celebration is usually observed more by people within the community who belong to a clan called the Udoko, in local parlance and whose traditional affinity with the Ondo people dates back to several centuries.

Therefore, the allusion to "7 lives with 7 wives" connotes the strength of the Ondo people in terms of sexuality. One unique identity of the people is the enablement to please their wives on bed. This is seen as a plus to the Ondo men. It is believed that women should not just be indoor for fun but to play a significant role of satisfying the men in respect of sex. Literarily, no one can have 7 lives: God gave everyone a single life, and that is where exaggeration comes in. Meanwhile, the simple statement the expression is making is to unveil the strength and resourcefulness of the Ondo men.

Findings

Through linguistic analysis and cultural studies, it becomes evident that the "*Oriki Ondo*" is a reservoir of rhetorical richness, employing various figures such as metaphor, hyperbole and symbolism. The chants not only showcase a mastery of language but also serve as a cultural repository, encapsulating the essence and identity of the Ondo people. The research underscores the cultural significance of "*Oriki Ondo*," revealing how rhetorical figures contribute to the rhythmic and aesthetic qualities that define this form/genre of expression. The integration of cultural symbols, idioms, and historical references within rhetorical devices enriches the chants, making them not just linguistic artifacts but profound reflections of Ondo heritage.

The findings highlight the importance of recognizing and preserving traditional art forms like "*Oriki Ondo*" in the face of evolving cultural landscapes. Understanding the rhetorical dimensions of these chants is essential for safeguarding and promoting Ondo cultural heritage for future generations. This

study contributes to the fields of linguistics, cultural studies, and Yoruba heritage preservation by providing a nuanced understanding of rhetorical figures within the "Oriki Ondo." It bridges a gap in the existing literature, offering insights into the expressive power of language and the cultural nuances encapsulated in traditional Yoruba poetry.

Limitations and Future Directions

While this research provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations. The availability of authentic and diverse "Oriki Òndó" chants may pose challenges, and interpretations of cultural symbols may vary among informants. Future research could explore the regional variations of rhetorical figures within different subcultures of Yoruba society and investigate the contemporary relevance of "Oriki Ondo" in a changing cultural context.

In essence, this study advances our comprehension of the artistic, linguistic, and cultural dimensions of the "Oriki Òndó" praise chant. By unraveling the rhetorical intricacies within this traditional form of expression, we contribute to a broader understanding of the rich tapestry that is Yoruba cultural heritage. The "Oriki Òndó" stands not only as a testament to the past but also as a living art form that continues to resonate and evolve within the cultural fabric of the Yorùbá people.

Conclusion

This research has delved into the intricate interplay between language, culture, and artistry within the "Oriki Ondo" praise chant, focusing on the utilization and impact of rhetorical figures. The study has revealed a rich tapestry of linguistic and cultural dimensions embedded in this traditional Yoruba form of praise poetry. Through linguistic analysis and cultural studies, it becomes evident that the "Oriki Òndó" is a reservoir of rhetorical richness, employing various figures such as imagery, repetition, metaphor, and parallelism. The chants not only showcase a mastery of language but also serve as a cultural repository, encapsulating the essence and identity of the Ondo people.

References

- Adekunle, J.T. *History of Òndó-Èkímògún*. News Bulletin Nigeria (2022).
- Conley, T. M. *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*. Longman, New York (1994).
- Drewal, H. J. *Yoruba: Nine Centuries of African Art and Thought*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington (1997).

- Ezegwu, D. 'He Who Brings Kola Brings Life': Communicating the Significance of Kolanut among Igbo People of Nigeria, India. *Indiana Journal of Arts & Literature*, (2023) 4 (1), 24-29.
- Golden, J. *Introduction to Rhetorical Theory*. St. Martin's Press, New York (1997).
- Lawal, B. *The Art of Yoruba Belonging*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington (2018).
- Nkiruka Jane Uju Nwafor. "Significance of Animal Motifs in Indigenous Uli Body and Wall Paintings," *Journal of African Studies*. (2019) 8, (1).
- Okpewho, I. *African Oral Literature: Backgrounds, Character, and Continuity*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington (1992).
- Owomoyela, O. *Yoruba Proverbs*. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln (2005).
- Stoller, P. *The Power of the Between: An Anthropological Odyssey*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago (2004).

Law and Lawlessness in Yorubá Society: A Critical Analysis of *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyerí* and *Adákédájó*

Ridwan Akínkúnmi Rabiú
Department of English and Linguistics,
Kwara State University, Nigeria.
ridwan.rabiú@kwasu.edu.ng

Abstract

This essay is centered on the comparative analysis of the justice system in traditional and modern Yorùbá society vis-à-vis equality of rule of law to all and sundry. This paper aims to analyze the effects of an upright as well as a corrupt judicial system on society. The theory adopted for this work is the sociological theory of literature. The model adopted under this theory is the mirror image approach. Proponents of this model believe there is a cordial relationship between literature and society because literature mirrors society. We employ an auto-telic textual analysis approach in our analysis of the two play texts, which are *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyerí* and *Adákédájó*. Our findings in this work show that equality of all and sundry in justice dispensation will bring about peace, tranquility, and development in society why inequality as well as lack of equity, justice, and fairness as seen in the two texts breed lawlessness, anarchy and resort to self-help by those deprived of justice which will, in turn, brings about loss of life and properties as we are witnessing in Nigeria today. Based on our findings in this work, we believe that the solution to this problem is to follow the rule of law which should be above everybody, and to inculcate moral discipline (*iwà omólúàbí*) which is the watchword of the traditional Yoruba society in children through both formal and informal education by teachers, parents, and guardians.

Keywords: Literature, Society, Equality, Justice, and Crime.

Introduction

A variety of scholarly works have been carried out on the authors whose work we are analyzing in this research work. The two literary texts we adopted for this research work are *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì* by (¹Ogunniran 2007) and *Adákédájó*² by Sangotoye (2007). Few among the scholarly works that has been carried out on the works of these two authors are Adesola 1998³ who did a phonological, morphological as well as the syntactic analysis of Ogunniran's *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì* in his work titled "The Linguistic Forms of *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì*", Adeyemi (2006) who adopted the formalist theory in analyzing Ogunniran's poem titled "Má rò mí pin". Also, Ògúnlọ́lá⁴ (2014) used the archetypal theory to analyze "*Adákédájó* by Sàngótóyẹ̀, *Wón Rò Pé Wèrè Nì* by Fálẹ̀tì and *Ayẹ̀ Yẹ̀ wón Tán* by Ìṣòlá". Also, Fákéyẹ̀⁵ (2015) in her work examined *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì* by Ògúnńíran and three other texts for analysis. On the aspect of justice and its relation to Yoruba literature, Mobólájí⁶ (2016) examined Fágúnwà's concept of justice in Yoruba society using his five literary texts. But little or no research work that we know of has been carried out on these two literary texts i.e. *Adákédájó* and *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì* for analysis, most especially with the concept of justice as the focal point of their analysis. The aim of this research work is to use this work to fill this void. This essay will concern itself with analysis of notable differences in the traditional and modern judicial system using these two literary texts as our primary source of data. This paper will examine factors that are responsible for partial or mal-judgment and how judicial umpire both in traditional and modern Yoruba society respond to these overwhelming factors of financial inducement by suspects charged to their court for one crime or the other, especially the effects of their actions or in-actions on the less privileged in particular and the society at large in general. We believe this work will improve findings in Yorubá studies, especially on the impact that western and modern civilization has on our current judicial system. This work will be divided into six sections, which

-
- 1 Ògúnńíran, L. *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì*. Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers, 2007.
 - 2 Sàngótóyẹ̀, O. *Adákédájó*. Àkúrẹ̀: Life-Steps Publishers, 2007.
 - 3 Adésọ́lá, P.O. "The Linguistic Forms of *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì*". *ALORE: Ilorin Journal of the Humanities* 9.1 (1998)
 - 4 Ògúnlọ́lá, L. "Yorùbá Proverbs and Morality (iwà omólúàbí): The Past, Present and the Future" In *Bringing Our Cultures Home: Festschrift for Bade Ajayi at 70*, ed. A.S. Abdussalam, et. al. Ilorin: Chrimadel Publisher, 2014.
 - 5 Fákéyẹ̀, F. "Yorùbá Worldview and the Context of Irony of Fate in Selected Tragic Plays" *YORÙBÁ: Journal of Yorùbá Studies Association of Nigeria*. 8 (2015):
 - 6 Mobólájí, W.A. 2016. "Ìhà Tí Fágúnwà Kọ́ Sí Ètò Ìdájó Ní Àwùjọ́ Yorùbá" In *Òtun Ìmọ̀ Nínú Ìtàn Àròṣọ́ D.O Fágúnwà*, edited by Olúyémisí Adébòwálé, Dúró Adélékè and Àrínpé Adéjùmọ̀. Lagos: Capstone Publications.

are Introduction, Concept of justice, Theoretical Framework, Synopsis of the two texts, Analysis of the two texts and Conclusion.

The Concept of Justice

Ever since the first man was created, God gave him list of rules and regulations and was told that failure to follow these laid down rules will lead to punishment as was the case with the first man on earth, Adam. The people that determine the fate of offenders are called judges who are known as “*adájó*” in Yorubá. The Yorubá state is a rule govern state which is why they always say “*ílú tí kò sòfin; èşẹ̀ ò sí nìbẹ̀*” that is where there is no rule; there will not be room for punishment. Olájubù⁷ (1997: 1) explains that, “The Yorubá is guided by an unwritten constitution cutting across all spheres of the individual’s life.” What this means is that there are rules and laws that guide the action of a Yorubá man or woman though not written.

What he implies is that indigenous judicial systems dispense justice without fear or favor. The Yoruba people believe that a judge must be above board and must dispense justice without fear or favor. This is why they always say, “*tíkà bá rojó, ikà kó ni yóó da*” that is if the suspect is bias in his or her presentation, the judge will never be bias in his or her judgment, since the court is the last hope of the common man. The international bar association (2009) explains the cardinal points of rule of law which is the basic tenet of justice as:

- (i). Rule of law must entail an independent, impartial Judiciary
- (ii). the presumption of innocence
- (iii). the right to fair and public trial without undue delay
- (iv). a rational and proportionate approach to punishment
- (v). a strong and independent legal profession
- (vi). equality of all before the law.

7 Olájubù, O. (1997). The Effects of Taboo on the Health of African Women: The Yorubá Experience. In Women in the Commonwealth of God: Circle of African Women Theologians. Accra (Ghana) pg 124-135.

These afore-mentioned features show that law must be above any form of partiality and camaraderie. Omípidán⁸ (2012: 199) explains what the symbol of justice in Nigeria entails when he says:

The symbol of justice is a practical demonstration of what justice means. Thus, it is a blindfolded woman robed in white and wearing a crown, she supports the same with a pair of scales with one hand and an upright sword on the other.

This symbol shows that a judge must not be partial and must dish out punishment when the need arises no matter whose horse is gored. Fálólá and Ò-guńtómísiń (1984) explains that there are three types of courts in Yorubaland. These are “*ilé ejó baálê*” ‘a court of the compound or family head, (ii) *ilé ejó ti ijòyè* ‘a court of the ward or village chief’, (iii) *ilé ejó ti oba* ‘royal court of the king, which is the highest in hierarchy’. These three local courts can be compared to the high court, Appeal court and Supreme courts in the modern judicial system. This paper will examine two literary texts, that is, *Àrẹ Àgò Aríkúyeri* and *Adàkédájó* to examine how judges in the two texts fare in their duty of dispensing judgment that is based on equity and equality and the implication of their actions and in-actions on the society as portrayed by the two writers.

Theoretical Framework

Literary theories are instruments that are used to dissect a literary text. Ori-moogunje⁹ (2015: 76) explains that “a literary theory can be viewed as a set of logically related statements that seek to explain an entire class of events of a given text.” Theories are analytic instruments which literary critics use in the analysis of a given text. The theory adopted for this work is the sociological theory of literature. According to (Adéyemí 2006), it is a combination of two distinct disciplines that is sociology and literature. While sociology entails what concerns man and his environment, literature on the other hand is used to educate and entertain man about his society. The aspect of this theory that we are adopting for our analysis is the mirror image approach. This model sees the work of literature as the imitation of occurrences in society. Proponents of this theory opine that literature mirrors what is happening in society. One of the proponents of this theory is (Lous de Bonald: 1754-1840). According to

8 Omípidán, B.A. 2012 “The Concept of Justice and the Rule of Law” In *General Studies in the Art*, edited by Adélékè, B.L and Abíójè, P.O. Ilorin: Rajah Dynamic Printers.

9 Orímóògúnjẹ, O.C. “Socio-Mythical Approach to Yoruba Indigenous Health Related Verbal Art”. *Ilorin Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*. 5 (2015):

(Adéyemí 2006) Bonald is the first person to explain that we can know about the thought, philosophy, ideology, beliefs, and culture of a particular group of people or tribe if we carefully read their literatures.

Ògúnsínà¹⁰ (2006: 112) explains the connection between literature and society when he asserts that:

Literature is part and product of society; its nature is essentially social. It has no independence from man. For it is produced by people living together, it is a structure of words and ideas which are shared and understood by members of a community.

What this means is that literature in its entirety is about man in relation to his society. (Adélékè 1999) in (Zaccheaus 2022: 149) explains that the focus of literature is beyond aesthetics. He opined that:

The purpose of art, apart from these two overriding goals, is to inform, organize, influence, instigate, incite and stir the member of the audience (that is, a representation of the whole community) into action.

Proponents of this theory are of the opinion that literature can be used to shape society. For this reason, what is paramount for critics using this theory for analysis is to successfully link what transpires in the selected texts to what is happening in society.

Ògúnlólá¹¹ (2014) buttressed this point when he opines that:

The theory (sociology of literature) postulates that there is a very close link between literature and society. It is therefore essential to have a deep knowledge of the social life, economy, history and the entire lifestyle of a society in order to fully understand the society.

Since our work is primarily based on two Yorubá literary texts. We are of the opinion that the theory that fits our analysis is the theory of sociology of literature, and the approach suitable for our analysis under this theory is the mirror image approach. This is the main reason we adopted this model for our analysis.

10 Ogunsina, J.A. *The Sociology of Yorubá Novel. 1930-1975*. Ibadan: Integrity Publication, 2006.

11 Ògúnlólá, L. 2014. "Yorùba Proverbs and Morality (iwà omólúàbí): The Past, Present and the Future" In *Bringing Our Cultures Home: Festschrift for Bade Ajayi at 70*, edited by A.S. Abdussalam, et. al. Ilorin: Chrimadel Publisher.

Synopsis of *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì*

The drama text *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì* was written by Láwuyì Ògúnníran in the year (1977)¹². This book is centered on an Ibadan warlord who goes by the name Ògúnrindé Ajé and holds the title of Ààrẹ̀ Àgò to Basorun Ogunmola. On the day he scheduled to celebrate his creator (Orí) mishap befell his household as three of his children died on that same day and Ajé's favorite wife Fátólá was name as the culprit based on the scheme of his first wife Asiyanbí. Without thorough investigation, Ààrẹ̀ Àgò believes the findings of Asiyanbí the first wife, which was based on jealousy that Fátólá is the culprit and killed his wife. After the murder of Fátólá by Ògúnrindé Ajé, hell was let loose between Ògúnrindé Ajé and Başorun Ògúnmólá. As the Ìbàdàn chief, Ògúnmólá believes Ògúnrindé Ajé must pay for his crime with his life as the town constitution state but Ògúnrindé Ajé and the privileged in the town believe that Ajé should be pardon or his punishment be reduced based on his position in the town. Did Ògúnmólá bow down to pressure and subvert justice in favour of his war chief or did he punish Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Ògúnrindé Ajé for his crime? And how is this related to what is happening in our society today?

Synopsis of *Adákédájò*

The drama text *Adákédájò* was written by Sàngótóyè in the year (2000).¹³ This book is centered on Àrẹ̀mú, who was given money to be changed from the old currency to the new currency by Kànmí and his brother Tólání because of the announcement made by the federal government on the cancellation of the old currency notes. But instead of him to help them change the money to the new currency, Àrẹ̀mú squandered their hard-earned money at beer parlors, religious gatherings and at ówàmbè parties. When the time federal government allowed for the change of old currency to new ones expired, Kànmí asked for their money but Àrẹ̀mú was giving flimsy excuses for his failure to return the money given to him. When Kànmí threatened him because of the money, Àrẹ̀mú waylaid him and murdered him in cold blood on his way home. Investigation was carried out and the police report reveals Àrẹ̀mú as the culprit. But because Àrẹ̀mú belongs to a secret cult that has the presiding judge, the prosecution lawyer and the chief police officer of the state as members of a secret cult the case was turned upside down. What later happened to Àrẹ̀mú? Was he punished according to the constitution of the land or was justice subverted and undermined because Àrẹ̀mú belongs to a powerful cult group in the society? And how is what transpired in the book related to what is happening in our society today?

12 Ògúnníran, L. *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì*. Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers, 2007.

13 Sàngótóyè, O. *Adákédájò*. Àkúrẹ̀: Life-Steps Publishers. 2007

Analysis of *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì* and *Adákédájó*

In the two selected plays, a crime of murder was committed by the main actors of the drama, which are Àrẹ̀mú and Ògúnrindé Ajé. This was shown on page (30) in *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì*, the writer says:

Ààrẹ̀ Àgò padà jáde pẹ̀lú ibínú, ó dojú ọ̀fà kọ́ fátólá, ọ̀fà jáde: Fátólá subú lulẹ̀, ó sì kú. Àwọn èniyàn túká pẹ̀ẹ̀. Ààrẹ̀ àgò m'òrilé ọ̀nà ìgbéjọ́ rẹ̀, ó n sọ̀rọ̀ lọ.

(Ààrẹ̀ àgò came out again, with anger he pointed the arrow to Fatọ̀la, he shot Fatọ̀la with the arrow: Fatọ̀la fell down and died, people fled the scene. Ààrẹ̀ àgò walks to his chamber talking.)

From the excerpt above we can see that a clear case of murder has been established against Ogunrinde Aje. We also have a case of murder in the second play which is *Adákédájó*. This was shown on page (72) of the text:

Kíá ni ọ̀dẹ̀ dé, ó yọ̀ àdà nínú ọ̀kọ̀ rẹ̀, ó sì bèrẹ̀ sí í sá ẹ̀ni tí ibọn bá ní orùn, bí onítòhún ẹ̀ n kígbe oró, ọ̀dẹ̀ fọ̀hùn Àtòrun dọ̀run rẹ̀.

(Immediately the hunter emerges, he removed the cutlass from its scabbard, and he started macheting the victim who he has shot in the neck, as the victim was shouting in agony, the hunter said, may you die a thousand times.)

Excerpts from the two texts show that a crime of murder has been committed, which according to the Yoruba traditional judicial system and the (Nigeria 1999) constitution section (33) as amended should result in the killing of the culprit if found guilty after proper investigation. In *Adákédájó*, a proper investigation was carried out by police officers in charge of the case and their investigation showed clearly that Àrẹ̀mú was the perpetrator of the evil act; we have evidence of this on page (73) of the text:

Àwọn ọ̀lọ́pàá mú filà àtí ajá lọ́ sí ibi tí iṣẹ̀lẹ̀ tí ẹ̀. Bí wọn tí débè, wọn fí filà bọ́ imú ajá, aja sì n sáájú. Lójìjì ní ajá yà sí ọ̀nà oko kan, ọ̀nà oko yìí ní wọn tò débi tí Àrẹ̀mú tí n sísẹ̀, tí ajá fò fẹ̀rẹ̀ mọ́. Wọn mún un, nígbà tí ọ̀wọ́ yà tẹ̀, ó jẹ́wọ́ pé ọ̀un ló se ọ̀sẹ̀ nàà.

(The policemen took the cap and their sniffer dog to the scene of the crime. They put the cap into the dog nose and the dog started moving. Suddenly the dog change direction to a farm path, they were following this farm path

until they saw Àrẹ̀mú where he was working. The dog jumped on him, and when he was arrested and tortured, he confessed that he was the one that killed the victim.

Also, in *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rí*, Ògúnrindé Ajé confirmed that he was the one that killed Fátólá when the Akòdà (King's messenger) read his offense to him thrice on page (56) of the book:

Ìwo Ògúnrindé Ajé tí ó jẹ̀ Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Balógun Ìbàdàn, o pa iyàwó rẹ̀ Fátólá ní ipa taa-ni-ó-mú-mi nnínú ilé rẹ̀ láì bikítà fún olá Başòrun Ògúnmólá...3x

(You Ògúnrindé Ajé, the Ààrẹ̀ Àgò to the Balógun of Ìbàdànland killed your wife Fátólá in a manner of impunity without thinking about the authority of Başòrun Ògúnmólá...3x)

As it is known that the Yoruba traditional constitution and the Nigeria criminal act of (1999) as amended stated that whoever killed intentionally must be killed, but because of the position of the accused in the two plays, money, power and position was used as a means of pervading justice. In *Adákédájó*, the policeman in charge of Àrẹ̀mú case was bribed with money, evidence of this is on page (81) of the text:

Rítà sí páálí nàà wò, kò sí ọ̀tí kankan nìbẹ̀, bíkò se owó tuntun tuntun, kíkì egbèrún náírà tí a dì ní itì itì.

(Rita opened the package but it was not drinks that were inside. It was filled with new naira notes in thousand denominations that were packed in bundles).

The writer of *Adákédájó* shows the corrupt practices of security operatives, who should be the protector of law and order in the society who has now turn themselves to destroyer of law and order. The policeman that collects bribe in the play text stands for corrupt police officers in our society. Example of such corrupt corps is a celebrated officer of the Nigeria police force that was caught in a drug scandal by the Nigeria Drug Law Enforcement Agency recently. Also, in *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò*, Ògúnrindé Ajé attempts to use money and his position of power to change the course of justice; we have evidence of this on page (89) when Ògúnmólá said:

Èyin jànmàà, ẹ ráwọ̀n èyàn wọ̀nyí à bẹ̀ẹ̀ rí wọ̀n? Ẹ wo ọwọ wọ̀n wò. Ọkẹ ọwọ kòòkan ni wọ̀n gbé lówó, tí wọ̀n wá gbé fún mí, orúkọ Ajé ni wọ̀n sì fí jé.

(My people, do you see these people or not? Look at their hand. They are holding twenty thousand each, which they brought to me, and they said it is from Ajé.)

This clearly shows that the issue of bribery giving and taking is not absent in Yorubá traditional settings, but it is not as pronounced as what we have today. The dialogue that later ensue between Baṣọrun Ogúnmólá and his chiefs on the issue of bribery also gives credence to our assertion that the traditional settings was not devoid of judicial corruption, though it was not as pronounced as what we have in our society today. Ogúnmólá says to his chiefs:

Ọjú tiyín, yègèdè wò ọ, ẹ n pa ràdàràdà bí aláílèrò. Ẹ n sọrọ bákabàka bí ẹyẹ ibàkà. Balógun, Ọtún, Ọsì, Aṣípa, Ìyálóde... A lẹẹ gbowó, ẹ lẹẹ gbowó. A lẹẹ gbobì, ẹ lẹẹ gbobì. A biyín lórò, ẹ ò mo ohun tí ẹ lè sọ.

(You have been shamed and disgrace, you are acting like a thoughtless fellow. You are acting like a moron. Balógun, Ọtún, Ọsì, Aṣípa, Ìyálóde... We said you collect bribe, you said you did not collect bribe. We said you collect kolanut, you said you did not collect kolanut. Yet we ask you questions, you do not know what to say.)

This monologue by Baṣọrun Ogúnmólá shows that the high chiefs of Ibadan, who should be upholder of equity and justice are themselves corrupt and are bribe giver and takers. In Adákédájó, since both the police and the judge has collected bribe from the suspect (Àrẹ̀mú), he Àrẹ̀mú (the alleged murderer) was discharged and acquitted with the payment of one thousand naira as fine, this shows that a case of murder was dubiously changed to a case of unlawful trespassing. The presiding judge judgment in Adákédájó is as follow:

Ọgbéni Àrẹ̀mú, mo gbọ gbogbo àwíjàre rẹ àti èbẹ̀ tí o bẹ̀, bí ó bá jẹ pé bí ó se ye ni, èsùn ipànyàn ló ye kí n fi kàn ọ, sùgbọ̀n nítorí pé kò sí ẹ̀rì níwájú mí pé o mò nípa ikú Kànmí àti pé àànú tí o fẹ́ ẹ se ló di ibi mó ọ lówó, màà wò ọ se. ọfin kò fi àyè sílẹ̀ fún àimọkan, nítorí idí èyí, idájọ mí ni pé kí o lo ẹwọ̀n ọdún méjì tàbí kí ó san owó itanràn egbẹ̀rún kan náirà fún ijoba.

(Mr Arẹ̀mu, I have listened to all your arguments and plead, if I wants to act right on this case, I am supposed to charge you with murder, but

because there is no tangible evidence that suggest that you know anything about Kanmi's death. And that it was your act of doing good that wants to put you in trouble. I will tender justice with mercy, but the law does not give room for ignorance, for this reason, my judgment is that you should go to jail for two years or pay a fine of a thousand naira to the government).

The judge himself said it in the above quotation that if he wants to act right, Àrẹ̀mú is supposed to be charged with murder, but because of financial gain, and also because Àrẹ̀mú belongs to the upper caste in the society, he did not act right. This same scenario is what is playing out in our court of law today where the wealthy buy and sell justice and the poor only window shop. For instance, the case of a former governor always comes to mind when we talk of judicial corruption and mal administration in Nigeria. In a tragic-comedy scenario, he was discharge and acquitted on a no case submission rule on a whole 170-count charges bordering on corruption and money laundering brought against him in (2009) by the EFCC by a judge of a federal high court in Nigeria, but was later sentenced to thirteen years imprisonment by a United kingdom judge on a charge of \$250m he confessed to have stolen. Recently, similar to what transpired in *Adákédájó*, a former presidential spokesperson in Nigeria was convicted for laundering 240 million naira but was sentenced to two years of imprisonment with an option of 13 million naira fine which the convict gladly paid before five hours.

Unlike *Adákédájó*, all efforts to turn the case in favor of the suspect (alleged murderer) were thwarted by Başõrun Ògúnmólá in *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Arikúyẹ̀rì*. He did not only dispense justice according to the law and tradition of the land, but also punished all the bribe givers and takers including his high chiefs and family members. There is evidence of this on page (98) of the text:

Èyin ni wón rán nísẹ̀ àlùsì t'ẹ̀ ẹ̀ le kò... Mo pàşẹ̀ kí wón ta iwọ̀ àbúrò obìnrin mi fún àwọn Fúlàní; kí wón ta ọmọ ogun mi fún àwọn Ìdòòmì; kí wón sì ta àwọn méjì tó kù fún àwọn ará Kútúwenjì.

(You are the ones they send on a stupid mission and cannot refuse... I order that they should sell my wife younger sibling to the Fúlàní; they should sell my soldier to the Ìdòòmì; and they should sell the other two to the Kútúwenjì. p. 98)

Başõrun Ògúnmólá also punished his high chiefs for collecting bribe from the suspect. We have evidence of his pronouncement on this on page (97). When he says:

Mo pàṣẹ kí ẹ gbé òkẹ márùn-ún tí ẹ gbà lówọ Ògúnndé Ajé fún igbimò ilú. Léyìn nàà mo ta ẹnì kòòkan yín lójì òkẹ owó márùn-ún márùn-ún, igò ọtí èèbó kòòkan, ibon sakabùlà mewaá mewaá, agbá ẹtù kòòkan àti ogoogún erú... Léyìn nàà mo pàṣẹ pé kí a gba gbogbo ilú àmòná tí ó n sìn yín fún igbimò ilú tí tí di igbà kan ná. (o.i. 97)

(I order that you return the one hundred thousand you collected from Ogunndé Ajé to the community account. After that, I fined each of you a hundred thousand, one bottle of foreign gin, ten locally made gun each, one drum of bullet each... After that I decree that all satellites towns in your care should be taken away from you till further notice. (p.97)

In addition to the above, qualities of a good judge was shown in Baṣòrun Ógúnmolá, the Balógun of Ibadanland, as he dispense his judgment without fear or favor, he reiterates that base on his position and power, he can release Ógúnrinde Ajé and acquits him from all his crimes, but this will not be in agreement with the supreme being who he is going to account all his actions to, he said:

Nítòótó ni mo lè sẹ, tí kò sì sí ẹnì tí ó lè yomí lówọrẹ wò láyé, sùgbón ẹnìkan n bẹ tó jù mí lọ tí yóó bèrèrè bí mo tí sẹjọ nàà sí. Olúwarẹ ni Olódumarẹ. (p.108)

(Truly I can do it and nobody can dare ask me why, but there is one person who will ask me how I judge this case. He is the Supreme Being. (p. 108)

This quotation above proof that the fear of God, that is present in traditional rulers of yesteryears which makes them not to be bias in their judgment is what is absent in most of our modern judges and security operatives today, and as a result of this they lust over worldly wealth and gains. In Ààrẹ Àgò, Ógúnrinde Ajé was sentenced to death by Baṣòrun Ógúnmolá according to the law and custom of the land; we have evidence of this on (p. 110):

Ìwọ Ògúnrinde Ajé, Ààrẹ Àgò Balógun Ìbàdàn. Wọ́n fi ẹ̀sùn ipà̀nìyàn kàn ó. Mo sì sẹjọ rẹ̀ pẹ̀lú iwàdít finifini pẹ̀lú ẹ̀tọ́ tí ó yẹ̀ fún ọ̀ gégé bí ọ̀kan nínú ijòyè ilú. Nígbà tí mo sì gbé ọ̀rọ̀ nàà lọ, tí mo gbé e bọ̀, mo dá ọ̀ lẹ̀bí ikú. Nítórí nàà, àṣẹ̀ mi ni pé iwọ̀ ní láti kú.

(You Ogunrinde Aje, the Aare Ago to the Balógun of Ibadanland, they charge you with murder. And I attend to your case with diligent

investigation that you deserve as a chief. After proper investigation I sentence you to death, for this reason my judgement is for you to die p. 110)

As it is generally known that any society that fails to follow their laid down rules and regulations will be embroiled in chaos and civil unrest. This was the case in *Adákédájó* as the writer shows through Gbénga, who in the process of avenging his uncle (Kànmi) perpetrates murder and arson; we have evidence of this on (p. 97) in *Adákédájó*. Gbénga said:

Mo fẹ́ kí èmí Àrẹ̀mú lọ sí i, kí iyàwó adájó tó dájó èrú lọ sí i, kí sẹ̀nbà àg-bejórò Àrẹ̀mú jóná, kí ọmọ ọ̀gá ọ̀lópàá tó wà nídii ọ̀rọ̀ náà méjì máa wolé de bàbá wọn.

(I want Àrẹ̀mú to die, the wife of the judge that presided over this fraudulent case should also die, the chamber of Àrẹ̀mú's lawyer should be set ablaze and two children of the policeman in charge of the case should be killed. (p.97).

This same scenario of corruption and perversion of justice through financial inducement and political power is what is causing problems in Nigeria today. For example, the case of Boko Haram terrorism can be traced to the double standard in which judges, especially Sharia court judges in the Northern region, order that petty thief's hand or leg should be severed while the political thieves are allowed to roam around the street in their luxurious cars. Also, the case of militancy and kidnapping in the Niger Delta region and recently in all parts of the country can be traced to the issue of the people being shortchanged by their leaders. The only solution to this is equity of all and respect for the law and constitution of the land.

Conclusion

In this essay we have analyzed two Yoruba play texts, namely *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Arikúyerí* by Ògúnńíran and *Adákédájó* by Şàngótóyè to compare and contrast the judicial system in Yorùbá traditional settings with that of modern Nigeria. Our research findings show that, although there is an atom of corruption in traditional Yorùbá settings as confirmed by one of our text *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Arikúyerí*, it is not as prevalent and viral as what we have today in our modern judicial system where justice is been bought and sold as portrayed by *Adákédájó*. The main reason for this as shown by the two texts is lack of fear of God and the laws of the land.

We propose that inflexible punishment for perpetrators of bribery in the society should be promoted. Furthermore, the teaching and learning of Yorùbá

ethos of ọmọlúàbí should be made paramount in our schools and homes and should be inculcate to our younger generation from cradle. Failure to do this will only result in chaos and anarchy as we are witnessing in the country today.

Recommendation

We recommend that Yoruba and African morality (ìwà ọmọlúàbí) which according to (¹⁴Lawal 2004: 20) is a balanced, healthy in body, sound in intellect and above all, strong in the communal spirit should be inculcate to children early in life, as this will help them to know what is morally good from what is bad. Furthermore, the virtue of hard work and uprightness should be taught to children in schools using poems such as “*ìṣẹ́ lóógùn ìṣẹ́*”, ‘hard work is the antidote to poverty’, “*Kí ni ñ ó folè ṣe*” ‘what will I do with stealing?’ etc. by teachers and guardians instead of teaching them western poems and literatures that add little or no moral value to their life. And lastly, our nation's criminal law must be reviewed as a matter of urgency.

References

- Abimbó lá, W. *Àwọn Ojú Odù Mé rindínlógún*. Ìbàdàn: University Press Plc., 2004.
- Adéṣòlá, P.O. “The Linguistic Forms of Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Arikúyerí”. *ALORE: Ilorin Journal of the Humanities* 9(1998)
- Adèyemí, L. *Tiọ̀rì Lítirésò ní Èdè Yorùbá*. Ìjẹ̀ bú-òde: Shebiotimọ̀ Publications, 2006.
- Adèyemí, L. *Children Literature and Yorùbá Literary Disability Criticism*. Ibadan: Matrix Publications, 2013.
- Fákéyẹ̀, F. “Yorùbá Worldview and the Context of Irony of Fate in Selected Tragic Plays” *YORÙBÁ: Journal of Yorùbá Studies Association of Nigeria*. 8 (2015):314-337.
- Lawal, R.A *Meaning without Mean-ness*. University of Ilorin Seventy-Four Inaugural Lectures. Ilorin: Unilorin Press, 2004.
- Lawal, A. “*Corruption in the Colonial Period.*” Daily Comet, Thursday 22nd of June 2006.
- Mobólájí, W.A. “Ìhà Tí Fágúnwà Kọ Sí Ètò Ìdájọ̀ Ní Àwùjọ̀ Yorùbá” In *Ọ̀tun Ìmọ̀ Nínú Ìtàn Àròṣọ̀ D.O Fágúnwà*, ed. Olúyemísí Adébòwálé, Dúró Adélékè and Àrinpé Adéjùmò, 113-117. Lagos: Capstone Publications, 2016.

14 Lawal, R.A *Meaning without Mean-ness*. University of Ilorin Seventy-Four Inaugural Lectures. Ilorin: Unilorin Press, 2004.

- Ògúnṣọlá, L. “Yorùba Proverbs and Morality (iwà ọmọlúàbí): The Past, Present and the Future” In *Bringing Our Cultures Home: Festschrift for Bade Ajayi at 70*, ed. A.S. Abdussalam, et. al. 124-138. Ilorin: Chrimadel Publisher, (2014)
- Ògúnníran, L. *Ààrẹ̀ Àgò Aríkúyẹ̀rì*. Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers, 2007.
- Ogunsina, J.A. *The Sociology of Yorùbá Novel. 1930-1975*. Ibadan: Integrity Publication, 2006.
- Olájubù, O. The Effects of Taboo on the Health of African Women: The Yorùbá Experience. In *Women in the Commonwealth of God: Circle of African Women Theologians*. Accra (Ghana):124-135, (1997).
- Omipidan, B.A. “The Concept of Justice and the Rule of Law” In *General Studies in the Art*, ed. F.A. Adekola and R.I. Adebayo, 97-101. Ilorin: Rajah Dynamic Printers, 2012.
- Ọmótóyè, R. “Perspectives on Corruption in Nigeria” In *General Studies in the Art*, ed. R.O. Lasisi, 37-41. Ilorin: Rajah Dynamic Printers, 2012.
- Orímóògùnje, O.C. “Socio-Mythical Approach to Yoruba Indigenous Health Related Verbal Art”. *Ilorin Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*. 5 (2015): 77-95
- Şàngótóyè, O. *Adáké dájó* . Àkúrẹ̀: Life-Steps Publishers. 2007

The Responsibilities of the Babaláwo-*Ifá* Priests in the Political Activities and Judicial Administration in Ancient Yorùbá Society: Lessons for Contemporary Nigeria

Samuel Káyòdé Ọláléyẹ and Julius Sunday Adekoya
Department of Religious Studies,
University of Ìbàdàn, Nigeria
kayodeleye2005@yahoo.com
adekoyajulius@yahoo.com

Abstract

Babaláwo (Ifá priests) are considered as the fathers of secrets/mysteries; they are initiated to be the Custodians of Ifá (an epitome of wisdom, knowledge and power) who leads other deities. Hence, they are in charge of worship, devotions and administration of ẹbọ (sacrifice) to maintain peace and order in every community. This makes a Babaláwo to occupy a strategic position and thereby plays a significant role in the political activities and administration of any community in Yorùbáland. In addition to these responsibilities, Babaláwo serve as check and balance for the kings and their subjects in ancient Yorùbá society; they were the custodians and enforcers of ethical codes. Therefore, they ensure proper political and administration of justice so as to make the then society free from corruption, nepotism, favoritism and all sorts of social vices that characterise the modern Yorùbá society. It is on this note that this paper re-examines the responsibilities of Babaláwo in the political and administration of the ancient Yorùbá society so as to draw some lessons for the present generation. Twenty Babaláwo were interviewed and their opinions were

content analysed with a view of gaining insight into the political and justice administration in the ancient Yorùbá society.

Key words: Babaláwo-Ifá priests, political activities, judicial administration, ancient Yorùbá society, Contemporary Nigeria.

Introduction

Babaláwo (*Ifá* priests) played significant roles in the life of the ancient Yorùbá as the representatives of the gods or intermediaries between Olódùmarè and the people. The roles which they still play in some quarters, particularly in the areas of offering Èbò- sacrifice for the peace and harmony of the land, and in choosing credible candidates for Obaship. In abnormal situations such as war and epidemics, it is their duty to consult the oracle on behalf of the people to normalize the situation by offering the right sacrifice to right all the wrongs. They counsel the king and the chiefs on important issues relating to the whole affairs of the town and on personal matters. They acted as what can be likening to today's personal physicians' to the kings and the chiefs' regarding their health, their families and their total wellbeing. On crucial matters that are delicate to take decision on such as murder cases, they are always there to assist the kings and their subjects. These were some of the administrative duties they performed then. In the old Òyó Empire, the roles of Babaláwo were not lacking in ensuring that the right candidate was chosen as king, and when the king is finally chosen, they ensured that his reign is favourably disposed to his people by assisting in seeking the face of the gods for their favour through the offering of sacrifice at all times to appease them. They also assisted during and after the war through constant offerings. No festival is done without the consent of Ifa that they represented. They give counsel through the help of *Ifá* in crucial matters like murder, land, property and marriage issues. Their roles are enormous in the administrative system of the Yorùbá land in general, and Òyó Empire in particular. These are some of what this paper tried to explain. In addition to how *Ifá* worship was introduced to Òyó Empire through Arugba *Ifá*, an Òtá woman during the reign of Oba Onígogí, and the roles *Ifá* had been playing in the Empire till today.

The Babaláwo and His Roles in Yorùbá Kingdoms

A Babaláwo is a well-trained *Ifá* diviner and consultant of *Ifá* Oracle. He is the mediator between man and his god. He is the middle man between the client in the physical world and the world of the spiritual. Thus, according to Falola¹, the esoteric nature of the *Ifá* cult is anchored on the African

1 Toyin Falola, 2022, *African Spirituality, Politics, and Knowledge Systems*, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 27.

traditional belief system, religion and belief in the existence of supernatural beings which include Olódùmarè the Supreme Being, the divinities and other spiritual agents. They are the one that know what *Ifá*, or any deity will take and when they will take it. Among other positions a good Babaláwo can be found as; as a healer and an herbalist. By this, he attends to both the physical as well as the spiritual life of his clients to give holistic healing. The healing works of a Babaláwo is clearly noticeable where there is an outbreak of an epidemic in the community, serious illness or when a woman is under labour pain. As a local genius and repositories of knowledge in the area where they live, they give advice and guidance, especially to the constituted authority in pre-colonial Yorùbá society. Even up till now, their advisory roles can not be over emphasised. Therefore, throughout the Yorùbá kingdom, the Babaláwo are indispensable tools in the hands of the Oba, their chiefs and the general populace. They are consulted on several instances on matters arising and every dealings of life from birth to death. A Babaláwo is always; generous, faithful, knowledgeable and good traditional counselor to the members of his community.

Since they are centre of attraction in the society, their world is built on checks and balances; they are not expected to misbehave. They therefore, constituted part of the judicial system in every Yorùbá kingdom². In fact, in the past, it is the duty of the Babaláwo to divine for the king and his household on daily basis to ascertain the will of Olodumare and other Orisa on him, his household and the entire kingdom. McClelland³ has claimed that apart from occupying an important place in the society, they are always revered. However, by taking a critical look at the Babaláwo's position in the Yorùbá society, one would discover that McClelland's assertion is an understatement because, Babaláwo in the Yorùbá society act like kings in their own capacity. Therefore, they are to be respected and accorded same honours given to the kings. Besides, when dressed in their regalia, they are not expected to prostrate for anyone (even the king). Rather, they can take a bow to show their respect and whatever they say on an issue is always the final. This is the reason why kings and leaders in Yorùbá society cannot do without their counsel both on private and public matter. As a result, a Babaláwo must present himself worthy of that position he occupies.

As part of their duties, a good Babaláwo must be a keeper of morals, ethics and ethos. Therefore, he must be able to reflect the moral teachings of *Ifá* in his personal life and all virtues of an upright man must be found in him.

2 Ayo Salami, 2008, *Yoruba Theology and Tradition, The Worship*, Lagos: NIDD Limited (Publishers), 575.

3 E. McClelland, 1982, *The Cult of Ifa among the Yoruba, Folk Practices and the Art*, Britain: Ethnographical Ltd, 86.

Babaláwo's position is a unique one in Yorùbá kingdom. This is so because it is not an honorary title nor hereditary. Rather, it is a position acquired after many years of rigorous training and experience.

Bade Ajayi⁴ was able to identify two categories of Babaláwo. These are: *Awo Èlégán* and *Awo Olódù*. *Awo Èlégán*, according to him, are the Babaláwo who are not fully engaged in *Ifá* divination. He however divided this *Awo Èlégán* into two. They are *Agbàmótẹ* and *Şawoşẹşẹgùn*. He described *Agbàmótẹ* as a Babaláwo, particularly trained in the act of *Ifá* divination but not initiated into *Ifá* cult. Therefore, they are not commercial *Ifá* diviners. They only used divination for their own purpose and for the purpose of their family members. The *Şawoşẹşẹgùn* are the set of Babaláwo that combined divination with healing. They are known for their healing than divination. They only make use of divination experience when things are not going well with their healing applications.

The second category identified by Bade Ajayi is the Babaláwo *Olódù* who are the devoted *Ifá* diviners. They are the most recognised and most knowledgeable class among the Babaláwo. They pass through all the stages of *Ifá* divination to be qualified. They entered *igbódù* and see *igbádù*, thus were exposed to the secret of *Odù* which only a qualified Babaláwo in all ramifications can see. This is the category of Babaláwo this paper tries to address.

However, William Bascom⁵ identified four different categories of Babaláwo as against that of Bade Ajayi, particularly, in Ilé-Ifẹ. These are Babaláwo *Èlégán* which he believes is the lowest grade and not always expensive. They are also sometime called or referred to as *Omọ ajárimádi* – those who shave their head but do not tie their hair. The second category, according to him, is Babaláwo *Adóşù* – those who create a tuft of hair. To be a diviner of this category, such a diviner must belong to a compound that has *òrigín* – a mound of earth built in front of the compound containing secret materials. While the third category is Babaláwo *Olódù*, which is the most popular among them as said above. The last category is *Awo Oọni* of which all of them must be *Olódù* and they are headed by *Aràba*, followed by *Agbongbòn* and fourteen other individual titles. This is the third categories of people called *Àwòrò* by Adeoye⁶ that were assisting Olófin Odùdúwà in his government in pre-colonial Yorùbá kingdom. However, regardless of any categories a Babaláwo may belong to, they are banded together by the same code of conduct.

4 Bade Ajayi 2002, *Ifa Divination: its Practices among the Yoruba of Nigeria*, Ijebu-Ode: Shebiotimo Publications, 4.

5 William Bascom, 1969, *Ifa Divination, Communication between Gods and Man in West Africa*, London: Indiana University Press, 82-85.

6 C. L. Adeoye, 1979, *Asa ati Ise Yoruba*, Nigeria: Oxford University Press, 277.

Judicial System of the Pre-colonial Yorùbá Government and Administration in General

The Yorùbá had a well-organised political system right from the pre-colonial era to the extent that even when the Europeans came, they built their own government on the existing structure in Yorùbá kingdom. According to Raji and Danmole⁷, Yorùbá political system was monarchical in nature. Thus, the Ọba was the head of state and government and the process of succession was hereditary.

Generally speaking, in Yorùbá land, government begins from individual homes where the *Baálé* is the head. Then, there is the extended family where *Eléébí* or *Mógàjí* is the head. There is also *Ádúgbò* – a quarter headed by a chief, and there are villages where they have *Baálè* as their heads⁸. Finally, there is town where Ọba is the head. The Ọba is also assisted by *Mọdewá* – they are chiefs that seat with the king on daily basis to help the king settle quarrel among his people and also assist in whatever things that the Ọba wishes to do in the town every day. In other words, they are the group that primarily executes the king's order. There are also the *Ígbimò*, or the *Ìwàràfàs*, or the *Ọyó Mèsì*. They are high chiefs who have the power to install and remove the king on the throne if he misbehaved⁹. Then, there are the *Babaláwo* whose duty among others is to secure the community against epidemic, act as a spiritual father to the king and the entire community, and offer sacrifice for the smooth running of the community. They are in charge of worship, devotions and administration of *ẹbọ*-sacrifice for the peace of their communities. As part of the judicial system, Babaláwo mediated between man, particularly the king, and the Supreme God on how to ensure a successful administration. Whatever the priests pronounced was always the final. Also, they served as checks and balances on the kings and their subjects.

This clearly shows that the Pre-colonial Yorùbá system, where the *Ifá* Priests were the custodians and enforcers of ethical codes, is a model system where corruption, nepotism, favoritism and all sorts of social vices that characterise the modern society was at its barest minimum. For instance, in *Èkítì* kingdoms, the head of the *Babaláwo* in each town is called *Àmèèkú* who is always with the king to offer useful advice to the king. He and the *Emigun* – herbalists always team up together to make sure that the above duties are discharged appropriately. Although *Àmèèkán* do not go to *Ibodè* – the council

7 A.O.Y. Raji and H.O. Danmole, 2004, *Understanding Yoruba Life and Culture*, Edited by Nike S. Lawal, Mathew N.O. Sadiku and Ade Dopamu, Eritrea: Africa World Press Inc., 260.

8 Olu Daramola ati A, Jeje, 1975, *Awon Asa ati Orisa Ile Yoruba*, Ibadan: Onibonje Press and Books Industries, Nigeria: Oxford University Press, 279.

9 C. L. Adeoye, 1979, *Asa ati Ise Yoruba*, Nigeria: Oxford University Press, 279.

of High chiefs meeting (among which are *Ìwàràfà*), due to the virtue of his position as a king in his own domain who enjoyed same privilege with the king, who must not prostrate or bow to the king and whose order is carried out through the king in whatever he says because he takes directive from *Ifá*. Despite the fact that they do not go to such meetings, they are always with the king to direct his affairs aright. It is however possible that the king may have his own personal Babaláwo since *Àmèèkú* is the head of *Ifá* cult of his town or community. More importantly, it may not be the current king that installed him there, thus, the king cannot remove him and if they are not in good term with each other, it is necessary therefore for such a king to have his own private or personal Babaláwo that would be assisting him in that regard (such was the case of those Babaláwo mentioned in this paper). However, that does not indicate that the *Àmèèkú* will not discharge his duty as well and in a good faith since he is not representing the king alone, but the whole community.

In the old *Ọ̀yọ̀* Empire, the *Ọ̀yọ̀ Mèsì* was seven principal councilors of the state led by the *Baṣòrun* who can be regarded as the prime minister. Other members of the council were the *Àgbàakin*, *Ṣàmù*, *Alápíni*, *Laguna*, *Akíníkú* and *Asípa* who represented the voice of the people to protect the interest of the entire empire. These were the *bóba ṣèlús* of the time. The *Aláàfin* was necessary to take advice from them on any important matter that has to do with the state such as waging wars, festivals and some other state issues. Each man had a state duty to perform at the court every morning and afternoon. If any members are to be absent in the palace, they must as a matter of duty sent their representatives. Some of their duties included to act as a check and balance on the powers of *Aláàfin* from being an autocrat. It is the duty of the head of *Ọ̀yọ̀ Mèsì*, the *Basorun* to consult the *Ifá* oracle for the approval of the gods (after *Ifá* mysteries had been established in the kingdom) despite the fact that they already known the next king and the *Basorun* had the final say on the nomination of the new *Aláàfin*, and his power rivaling the king himself. They also have the mandate as part of their duties to compel a despotic king to commit suicide if he was becoming too tyrannical. In such a situation, the *Aláàfin*, his eldest son, the *Samu*, his personal counsellor and a member of the *Ọ̀yọ̀ Mèsì*, the *Asamu*, all had to commit suicide in order to renew the government all together. The process and the suicide ceremony must take place during the *Orun* festival¹⁰.

Again, the *Ọ̀yọ̀ Mèsì* was not left alone to enjoy an absolute power or influence. The *Ogboni*, who represented the popular opinion backed by the authority of religion, served as checks and balances on the king and the *Ọ̀yọ̀ Mèsì* so that none of the parties would arrogate too much power to themselves.

10 <https://freefacebook.com>, retrieved on 12/09/2018.

As a matter of fact, the Ogboni was a powerful society composed of people from different professions; noted for their age, wisdom and importance in religious and political affairs, and all their members spread across all religious cults and social life of the Yorùbá in general. Aside from their duties in respect to the worship of the earth, they were responsible for judging any case dealing with the spilling of blood. The leader of the Ogboni, the Oluwo, had the unqualified right of direct access to the Aláàfin of Òyó on any matter¹¹.

The View of *Ifá* on the Judicial Administration in the Old Òyó Empire and other Ancient Yorùbá Kingdoms as found in *Ìrètè Méjì*

As alleged by Bolaji Idowu that the keynote of the life of the Yorùbá is not in the noble ancestry or in the past deed of their heroes but in their religion, may be right to certain level. According to him, in all the circumstances of life, is it joys and troubles, before a child is born, when the child is born, at every state of life puberty, betrothal, marriage, career, and all other things that make up human existence on earth, it is the deity that dictates¹². The Òyó Empire (which was prominent in pre-colonial period) and other Yoruba kingdoms were not left behind. Before the introduction of the worship of *Ifá*, not every affairs of life were left in the hands of the deity. Particularly, when it comes to choosing of a successor to the throne, the person that would take over the reign among the children would have known himself. Even the entire town would know. Therefore, there was no need of consulting *Ifá* or any deity to ascertain their wishes to do this. While other gods like *Obátálá*, *Òṣun*, *Oya*, *Ṣàngó* were popular and accorded worship and respect, *Ifá* was not. Although there were magic and medicine and great herbalists of repute, but due to the human urge for power, there were no *Ifá* priests. According to Johnson¹³, it was during the reign of *Aláàfin* Onigbogi, one of the sons of *Aláàfin* Olúàṣo who was born to him by *Arugbá Ifá*, an Òtá woman who had left Òyó during the previous reign for her native town of Òtá that introduced *Ifá* worship to Òyó. However, when she heard that her son had been made a king, she came back to Òyó, to assist him in his government, so that he would have a long and prosperous reign. Therefore, she advised him to introduce the worship of *Ifá* into Òyó as a national deity, but the Òyó citizens declined that they could not worship palm nuts. Thus, her advice was turned down. It was Aládó that

11 <https://historicalforte.blogspot.com>, retrieved 12/09/2018.

12 E Bolaji Idowu, 1989, *Olodumare God in Yoruba Belief*, Nigeria: Longman (Nig.) Publishers, 5.

13 Samuel Johnson, 1969, *The History of the Yoruba*, London; Lowe and Brydone, (Printers) Ltd, 158-159.

Ifá mentioned in *Odù Irè Ntegbè* as quoted below that accepted Arugba's idea of *Ifá* worship on her way back to Òtá. Arugbá initiated him (Alado) and conferred on him the right to initiate others into the mysteries of *Ifá* worship. It was this Alado that initiated the Òyós into the mysteries, rites and ceremonies of *Ifá* when they decided to accept *Ifá* worship. However, this kind of system is slightly different from other Yorùbá kingdoms where *Ifá* counsels must be sought before venturing into the business of choosing successors to the throne.

Ifá is a bunch of knowledge and wisdom that talks virtually about everything and all things one can think about here on earth and in heaven. In Makinde's¹⁴ words, "*Ifá*, which is known as a repository of knowledge or infinite source of knowledge (*Ìmò àìmòtán*), is in possession of knowledge consisting of several branches; science of nature (physics), animal (biology), plants (botany), oral incantations (*Oḡḡ*), divination (prediction), medicinal plants (herbalism), and all the sciences associated with healing diseases (medicine)". This does not exclude governance and administration. In fact, Òrúnmilà, the custodian of *Ifá* spent much time attending to the needs of the people including kings in all Yorùbá kingdoms, while on earth to make sure that the kings and his people live a peaceful life right from the time of *Olófin Odùdúwà*. *Ìrètè Òkànràn*¹⁵ attests to this fact thus:

Ìrètè Òkànràn ni a dá
Nijò tí gbogbo Awo péjò sílè Olófin

Nṣorò sílè de Òrúnmilà

A ní kí Òrúnmilà ó rú ewúré kan
Àti egbèrìndínlógún lẹbọ àrùni

Kí ó má bàá fi ẹnu ara rẹ gba iwọ
jẹ láwùjọ Awo.
Òrúnmilà gbọ,
Ó rúbọ tán, ó fori lé ilé Olófin...

Irete Okanran was what was casted
On the day all Awo assembled in
the house of Olófin

When an Oro was organised for
Òrúnmilà

Òrúnmilà was asked to offer a goat
Three thousand eight hundred
cowries as sacrifice of loss.

So that he would not eat poison
in the midst of the Awos

Òrúnmilà heard

He offered the sacrifice and went to
Olófin's house...

14 M. Akin Makinde, 1988 *African Philosophy, Culture and Traditional Medicine*, Athens: University Center for International Studies, 7.

15 A. Lijadu, 1897, *Ifa Mimo Alabalase*, Ado Èkìtì: United Star Printers Ltd, 28.

In the same way, *Odù Ìrẹ̀ Ntegbè*¹⁶ explained how *Ológbòjìgòlò*, *Èwí's Ifá* priest later became *Olóyó's Ifá* priest. According to the *Odù*, *Ifá* says:

<i>Apá Èranlá mbe lówó Lánlošé</i>	The big hand of elephant is in the hand of Lanlose
<i>Agò màrìwò mbe lówó Lárùba</i>	Masquerade costume is in the hand of Laruba
<i>Mo fògo</i>	I jumped Ogo
<i>Mo rògo</i>	I bought Ogo
<i>Mo wògbèhìn òràn sun àn sun àn,</i>	I looked at the end of the matter
<i>Ló dífá fòba Èwí Adó</i>	Casts divination for Ewi Ado
<i>Ológošé, awo wọn lóde Àgéré</i>	Ologose their priest at Agere town
<i>Arèrèkosùn, awo òkè Ìjèrò</i>	Arerekosun their priest on the hill of Ijero
<i>Ebùréjẹgijẹgi, awo ọrùn ebè</i>	Eburejegijegi the priest on top of a ridge
<i>Awo inú pòro oko</i>	The priest of a ridge in the farm
<i>Ló dífá fòba lálòde Ọyọ</i>	Casts divination for the king of Ọyọ
<i>Ó dígbà kinní,</i>	On the first time
<i>Ọba lóyọ ngbógun ròde Èwí,</i>	The king of Ọyọ made a war expedition to Ewi
<i>Ọwọ̀ dodo o do ló sán bọ</i>	He came with nothing
<i>Ó dígbà kéjì</i>	On the second time
<i>Ọba lóyọ ngbógun ròde Èwí</i>	The king of Ọyọ made a war expedition to Ewi
<i>Ọwọ̀ dodo o do ló sán bọ</i>	He came with nothing
<i>Àì sí nílẹ̀ Ológbòjìgòlò</i>	Due to the absence of Ologbojigolo
<i>Nwọ̀n wá dé orí Eléwí mákoto</i>	Ewi's head was covered in a calabash
<i>Òtító lológbò nšawo</i>	Truly Ologbo was priest
<i>Ológbòjìgòlò lawo Èwí Adó</i>	Ologbojigolo was Ewi Ado's priest
<i>Òtító lológbò nšawo</i>	Truly Ologbo was priest
<i>Ó wá dológbòjìgòlò lawo láròde Ọyọ-ilé</i>	Ologbojigolo now became awo in the city of Ọyọ
<i>Òtító lológbò nšawo.</i>	Truly Ologbo was priest

Although there is a conflicting report on this *Odù* because this story was narrated in *Odù Ogbèwèhìn*¹⁷ with a slight variation where it was explained the reason why Ọyọ people don't eat *Ológbò* – cat till today. According to the story, the event happened between *Àpà* town and *Eléyó* town. *Eléyó* town

16 Oladipo Yemitan ati Olajide Ogunde, 1970, *Oju Osupa Apa Keji*, Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 70.

17 Oladipo Yemitan ati Olajide Ogunde, 1985, *Oju Osupa Apa Kinni*, Nigeria: University Press Limited, 49-60.

merged with the present-day Ọyọ town as a result of that incident. We learnt that Ọlọyọ later took over the whole affairs from Ẹlẹyẹ because even before he took over the affairs, every person's taken captive in *Apa* town by Ẹlẹyẹ were sold to Ọlọyọ.

However, it was the same story; same characters but different towns of which one has a link, with Ọyọ. Again, the *Odù* sited in *Ogbèwèhìn* was a fuller and detailed version than the one in *Ìrètẹgbè*. While the major differences in the two stories are; one, in *Ìrètẹgbè*, *Ológbòjìgòlò* was *Awo* to both kings, *Ọlọyọ* and *Eléwí*, while in *Ogbèwèhìn*, he was *Awo* to only *Alápà*. The reason for this was, the moment he discovered the truth, he turned to a cat and escaped through the ceiling. This was responsible for the reason why the Ọyọ people do not eat *Ológbò*- cat till today. There is a belief that if they do, they are eating their in-law. After all, Ọlọyọ's daughter had children for *Ologbojigolo*. However, the story is all about *Ológbòjìgòlò*, who was an *Awo* to a king or some kings, which is the point we are trying to establish. This is how *Ifá* puts the *Odù* in *Ogbèwèhìn*:

<i>Ogbèwèhìn;</i>	Ogbewehinwo
<i>Ẹhìn Ìwà mo wò</i>	I looked at the outcome of character
<i>Mo wò réré,</i>	I looked at the open
<i>Mo wò jọjọ</i>	I looked patiently
<i>A dífá fún Ológbòjìgòlò</i>	Casts divination for <i>Ologbojigolo</i>
<i>Tó nṣawo ròde Àpà</i>	Who was on divination mission to <i>Apa</i>
<i>Nwón ní ẹ má jobì tó gbó</i>	They were told not to eat matured kola nut
<i>Ẹ nje obì tó gbó</i>	They were eating matured kola nut
<i>Ẹyin àgbà,</i>	You elders,
<i>Nwón ní ẹ má láya méjì ní</i>	You were instructed not to marry
<i>rògbà-nrògbà</i>	two wives at once
<i>Ẹyín rèè láya méjì ní rògbà</i>	You went ahead to marry two wives at once
<i>nrògbà</i>	
<i>Njé tani ò mòràn</i>	Now who is not unwise
<i>Tani ò mète,</i>	Who does not know the trick
<i>Njé tani ò mò pòrí Alápà</i>	Who does not know that it is the head of <i>Alapa</i>
<i>Ló mbẹ nínú akoto!</i>	That is inside the bowl

What applied to Ọrúnmílà and *Ológbòjìgòlò* was what happened to all the *Awo* mentioned in *Odù Ìrètẹ Méjì*¹⁸ where the sample of this paper was taken. The *Odù* explained that *Adegorolu*, one of the sons of Ọ̀nì Alà̀nàkànè-súrú was in search of a wife and went to consult some priests. He was told to offer sacrifice to get a wife and for the wife to bear children for him. He

18 Fasina Agboola, 1989, *Ojulowo Oriki Ifa Apa Kinni*, Lagos: Project Publications Limited, 211-213.

made partial offering, got married to Aróhunwè. The woman could not bear children for Adegorolu, she went to consult the oracle and was asked to offer two hundred pieces of kola nut and two hundred cowries. It was where she went to purchase the kola nut in the market that she encountered the Olokun's emissary who were looking for the same item for sacrifice to the same kind of problem. These servants forcefully took the kola nut from Aróhunwè. She cried and ran after them till she got to Olokun's house. It was through this means that she became Olokun's wife. This is how *Ifá* puts it:

<i>Aláásàrèé</i>	Aláásàrèé
<i>Alààsàrè</i>	Alààsàrè
<i>Alààsàsà</i>	Alààsàsà
<i>Àwọn ni wọn sawo tí tí tí</i>	They were the one on divination mission for a long time
<i>Wọn gbapá erinlá</i>	That were given the hand of a cow
<i>Wọn déyìnkùlè àpón</i>	They got to the back of a bachelor
<i>Wọn pòyì biri biri</i>	They made a round turning
<i>A dífá fún Adégorólú</i>	Casts divination for Adegorolu
<i>Ọmọ Ọ̀ṣ̀ni Alà̀nàkan-èsùrú</i>	The son of Ooni Alanakanesuru
<i>Nìjọ̀ tó nsunkán pónun ò lóbìnrin.</i>	On the day he was crying for lack of wife
<i>Wón ní kó káralẹ̀ ẹ̀bọ̀ ní ó ẹ̀se...</i>	He was asked to offer sacrifice...
<i>Àwọn Awo yí nàà ló ẹ̀fá fún Arihunwè</i>	The same Awos divined for Arihunwe
<i>Nìjọ̀ tó nsunkún pónun ò bímọ</i>	When she was crying because she had no child
<i>Àwọn ná à ló dífá f'Ólókun</i>	The same Awos divined for Olokun
<i>Nígbà tó ún m̀ékún ojú ẹ̀ráhùn ọ̀mọ</i>	When Olokun was crying for lack of children
<i>Wón ní kó nígba ọ̀mọ̀ obì</i>	He was told to offer two hundred pieces of kola nut
<i>Tó so lóri iyá kan nàà</i>	Produced by only one tree
<i>Olókun gbẹ̀bọ̀ nlẹ̀ ó rúbọ̀</i>	Olokun heard and offered the sacrifice
<i>Ọ̀un ló wá bí Iyewájọ̀bí</i>	He was the one that gave birth to Iyewájọ̀bí
<i>Àwọn awo yí nàà ló ẹ̀fá fún Iyewájọ̀bí</i>	This same Awos also divined for Iyewájọ̀bí
<i>Nìjọ̀ tí nsunkún pónun ò níbùdó</i>	When she was crying for lack of settlement
<i>Wón ní kó káralẹ̀, ẹ̀bọ̀ ní o ẹ̀se</i>	She was told to offer sacrifice
<i>Adá-ẹ̀ní-sokó</i>	Adá-ẹ̀ní-sokó
<i>A dífá fún Ọ̀gò-Ọ̀là</i>	Casts divination for Ọ̀gò-Ọ̀là
<i>Èyí tí ẹ̀mọ̀ oba lóyọ̀ ajorí</i>	The son of oba OIỌ̀yọ̀ ajorí
<i>Nìjọ̀ tí nsunkún pónun ò lóbìnrin.</i>	On the day he was crying for lack of a wife
<i>Wón ní ó kalẹ̀ ẹ̀bọ̀ ní o ẹ̀se</i>	He was asked to offer sacrifice
<i>Ọ̀un ló wá bí Ahánáhánnáméjì</i>	He was the one that gave birth to Ahánáhánnáméjì

<i>Ló bía Ahànàhànaànàméjì</i>	He also gave birth to Ahànàhànaànàméjì
<i>Ó bí Arábéjirinómúnálówó</i>	He gave birth to Arábéjirinómúnálówó
<i>Ó bí Èṣùmàrè-ògò-ó béjì-rin ótúmòèjì</i>	Also gave birth to Èṣùmàrè-ògò-ó béjì-rin ótúmòèjì
<i>Ó bí Olábérinjò</i>	He gave birth to Olábérinjò
<i>Tí nṣawo fún wọn lóde Ìsánlú</i>	Who was their diviner at Isanlu
<i>Ó bí Jegúre,</i>	He gave birth to Jegúre,
<i>Tí sawo fún wọn lóde Òtùnmòbà</i>	Who was their diviner at Otunmoba
<i>Ó bí Pátákó</i>	He gave birth to Pátákó
<i>Tí nṣawo fún wọn lóde Ìpóró</i>	Their priest at Iporo
<i>Ó bí Páráfà</i>	He also gave birth to Páráfà
<i>Tí nṣawo fún wọn lóde ÌÈmèrè</i>	Their priest in the city of Lemere
<i>Ó bí Òkánlāwón</i>	He gave birth to Òkánlāwón
<i>Tí nṣawo fún Arèsa Àjèjé</i>	Who was a priest to Aresa Ajeje
<i>Ó wá bí Òrògbòdòṣègùn</i>	He now gave birth to Òrògbòdòṣègùn
<i>Tí nṣawo wọn ní Ìbàribá</i>	Their priest at Ibariba
<i>Omọ asòsándòru</i>	The child of he that turns daylight to darkness
<i>Ó wá bí Ìbò</i>	He then gave birth to Ìbò
<i>Tí borí ayé</i>	That covers the whole world
<i>Ó fi ṣomọ ikéyìn wọn lénje lénje</i>	That was the last born
<i>Njé eni ó bá lówó</i>	Therefore, he who has money
<i>È wá rúbọ fómọ</i>	Come and offer sacrifice for children
<i>Iyewa lọ sókun ò dé mó...</i>	Iyewa went to the Atlantic she didn't comeback.

When Yewajobi was of age to get married, *Ifá* was consulted through the same set of people that divined for her mother Arihunwè. She was told to offer two sheeps and four hundred and twenty cowries as sacrifice with a promise that she would get a husband. Out of these two sheep, one was given to her and was instructed that wherever she goes, she must go with the sheep and wherever a ram mate with the sheep, that was where she would get her husband. The *Odù* went further:

<i>Adaenisoko</i> ¹⁹	Adaenisoko
<i>A dá fún Ògò-Olà</i>	Casts divination for Ogo-Ola
<i>Èyí tí Í ṣomọ Oba lóyọ ajori</i>	Who was a child of Oba lóyọ ajori

19 Fasina agboola, 1989, *Ojulowo Oriki Ifa, Apa Kinni*, Lagos: Project Publications Limited, 203-209.

Nijó tí Nsunkún p'òun ò lóbinrin...

On the day he was crying for lack
of wife

Ògò was a son of one of the *Aláàfin* of Òyó (though the name of his father was not mentioned by *Ifá*, but there is the possibility that it could be *Aláàfin* Olúàṣo²⁰ because it was Olúàṣo that reigned for about 320 years and had 1,460 children (with numerous wives) out of which it was Onigbogi that succeeded him. Again, it could also be *Aláàfin* Onigbogi himself because he was the one who had direct contact with *Arugbá Ifá*, an Òtá woman. However, in Johnson's narration, *Arugbá* could probably be the mother. While *Odù Írètè Méjì* claimed that she was a wife and rendered her name as *Iyewajóbi* that turned to Yewa River till today as a result of what transpired between her and Ògò. She got married to Ògò and bore ten children for him before she left him because none of the children stayed at home with them.

When *Aláàfin*, the father of Ògò died, Ògò was sent for and was made a king. When *Iyewajóbi* heard that her husband had been made a king, she went to Òyó to celebrate with her husband. When she was going, she went with money and valuable things (these valuable things that *Ifá* did not mention could be what Johnson called personification of several common objects used in fetish worship like *Ajé*, which is money, *Opón*-divination tray, *Ajere*- a kind of sieve, *Òsùn*, *Elégbára*- Image of *Èṣù* and *Íròkè* - a tapper that are related to *Ifá* divination system that accompanied *Arugbá-Ifá* when she was going to Òyó. (Johnson, being a priest of a foreign religion may not be favourably disposed to using *Ifá* in tracing any history and this could be the gap that differentiates the two stories that this paper is trying to link here).

Furthermore, just as Johnson explained that when the citizens of Òyó rejected *Arugbá* god, that is, *Ifá* worship, she returned to Òtá weeping. On the other hand, *Iyewajóbi* also wept on her way back to her place somewhere in Ògùn State, possibly the present-day Yewa, perhaps not on the issue of the rejection of her god, but because her husband Ògò forcefully had intercourse with her in the open in the presence of people and she left weeping. However, before she left, she placed a curse on the king. This curse may have been responsible for the war that broke out shortly after *Iyewajóbi/Arugbá* left Òyó. The war was between Tapa (Nupe) and Òyó Empire. The war made Onigbogi to flee from Òyó to Gbere in the Bariba country where he died in a strange land as narrated by Johnson. (However, whether the two stories are related or not, the institution of *Ifá* had been established in Òyó kingdom till today and currently, it had almost taken over from the rest of the Yorúbá because there is what we regarded as *Ifá* Òyó today).

20 Samuel Johnson 1969, *The History of the Yorubas*, 158-159.

According to *Odù Irete Meji* mentioned above, Yewájóbí gave birth to eleven children and they were all *Awo* except Ọ̀rògbòdòṣẹ̀gun who was a renowned herbalist that settled in the region of Bàrùbá in the present Kwara State. Baruba is a place known for effective and potent medicine till today. It also had a link with the old Ọ̀yọ̀ Empire greatly as said earlier. The first four went to the abode of Elédùmarè. After a wonderful performance with their divination, they were begged to stay back, to help in the administration of the abode of Elédùmarè. Ọ̀lábérinjo went to *Ìsánlú*, a town now in Kogi State where he became king's adviser and an administrator. Jegùre went to Ọ̀tùn, a town in Èkìtì State. They all became administrators and members of the government in their respective places they went to. They contributed to the harmony and peaceful co-existence of those places. One can still see the link and traces among these towns mentioned in the *Odù Ifá* and the entire Yorùbá race till today. This is part of what is responsible for the peaceful cohabitation enjoyed among the Yorùbá. As we can see, all the Yorùbá are interrelated, and regardless of any religious affiliation, the Yorùbá will still see themselves as one big family, particularly the indigenous religious people who viewed other religious affiliates as an extension of Yorùbá indigenous religion. Fátóósìn²¹ in his observation explained that most contemporary Christians and Muslims had their background in indigenous religions, while some have links with these religions either through their names or family members who are still practicing the religion or that they usually celebrate with during traditional festivals. Olajumoke Adenrele²² also corroborated this view by claiming that presently two of her children are Christians while another one is married to a Muslim.

Part of the Babaláwo judicial administrative measure is to curtail the excessive use of their powers and positions at the same time instill discipline and the fear of the gods so that they will deal fairly with their subjects. A very good example can be found in *Odù Ọ̀gúndá Fú*²³ where *Ifá* says;

Fúnmi nkò fún ọ
A kò le jìjà ilẹ̀kẹ̀ d'Ọ̀yọ̀

Ká dé'le Ọ̀lọ́fìn
Bí a bá ti nìjìà ikòkò,
Ijọ a bá dé'le ọba làà sòtọ

Give me, I will not give you
One cannot fight over beads till
he gets to Ọ̀yọ̀
And gets to Ọ̀lọ́fìn's house
If we have been fighting in the secret
On the day we get to the kings
palace shall we tell the truth.

21 Awo Fatoosin Awosola, (an Ifa priest) *Oral Interview*, 27th, August, 2018.

22 Olajumoke Adenrele, Osun Priestess *Oral Interview*, 27th, August, 2018.

23 Oladipo Yemitan ati Olajide Ogundele, 1985, *Oju Osupa apa kinni*, Nigeria: University Press Limited, 24-27

<i>A dá f'oba tí a gb'ápò ilèkè fún pamó,</i>	Casts divination for a king that a
<i>Tó şetán tó lóun ó fi iwó f'ónilèkè jẹ</i>	bag of beads was kept with
<i>Kóun ó le ráyè filèkè şe toun</i>	That later wanted to poison the
	owner of the beads
	So that he would make the beads
	his own

This was an incident that happened in Old Ọyó Empire between the family of a wealthy man, the king and some Babaláwos. The rich man died and his two sons inherited an expensive bead among his property. They both decided to hide the beads from the rest of the family members. However, the eldest son wanted to play a fast game with the beads as a result went again to go and keep the beads with the king. Being expensive beads, the king also wanted to covet it by killing the owner to make the beads his own. However, before he did that, he decided to test his Awos. He kept part of the beads in a covered bowl and call them to come and tell him what he kept in the bowl. Though many of them tried without success, but when Kékeré Awo (the smallest of them all) unravel the secret in the bowl, he ordered the king not to do what he had in mind and also ordered him to pay some fines that included eighty snails to be offered to *Ọrişà Odù*, sixteen goats that would be offered to *Ifá* for attempting to poison the owner of the beads. Again, for Oba not to die as a result of what he wanted to do, he should pay another fine of sixteen thousand cowries, the cloth he was wearing at that moment, the expensive cloth spread on his throne and two maidens that would carry those things to his house. The king obeyed and did everything immediately.

Again, in *Odù Ogbè-Rosùn*²⁴ otherwise known as *Ogbèmosùn* says;

<i>Ikán Awo orí igi,</i>	Termite, the priest on top of a tree
<i>Jànpèpè Awo ilèélè</i>	Janpepe, the priest on ground
<i>A dífá fún Ọlófin ní kàà kèrindinlógún</i>	Casts divination for Ọlófin in the
	sixteenth room
<i>Nígba tó ntògbògbò àrùn nílè</i>	When he was seriously sick
<i>Tó nara aláì le díde.</i>	And could not stand up
<i>Wón ní kó káraálè ebọ lawó ní kó şe</i>	He was asked to offer sacrifice
<i>Èrò Íşòpé</i>	People of Işope
<i>È wá wo 'fá Awo kì bí ti nşẹ</i>	Come and see the Ifa chanted as
	it comes to pass

The Odù explain an incident that happened between Ọrúnmilà the priest of Oba Ọlófin. It was Ọlófin that was sick and Ọrúnmilà consulted the oracle and

ask Ọlọfin to offer a sacrifice of a goat, hen, rat, fish and money. Ọlọfin provided those items and Ọrúnmilà offered the sacrifice with the ears of the animals by burying them in the palace of Ọlọfin and went away with the animals according to the dictate and instruction of Ifa. On the market day, Ọrúnmilà asked his wife to go and sell those animals in the market where Ọlọfin's wife saw her and went home to tell Ọlọfin that Ọrúnmilà had defrauded Ọlọfin by not offering those animals Ọrúnmilà claimed Ifa demanded because she saw Ọrúnmilà's wife in the market selling those animals. Ọrúnmilà was sent for by Ọlọfin to come and explain himself the reason why he should not be punished for the offence he had committed. Ọrúnmilà told Ọlọfin that he offered the animals by burying them in his palace. He went there and chanted *iyere Ifa* by saying;

<i>Nje oni lo maa mo pe mo toluwo</i>	It is today that you will know that a'm
<i>Ajagunmale</i>	capable of beign Oluwo
<i>K'eti eku ko deku, Ajagunmale</i>	Let the ears of rat become rat, Ajagunmale
<i>K'eti eja ko deja, Ajagunmale</i>	Let the ears of fish become fish, Ajagunmale
<i>K'eti eran ko deran, Ajagunmale</i>	Let the ears of ram become ram, Ajagunmale
<i>K'eti aso ko daso, Ajagunmale</i>	Let the ears of cloth become cloth, Ajagunmale
<i>K'eti eni ko deni, Ajagunmale...</i>	Let the ears of man become man, Ajagunmale

The ears of those animals turned to life animals. As he was doing this, the sickness of Ọlọfin came back and they started begging Ọrúnmilà. Ọrúnmilà said for the sickness to go, Ọlọfin must produce those animals in five places and for him not to die, he must provide another set of items with a lot of money which Ọlọfin gladly did. Ever since then, Ọlọfin never doubted the integrity of Ọrúnmilà and whatever advice he gives, he, Ọlọfin takes.

Another instance could be found in odu *Iwori Irete*²⁵. There *Ifá* says;

<i>Orí wobi rere gbémi dé</i>	Head find a suitable place take me to
<i>Èsẹ wobi rere sìnmi rẹ</i>	Leg should find a suitable place lead me to
<i>Ibi orí ngbé mí ì rẹ</i>	Where my head is taking me to,
<i>N ò mọbẹ</i>	I do not know
<i>A dífá fún Sàşórẹ</i>	Casts divination for Sàşórẹ
<i>Èyí tí nlo rẹè bori Èlẹwì...</i>	Who was going to offer sacrifice to the head of Èlẹwì...

25 Ayo Salami, 2002, *Ifa: a Complete Divination*, Lagos: NIDD Publishing and Printing Limited, 139

Every year, whenever Oba Ẹlẹ̀wì wanted to celebrate, he would pray and called Şàşórẹ to come and do the final prayer as his Awo. Şàşórẹ would pray for the king, his house hold, the entire town and Şàşórẹ himself. This was not pleasing to the king. On one occasion like that he planned evil for Şàşórẹ by putting him in a wooden box alive and threw the box into a big river. It was at this time that the king of Benin died and they were looking for a replacement. The oracle was consulted and Ifa says they should go to the river, whatever strange thing they see there should be brought to the palace. They did and the messengers found the box Şàşórẹ was nailed and brought the box to the palace together with Şàşórẹ. Şàşórẹ was made the new oba of Benin of which Ẹlẹ̀wì found out later. However, Şàşórẹ supposed to use his power as a superior king over Ẹlẹ̀wì, but he never did because the evil deed had turned good for him.

There are countless examples that can be cited on this issue. In all the Odu cited above, they all warned that we should be careful particularly when leaders are dealing with their subjects that we should be mindful of the way we deal with them because there is always tomorrow. The position of the Babaláwo in Yorùbá society is almost gone as a result of civilization and foreign religions. Also, some priests are dubious as a result of money influence. They no longer discharge their duties like in the olden days. This notwithstanding, there are still reputable and respected ones among them that still perform their duties credibly. In Yorùbá society today, leaders at every level are not mindful of the way they deal with people of low level. They are insensitive to their plight which is not good enough.

Conclusion

Babaláwo (*Ifá* priests) and *Ifá* are important in Yorùbá society. In fact, their contributions in the kingdom cannot be underplayed. In the area of giving useful advices to individual, groups and the entire community, the Babaláwo are second to none. It is observed that in the pre-colonial time, no matter how terrible a king might be, he cannot ignore the advice of the *Awo*. If he does, it is to his own peril.

They also pass across moral and ethical values that are gradually eroding in our society today as a result of western education and modernity to the society at large. This is the reason why in the pre-colonial days, when a king comes across any competent and good Babaláwo, they hardly let go of such a rare gem regardless of where he comes from among the towns in Yorùbáland. The king and his people would cling to such Babaláwo to tap from his wisdom. This was exactly what happened in the case of Ọ̀rúnmilà in *Ọ̀sá Méjì*²⁶

26 Fasina Agboola, 1989, *Ojulowo Oriki Ifa*, Lagos: Project Publications Limited, 141.

where Ọ̀rúnmilà was mistook for a native of several towns like *Ìkòlẹ̀*, *Ọ̀fà*, *Ìjèsà*, *Ìjerò*, all in Yorùbáland. According to the *Odù*:

<i>Ifá ní wọn ó kí un mòjòjò</i>	Ifa says he should be greeted mojo mojo
<i>Ifá ní wọn ó kí un mejimeji</i>	Ifa says he should be greeted mejimeji
<i>Ifá pèlẹ̀ mòjòmòjò</i>	Hello Ifa mojo mojo
<i>Ifá pèlẹ̀ mejimeji</i>	Hello Ifa mejimeji
<i>Ifá pèlẹ̀ééé.</i>	Hello Ifa
<i>Omo olonà tò yà réré Adó Èwí</i>	The owner of the road that goes striate to Ado Ewi
<i>Ọ̀rúnmilà loun kii sàrá Adó Èwí.....</i>	Ọ̀rúnmilà says he was not from Ado Ewi...

Their contributions to the administration of any government is always accosted with peace, love, obedience, harmony and sound moral values. However, it is quite unfortunate that those Babaláwo, though they are on increase in their numbers all over the world particularly in Brazil, Cuba, America and so on, are limited in proportion in Yorùbá or Nigeria. More importantly, they are constantly diminishing in their values due to greed and the pervading influence of modernity, western education and foreign religions that is labeling the religion and the profession of Babaláwo, ‘black’. Nevertheless, their positions and values are still felt in Yorùbá society till today, particularly, in the areas of governance. I therefore, recommend that we should look inwardly into some of our culture that we can explore, tap from and make use of, in this modern time. After all, there is no present without the past and the present will definitely determine the future.

References

- Salami, Ayo, 2008, *Yorùbá Theology and Tradition, The Worship*, Lagos: NIDD Limited (Publishers).
- McClelland, E., 1982, *The Cult of Ifa among the Yorùbá, Folk Practices and the Art*, Britain: Ethnographical Ltd.
- Ajayi, Bade, 2002, *Ifa Divination: its Practices among the Yorùbá of Nigeria*, Ijebu-Ode: Shebiotimo Publications.
- Bascom, William, 1969, *Ifa Divination, Communication between Gods and Man in West Africa*, London: Indiana University Press.
- Adeoye, C. L., 1979, *Asa ati Ise Yorùbá*, Nigeria: Oxford University Press.

- Raji, A.O.Y. and Danmole, H.O., 2004, *Understanding Yorùbá Life and Culture*, edited by Nike S. Lawal, Mathew N.O.Sadiku and Ade Dopamu, Eritrea: Africa World Press Inc.
- Daramola, Olu ati Jeje, A., 1975, *Awon Asa ati Orisa Ile Yorùbá*, Ibadan: Onibonje Press and Books Industries, Nigeria: Oxford University Press.
<https://freefacebook.com>, retrieved on 12/09/2018.
<https://historicalforte.blogspot.com>, retrieved 12/09/2018.
- Idowu, E. Bolaji, 1989, *Olodumare God in Yorùbá Belief*, Nigeria: Longman (Nig.) Publishers.
- Johnson, Samuel, 1969, *The History of the Yorùbá*, London: Lowe and Brydone, (Printers) Ltd.
- Makinde, M. Akin, 1988 *African Philosophy, Culture and Traditional Medicine*, Athens: University Center for International Studies.
- Lijadu, 1897, *Ifa Mimo Alabalase*, Ado Èkiti: United Star Printers Ltd.
- Yemitan, Oladipo ati Ogundele, Olajide, 1970, *Oju Osupa Apa Keji*, Ibadan: Oxford University Press.
- Ayo Salami, 2002, *Ifa: a Complete Divination*, Lagos: NIDD Publishing and Printing Limited.
- Yemitan, Oladipo ati Ogundele, Olajide, 1985, *Oju Osupa Apa Kinni*, Nigeria: University Press Limited.
- Agboola, Fasina, 1989, *Ojulowo Oriki Ifa Apa Kinni*, Lagos: Project Publications Limited.
- Awo Fatoosin Awosola, (an Ifa priest) *Oral interview*, 27th August, 2018.
- Adenrele, Olajumoke, Osun Priestess *Oral interview*, 27th August, 2018.

Creation, Preservation and Documentation of Oral Tradition in Ancient Yorùbá and Hebraic Cultures

Abimbola O. Fagbe

Department of Information Resource Management,

Babcock University, Ilisan-Remo, Nigeria

fagbea@babcock.edu.ng

&

Ucheawaji G. Josiah &

Eleazar E. Ufomba

Department of Religious Studies,

Adeleke University, Ede, Nigeria

josiah.ucheawaji@adelekeuniversity.edu.ng

eleazarufomba@adelekeuniversity.edu.ng

Abstract

Oral tradition in both ancient Yoruba and Hebraic cultures has remained challenging in contemporary times. This study therefore comparatively examines the creation, preservation, and documentation of oral tradition in ancient Yoruba and Hebraic cultures with the view to evaluating its transition and historical trajectory. Historical narrative and documentary/archival research methods as well as Key Informant Interview (KII) employed in this study. Data was generated and subjected to content analysis. In Yoruba cosmology, oral traditions created were more concretized in the minds of people through cultural activities demonstrated in the form of moonlight stories, folktales, festivals, and so on that portrayed the community norms, beliefs, practices, and morals. These cultural practices become immortalized through repeated performances over a period and these cultures are being celebrated even to date. On the other hand, the Hebraic people believe that the oral tradition was

a creation of God for man and that these traditions passed down orally in successive patterns from one generation to another prior to their documentation. Regarding, the preservation and documentation of oral tradition in ancient Yoruba, it is believed that it is passed from mouth to mouth and through stories from one lineage to another. However, for the Hebraic people, the oral traditions preserved before their documentation as observed in the Hebrew Scriptures as well as seen in the written “Torah” (the first five books of the Old Testament). Consequently, the Hebraic oral traditions preserved through memorization, documented first in the Mishnah and some other ancient documents. Preserved in stories that illustrated the model of a sage who was in the order of Moses and was called the “rabbi”. The influence of globalization, misinterpretation and migration on Yoruba oral traditions remains challenging. This is not an exemption even with the Hebraic oral traditions though written.

Keywords: Creation, Documentation, Hebraic Mishnah, Oral Tradition, Yoruba culture Preservation

Introduction

Oral tradition as opined by Oladejo (2014: 73) comes in diverse forms and transmits from one generation to the other. Witnessed by the transmitter, and it can be passed on. It is important to note that most of these oral traditions have evolved from generation to generation and have been modified or recreated and subjected to mistranslation to suit the trend of modernity. Oral tradition majorly created in very informal ways through storytelling, mere observation of festive activities, and continuous participation in local activities. However, some of these oral traditions are innate because it is born naturally as part of daily living and Oladejo (2014, 73) submitted that the nature of oral tradition is peculiar to a given community

Information is a critical and valuable resource that must not be distorted. Distortion in information can lead to mistranslation and misunderstanding. However, when documented information helps researchers to lay their hands on information. Oral tradition created needs to remain valid and credible and this calls for documentation and preservation for the posterity. This could be why Oladejo (2014: 73) also believes that the most important issue germane to the continuous existence of oral tradition, is the issue of documentation.

Nevertheless, documentation is not just about gathering or generating information it encourages knowledge sharing; and it cuts across the sphere of human activities especially when we consider culture. In the light of oral tradition in different cultures, documentation helps to provide tools or information needed for reinventing the wheels especially when the original creator of the

idea or practice is no more. Documentation is the process of keeping a record of the daily activities of a community referred to for continuity. It is also the process of providing confirmation or proof of past events. Culture is all about information that deals with the ways of life of particular people, places, beliefs, processes, and procedures. No society progresses with displaced culture or becomes obsolete. Oral tradition encompasses our cultural practices, belief systems, and even ideas. Consequently, for culture to continue to remain the vehicle upon which the society or people exist there must be preservation.

Hence, preservation is the fundamental principle that enables the keeping of the life of any material, object, artifact, or information that has enduring value. This is critical given the fact that cultural heritages are endangered or facing the possibility of extinction. Therefore, it is necessary to document or capture for the purpose of preservation. Since oral tradition in ancient Yoruba and Hebraic culture remains relevant to the development and growth of their societies, and people, there is the need to explore ways to document and sustainably store these cultural values. This study, therefore, comparatively examines the creation, documentation, and preservation of oral tradition in ancient Yoruba and Hebraic cultures with the view to evaluating its transition and historical trajectory. In doing this, the study assesses the concept, creation, documentation, preservation, transition, and historical trajectory of oral traditions in antiquities. Arising from these fulcra are certain pertinent questions: could there be a synergy in the concept of oral tradition in these antiquities? Is there a similarity in creating, documenting, and persevering oral traditions among these antiquities? What is the transition and historical trajectory in the creation, documentation, and preservation of oral tradition in these ancient worlds?

A Conceptual Overview of Oral Tradition

Oral traditions emanate in human society through human experiences and circumstances. They are direct and indirect testimonies of life incidents. For the eyewitness, it is a direct account, an 'indirect statement' for a reported one (Wilson, 2015). It is possible to coin and employ words as names of locations or individuals. The human experience becomes symbols that are generally configured in linguistic objects of either non-literary or aesthetic-literary nature. This is what (Nogueira, 2003) implies when he wrote that human experiences become objects without the consignment of written testimonies but are usually accomplished vocally and collectively recognized and used during consecutive and successive generations. On the other hand, Mbiti, (1966) admits that stories as contained in oral traditions are to a certain extent the mirror of the life and reflection of people regarding what they do, their thought

patterns, their lifestyle, their values, joys as well as their sorrows. Such stories serve as a means of articulating humanity's response to their environment.

Also, Nogueira, (2003) viewed oral tradition as oral lore which is a form of communication within the human society in which ideas, art, cultural tenets, and cultural materials are created, preserved as well and transmitted from generation to generation. The use of oral tradition covers the hallmarks of social phenomena such as religion, medicine, vocation, values, and taboos. In the creation, preservation, and transmission of oral tradition, ideas communicated in the form of proverbs, memories, legends, riddles, jokes, and myths. It applies the tool of words, especially through storytelling in which the storyteller uses verbal expression, gestures, facial expression, or even the art of singing in the impartation of the message (Pompano, 2015). Oral tradition is highly communicative and verbal in nature transmitted from the elderly to the younger generation.

For instance, a father passes down to his son a particular procedure for accomplishing a task; the display of festive activities such as the "Egúngún" dance (masquerade dance), or even how to stay clear of what is considered "èèwò" (taboos). Furthermore, Okediji (2017) asserted that oral traditions are cultural heritages transmitted from generation to generation in the form of simple messages, information, and testimony of a group of people who are considered eyewitnesses or even observers. These cultural heritages transmitted to mediums such as folklore, storytelling, songs, drama, dances, proverbs, speeches, and poems. Furthermore, oral tradition is an intermediate approach to displaying ancient culture, history, and experience of people, especially through spoken words, gestures, demonstrations, and displays.

Oral traditions, of course, are not just about storytelling it is more about the transmission of ancient knowledge from the elderly to the younger ones. According to Luisa and Dilts (2014), oral tradition is traditional knowledge and wisdom, cultural, and spiritual values, worldviews, and lifeways embedded in and conveyed through an extraordinary variety of forms of expressions that human societies around the world have developed and perfected and through which they have manifested their creativity and artistry: songs, poems, epics, ritual chants, proverbs, and sayings. However, oral traditions more broadly also include personal narratives and oral histories, through which people record and communicate their individual and collective past and their links with past generations and ancestors, with times, places, and events of particular significance, and with the entire intangible heritage, both cultural and natural, that makes people who they are (Luisa & Dilts 2014, 4).

In addition, Okediji (2017) revealed that oral tradition has been the bedrock of development especially in education and the society even as far back as the precolonial era. However, according to observation oral traditions were

dropped gradually with the advent of the colonial masters and gradually deteriorate causing adverse effect on development. This therefore calls for a look at the creation, documentation, and preservation of oral tradition.

Similarly, viewed as 'literature without books,' oral tradition serves as the vehicle through which the cultural heritage are passed, providing various societies with the means preserving and conveying their genealogical history, socioeconomic values, rituals and spiritual practices (Boyles, 2017; Pompano, 2005). In the academic study of religious scriptures, like in biblical criticism, the concept of oral tradition being the first contents of what became the documented scripture is highly sustained. The oral period before the completion of the written Gospel lasted about a generation (Akintola, 2017).

The theory of form criticism suggests that during this period, the tradition was fragmentary, as no one could remember the totality of the story of the deeds of Jesus. Thus, separate incidents of the teachings and miracles of Jesus are remembered by different individuals as repeatedly presented verbally. Hence, form criticism that is the academic study of oral tradition, the Bible defends that the written scripture as we have it today, existed as oral prototypes (Mbonu, 2013; Akintola, 2017).

Creation of Oral Tradition in the African Society of the Yorùbá

The cultural values of African society have been portrayed in oral tradition, especially through folktales. While popular Eurocentric perspective in the early 19th century suggested that before the arrival of Europeans, Africa as a continent was savage and devoid of culture, African indigenous authors such as Chinua Achebe continued to use storytelling to debunk such Eurocentric narrative (Edosomwan & Peterson, 2016). Virtually every African society, especially the Yoruba culture and cosmology strongly founded on oral tradition. Folktales and stories are believed to be useful means of education for both young and adults as they can easily connect to the messages conveyed in the narratives (Edosomwan & Peterson, 2016).

Wholistically, the origins of the oral tradition of the Yoruba people left to one's imagination. Mythology tells the origin of the Yoruba intertwined in religion and history. According to Ogundipe (2018, p.15) in his book "*Esu Elegbera: Chance, Uncertainty in Yoruba Mythology*," the origin of Yoruba is unknown due to the lack of historical, archaeological, and merger documentation of information about the Yoruba gene. Although, myth, legends, folktales, and folklores provide knowledge on Yoruba origins as an alternative to oral tradition. Oral tradition mentioned above have provided a wealth

of knowledge for speculations about the origin of the Yoruba culture, where they came from before settling in South-west, Nigeria.

In addition, there are many variations on the story of how Olodumare instructed Obatala to come down from heaven to create the earth but on Obatala's way, he found palm wine, which he drank and became intoxicated. Therefore, his younger brother, Oduduwa, took the three items of creation from him, climbed down from the heavens on a chain, and threw a handful of earth on the primordial ocean, then put a cockerel on it so that it would scatter the earth, thus creating the land on which Ile-Ife would be built. Because of his creation of the world, Oduduwa became the ancestor of the first divine king of the Yoruba, Obatala believed to have created the first Yoruba people out of clay.

Based on this it was pertinent to hear from key informants on the creation, preservation, and documentation of oral tradition in Yoruba culture in support of previous literature. One of the informants, Mr. David, an indigene of Ibadan, specifically, from Erunmu, born over six decades ago spoke to the best of his knowledge on the creation, preservation, and documentation of oral tradition in Yoruba culture. Interestingly, Mr. David has traveled across the different localities in Yorubaland and narrated his experience as a young boy growing up in his community Erunmu, an oral tradition he has created over the years through verbal instruction, and storytelling at night. Oral tradition was created and more concretized in the minds of people when cultural activities were being demonstrated. He remembered vividly how his father would gather the children together at night under the moonlight and tell stories that portrayed the community norms, beliefs, and morals. These oral traditions are cultural practices, beliefs, and festivals that have been passed down from generation to generation and these according to him are unifying factors geared towards ensuring that there is unity amongst the Yoruba people and the world at large. He went further to mention that some of these cultural practices have become immortalised today and there at specific times, periods, or seasons in the year when these oral traditions in the Yoruba culture are being celebrated even to date. Some of the cultural practices mentioned by him are "Egungun" festival, the new yam festival, the "oro" festival, and the "ẹ̀yò" festival, while specific towns also have their special celebrations such as the "Ekimogun Day", "Ibadan Day", "Osi Owa Day" and even coronation of "oba"; "chief" are all cultural practices held in high esteem in the Yoruba culture.

However, many of these oral traditions have been changing due to civilization for instance, in Ibadan today; it is obvious that there is a large influx of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which has infiltrated the original customs, cultural beliefs, and practices. Nonetheless, the

fact remains that people still practice these cultural beliefs despite the issue of civilization and sometimes you see a form of synergy among the different ethnic groups. He explained further that oral tradition is more verbal than written and more practical in the sense that what you see, and witness stays longer in your memory than what you hear in passing. He concluded by saying oral traditions are created when parents take their children along to witness how some of these festivals are conducted and in turn when the children become parents get their children exposed to these oral traditions as well and go on and on. For him, this was the best way in which the oral traditions in Yoruba culture have remained preserved. Going forth, he advised that for these oral traditions to continue and not be eroded completely, it is pertinent to get them documented through written records and audio-visuals. Slackness in keeping records can lead to modification of the original cultural practices.

Mr. David on the challenges hindering the documentation and preservation of oral traditions in ancient Yoruba culture enumerated a lack of education, literacy, awareness, and historical channels as some of the challenges today. One of several African tribes, notably in Nigeria, is Yoruba, whose language is tonal. Word-of-mouth, songs, arts, crafts, idioms, rituals, folklore, music, and proverbs are used to carry on Yoruba oral traditions (Twinoburyo, 2019; Linus, Fagbemi & Kersha, 2020).

The Yoruba people are fondly known for their cultural values and norms especially when it comes to showing respect and love for the elderly folks. The younger ones are expected to show respect and it is widely seen and acknowledged in the way the Yoruba greet. The male is expected to prostrate (*dòbálẹ̀*) while the female knee (*kínlẹ̀*) respectively. This component of the oral tradition in ancient Yoruba culture was produced and passed down from generation to generation through demonstration by example. Once a child reaches a particular age, this is instilled in him or her, and the practice becomes ingrained in him or her. Hence, in an atypical Yoruba home, a child from early in the morning starts his or her with greeting the older persons around the home.

As seen in documented evidence, Yoruba culture uses stories and folktales organized around a specific objective and theme to teach morality, instill the ability to speak the truth even in the face of danger, describe war adventures, and teach the younger generation about legends, top personalities, and community figures. In the Yoruba society as well as in other African social settings, folktales and stories as contained in oral traditions continue to keep the history of people alive, sustaining narratives that constantly and significantly present the people with the values and norms. According to Amali (2014), the people of South-west Nigeria used folktales to demonstrate the society's expectations especially, acceptable societal moral behaviors. Studies among African communities based in New Zealand indicated that the oral tradition of

storytelling has been a useful anti-stress tool when dealing with work-related challenges (Edosomwan & Peterson, 2016) which is not farfetched from the experiences of the Yoruba people in Africa.

Preservation and Documentation of Oral Tradition in the Yoruba Cosmology

In the context of this paper, the preservation of oral traditions is becoming challenging because of civilization, modernity, and migration. Therefore, the documentation of the oral traditions is not farfetched because young people today do not take time to show signs of respect to the older ones. Much more than the issues of respect are some cultural practices and beliefs that deal with healthful practices. For instance, in the Yoruba culture, it is a bad practice to eat near a bunch of brooms used for cleaning the floor but the reasons or the consequence for this practice appears not to have been documented to show why people should not engage in this practice. However, scientifically, one knows that it could lead to unhygienic practices. The bunch of broom might contain germs that can lead to ill health and terrible consequences.

Another informant, Mr. Ade hails from Mobaland of Otun, Ekiti. He was born over five decades into the royal family. Unfortunately, to him, development has taken place unlike in the olden days. However, morals are highly esteemed in his community in Mobaland. Like the first respondent, the second is of the opinion that oral tradition is more verbal and is transmitted from one generation to another. Passed from mouth to mouth and from one lineage to another. In his view, the younger generation no longer upholds some of these moral values, especially in dress styles, food preparation and consumption, and even lack of interest in the spoken dialect. He also remembered that while he was young living in the palace, they often sat before their grandfather the then Oba of Mobaland in Otun Ekiti to listen to stories under the moonlight. He would narrate to them stories about their lineage especially since they are from the “Oore” lineage, and this information has resided with him since then. However, the challenge for him is how much of this knowledge has been able to create in the minds of his children who are the next generation after him.

The issue of civilization, globalization, and modernization comes into play again. He is of the opinion that lack of time with the children has made it impossible to transmit some of the knowledge gained from his ancestors to his own children and believes that some of this information will eventually go into extinction. He talked about the communal style of living in the olden days and in the process, children were taught many values, especially the one that has to do with taboos known as “èèwò.” Mr. Ade said that “èèwò” was meant to prevent children from getting into trouble. As a prince, he reminded them

of their kingly pedigree and certain rituals. He also recalled that the king then distributed the family into the different religion that was present in Mobaland.

One practice he loves and has not forgotten is the “kẹ̀tẹ̀kẹ̀tẹ̀” dance which the younger generation is not interested in carrying to the next generation because they have not created time to learn these practices today. On the aspect of documentation, he sees it as one of the greatest challenges today. Kẹ̀tẹ̀kẹ̀tẹ̀ needs to be preserved as a social dance for the next generation and this can only be possible if it is formally documented.

Mr. Oladele, a native of Osi Omumu in Kwara State is another informant who was born over six decades ago. He was born at a time when cultural practices were held in high esteem and thus witnessed many oral traditions that he has also passed down to his children. He recalled that his father was a businessperson who traveled between his own communities to exchange business in another locality. Most time, he went along with his father on business trips. In the process, he learned some business tricks from his father and some principles he can not forget is the idea of always speaking the truth and dealing with people fairly. He also inculcated this oral tradition to his children through practical demonstrations. Although his father died early these virtues have remained with him, and his generations to come will continue to exemplify these principles. One notable cultural practice that he enjoys participating in is the age group festival called “bo ikan” celebrated in traditional 7-year intervals, every child within the age group comes together to acknowledge their creator for keeping them alive. However, it is now modern that even children in the diaspora participate in this celebration to bring about development to the community. Another oral tradition practices in Osi Omumu is the Egungun festival known as “olójú foforo” which is more indigenous in nature. Osi indigens always long for this festival however, modernization has affected it a great deal, because it is no longer widely practiced since most of the aged traditional leaders are no more and the younger generations are not interested. Mr. Oladele is of the opinion that this cultural practice be preserved further for national development if it is well documented and projected to society. Much more than just being localized, it can help to promote peace and unity in the nation.

Mr. Ogunfowokan, another informant from Ilisan-Remo, Ogun State also born six decades ago into the Olumole family, believes that spoken oral traditions must be seen. He talked about the Orò, and Eluku, festivals, which have some èwò attached to their celebration because there are restrictions to some groups of people especially women who do not take part in the celebration. However, they can take part in the discussion, and preparations but not in the execution of the festival. These festivals are believed to be lineage-oriented. A group of families in the community inherits the practice. Meaning that only

those born in the family can move closer to the deity while another community member supports their actions. The deity is kept in a designated location for preservation. Once there is a conflict or trouble and annual events in the community, the custodian of the deity goes to seek answers and solutions from the “oro” deity. Festivals lack official documentation, but by continuous practice, and ways of doing so, the younger ones in the lineage learn to carry on the legacies. Mr. Ogunfowokan believed that one of the challenges facing the proper ways of celebrating the Orò festival today is a lack of discipline amongst the youth, he recalled that during the days of his father, there was timing, they created awareness of the celebration and kept rules of the celebration. Mr. Ogunfowokan believes that the essence of any oral tradition or culture is to promote peace and cordiality amongst the people in the community as well as protecting the community from harms and danger. Hence, he thinks that more enlightened personality to talk up the mantle of leadership in serving as custodian of these cultural practices is of essence.

In like manner, Mr. Taiwo also an indigen of Ilisan-Remo in Ogun State stated that while he was young, he knew his father to be the leader of the Egungun group in his community and yearly, he would accompany his father to engage with others in this festival. He said that he is more educated now and finds it difficult to participate in this festival. Although, he has not forgotten the chants and songs that his father used to communicate with his fellow Egungun members. However, for Mr. Taiwo, this was seen as a medium for socialization in those days unlike nowadays when the youths have taken over due to their selfish motives. Due to adulteration, the festival has been devoid of its authentic essence. To him it was due to lack of documentation of the actual practices by the forefathers and the lack of preservation of its originality. Moreover, religious beliefs have also made it impossible for people to engage in such practices except for those who are traditionalist who still practice the Egungun festival today in Ilisan-Remo. Another aspect, Mr. Taiwo talked is the issue of Oro festival, much celebrated but lacks dexterity.

Mr. Femi, from Omu-Aran in Kwara State says oral traditions use to be a way of passing morals, historical background of the community to coming generation. He believes that one of the ways oral traditions created is through *ewi*, *oriki* and Egungun festivals. To the best of his knowledge, efforts to preserve and document this oral tradition created. He went further to attest to the fact that there are some books written on the history and life of Omu-Aran people. In his lineage for instance, the use of *oriki*, gives a vivid knowledge of who they are in the community. However, he thinks not much has been down in documenting this form of oral tradition for preservation purposes. Sourcing for proper and accurate information is a great challenge in the preservation and documentation of the already created oral tradition.

Mr. Onifade, of Arandun also in Kwara State opines that oral tradition is the means by which information or traditional practice passed down verbally to the upcoming generation. He went further to assume that by passing down the traditional or indigenous information verbally, is for the information to continue to be relevant and not fade away. For him, oral tradition through art and craft preserved and documented today. To him, the challenge facing the proper preservation and documentation of oral tradition is the issue of variation in historical narrative because different sources of information can sometimes be contradictory. Another challenge for him is that the aged cannot remember what they were told by their forefathers due to a lack of documentation of information received. Thus, some of the oral information adulterated by the removal or addition of information, which makes the practice lose its originality.

In summary, all of the informants reached a consensus that verbal transmission was the sole means by which ancient Yoruba traditions were transmitted from one generation to the next. However, much has not been recorded when it comes to the preservation and documentation of these oral traditions that are still being practiced today.

Hebraic Creation of Oral Tradition

This section focuses on the Mishnah among other Jewish literary collections. This is so because the Mishnah is the first major recorded collection of the Jewish oral traditions known as Oral Torah. It also stands as the major work of Jewish Rabbinic Literature. According to Neusner, (1999), the Mishnah represents its system outside of all historical frameworks in form. The Mishnah presents a different kind of history, which encompasses 'the laws of society, the rational explanation of the rules that govern events, the ordering and regularization of the chaos of happenstance. Its authorship revises the inherited conception of history and reshapes that conception to fit into its own system' (Neusner, 1999: 94). According to Pharisaic tradition, God gave both the Written Torah and Oral Torah (which is the interpretation of the written torah) to Moses on Mt Sinai (Neusner, 1999). Therefore, to the Hebraic people, the oral tradition was a creation of God for man and was passed down orally in successive patterns from generation to generation before they were written as a way of preserving the ideas and philosophies inherent.

It is worth noting that the written Torah that is known as the TaNaKH or Hebrew Bible as we have it does not constitute the entire corpus of literary works produced in ancient Israel (Sicker, 2007). For instance, the written Torah makes references to funerals (Gen. 49:29; Gen. 25:8; I Kings 11:23) but did not specify the procedures of funeral practices as observed by ancient Hebraic people before the inception of the Mishnah, Talmud and other literary

collections of Israel. These collections attempt to record the oral traditions for a better life of the people. One of the examples well extricated in the Talmud¹ postulates that the body of a diseased person watched to protect it from rodents and similar marauders. That is possibly, why the deceased was not left alone until burial. Again, because the Torah records “For dust you are and to dust you shall return” (Gen 3:19). In order to hasten the process of the body returning to the elements, the material for the cascade must be made of wood and several holes opened at the bottom to hasten the body’s return to the earth. Only find these procedures in the oral traditions later written. Nevertheless, how traditions were preserved?

Hebraic Preservation and Documentation of Oral Tradition

Among the Jews of the dual Torah, the oral traditions were preserved before their documentation through three means. Neusner, (1999: 94) enumerates these means in the following order: a book, the Hebrew Scriptures; a memorized oral tradition, first documented in the Mishnah and some other ancient documents; and stories that illustrate the model of a sage who are in the order of Moses and are called a rabbi. Mishnah as the documented Oral Torah divided into six large divisions, with each division subdivided into topical expositions popularly known as tractates. These tractates are sixty-two in all; most of them are topically organized and spelled out the law on certain given subjects. These subjects were categorized as Agriculture, Appointed times (Mo’ed), Women (Nashim), Damages or civil law (Neziqin), Holy things (Qodashim) and Purity (Tohorot). The Mishnah as printed today always includes *Abot*, that is, the sayings of the sages (Neusner, 1999: 94).

The Hebrew have a long history of the preservation of oral tradition. Listening or the command to “hear” *shama* is common in the Hebrew education system. In biblical studies, upon the wider acceptance of mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), some assumed that Moses

1 Talmud is the body of Jewish civil and ceremonial law and legend, which also comprise the Mishnah and the Gemara (i.e., Rabbinical analysis of and commentary on the Mishnah). The final essential component to the Jewish faith is the Talmud, often referred to as the oral history (although it does exist in written form). The Talmud is collection of writings focusing on implementing the Ten Commandments and the text of the Torah. It is a large body of work that has been added to throughout history by many Rabbis, authors, and editors (Steinsaltz, 1999). The Talmud explores how the Torah should be applied to everyday life and is designed to help Jews apply the Torah to every aspect of their life. See Emily Elizabeth Fairchild, (2010) “An Overview of Jewish Beliefs and Traditions for Counselors” A project submitted to the Graduate Faculty of James Madison University, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of Educational Specialist, Department of Graduate Psychology.

must have had oral traditions regarding those things recorded in the book of Genesis, which occurred prior to his lifetime (Culley, 1986).

Despite depositing the written Torah for preservation in a cultic shrine in Israel (Exo 25:15, 21; 40:20), Moses transmitted the plenitude of the Oral Torah to his followers, even as his successors maintained an onward-unbroken chain of transmission. Such a chain of oral transmission traversed the entire Biblical period, surviving and highly protected, being intact during Israel's successive subjection to the imperial regimes of Babylonia, Persia, Media, Greece, and Rome. This also culminated in the teachings of the great rabbinic sages of Byzantium as well as Sasanian Babylonia (Jaffee, 1999). A similar chain of oral transmission observed among those who are familiar with the oral literature and mnemonically grounded practice in the culture of medieval Christian and Muslim scribes (Jaffee, 1999).

The Transmission and Historical Trajectory in the Creation, Documentation and Preservation of Oral Tradition

Oral traditions have been considered to diffuse and circulate only orally, hence anything that the folks (the informants) have learned from printed sources has been regarded as “contamination” posing questions on the authenticity of the materials collected through observed cultural performances (Anttonen et al, 2018). However, Boyles (2017) argues that most of the oldest works that were foundational to the world of literature began as part of the oral tradition before ever being written down. Literary works like *The Iliad* by Homer's, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, and even the Indian epic *The Ramayana* and the hosts of mythological stories of deities, like Zeus, Hercules, Thor, and Loki and their likes first existed in the form of oral traditions. The mid-20th century witnessed the process of the labeling of literarily documented folklore as “fakelore”, a terminology that was coined to mark off and declare as inauthentic any knowledge learned from books or distributed in other printed materials or media, being composed by the informant personally. Besides the concept of “fakelore”, the term booklore applied in distinguishing “bookish” traces from cultural ideas and practices created and transmitted orally (Anttonen et al, 2018). Accordingly, Certeau (1995) maintains that while written tradition is a symbol of the concept of modernity oral tradition is symbolic of the backward societies of nations. Following this conceptual background, Wilson (2015) observes that written tradition rides on top of the orality, and a visual architecture of language superimposed upon an acoustic restless flow of sound.

Conclusion

In Yoruba cosmology, the Oral tradition was created and more concretized in the minds of people through the demonstration of cultural activities. Some of the informants in this paper remembered vividly how fathers would gather the children together at night under the moonlight and tell stories that portrayed the community norms, beliefs, and morals. Certain cultural practices are immortalized through repeated practices over time celebrating these cultures today. On the other hand, the Hebraic people believe that the oral tradition was a creation of God for man and passed down orally in successive patterns from one generation to another prior to their documentation.

Regarding the preservation and documentation of oral tradition in ancient Yoruba, it is believed that it is passed from mouth to mouth and through stories from one lineage to another. In this manner, moral values were upheld by the younger generation, especially in dress styles, food preparation, and consumption, and although the lack of interest in the spoken dialect Yoruba itself among the younger generation is a setback for the Yoruba people. For the Hebraic people, the oral traditions were preserved before their documentation through means of compilation of a book called the Hebrew Scriptures. Preserved through memorizations first documented in the Mishnah (the documented Oral Torah) and some other ancient documents. Preserved in stories that illustrate the model of a sage who is in the order of Moses called a rabbi?

Moses believed to have transmitted the plenitude of the Oral Torah to his followers, even as his successors maintained an onward unbroken chain of transmission. Such a chain of oral transmission traversed the entire biblical period, surviving and highly protected, being intact during Israel's successive subjection to the imperial regimes of Babylonia, Persia, Media, Greece, and Rome.

The mid-20th century witnessed the process of the labeling of literarily documented folklore as "fakelore", a terminology that was coined to mark off and declare as inauthentic any knowledge learned from books or distributed in other printed materials or media, being composed by the informant personally. Besides the concept of "fakelore", the term booklore applied in distinguishing "bookish" traces from created cultural ideas and practices that are transmitted orally.

Finally, the creation, preservation, and documentation of oral tradition in ancient Yoruba and Hebraic cultures are germen to the growth and existence of humanity and their importance cannot be overemphasized. Scholars, historians, and information professionals have before the herculean task of ensuring that this oral tradition in Yoruba and Hebraic cultures continues to remain relevant and accurate by preserving and documenting for posterity.

References

- Akintola Samuel *Understanding Vital Issues in the New Testament*. Ibadan: Arthfavours Publishers (2017).
- Amali, Halima. The Function of Folktales as a Process of Educating Children in the 21st century: A case study of Idoma folktales. In 21st Century Academic Forum Conference Proceedings IC21CE 21 (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.21caf.org/uploads/1/3/5/2/13527682/amali.pdf>
- Boyles David Characteristics of Oral Tradition in World Literature. (2017, November 5) (2017). Retrieved from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/characteristics-of-oral-tradition-in-world-literature.html>.
- Culley, Robert Oral Tradition and Biblical Studies. *Oral Tradition*, 1/1, 30-65(1986).
- Edosomwan S. & Peterson, C. A History of Oral and Written Storytelling in Nigeria (2016). Retrieved from files.eric.edu.gov
- Jaffe Martins Oral Tradition in the Writings of Rabbinic Oral Torah: On Theorizing Rabbinic Orality. *Oral Tradition*, 14/1, 3-32 (1999).
- Joanna Pompano ,“Using Oral Tradition to Improve Verbal and Listening Skills” (2015). *Fellows of the Yale New Heaven Teachers Institute*, Volume 1.
- Maffi, Luisa, and Ortixia Dilts. "An introduction to biocultural diversity." *Bio-cultural Diversity Toolkit 1* (2014): 6-16.
- Mbonu Caroline “Biblical Exegetical and Hermeneutical Approaches”. Ejizu, C.I. ed., *Research Methodology in the Humanities*. University of Port Harcourt Press (2013).
- Mbiti, J. A. *Akanba stories*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press (1966).
- Michel De Certeau: *Interpretation and its other*. Stanford University Press, (1995).
- Neusner, Jacob. *The Four Stages of Rabbinic Judaism* (London: Routledge) (1999).
- Nogueira Carlos. *Oral Tradition*, Volume 18, Issue 2 (2003).
- Okediji, Hannah Adebola Aderonke. "Effect of Oral Traditions, Folklores and History on the Development of Education in Nigeria, 1977 Till Date." *History* 7, no. 2 (2017): 59-72.
- Oladejo, Mutiat Titilope. "History, Research and Documentation in Nigeria: The Relevance to Sustainable Development." *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, Pennsylvania* 16, no. 4 (2014).
- Ogundipe, A *Esu Elegbara: Chance, uncertainty in Yorùbá mythology*. Kwara State University Press. (2018).

- Pertti Anttonen, Cecilia af Forselles and Kirsti Salmi-Niklander, eds., (2018) *Oral Tradition and Book Culture*. Studia Fennica Folkloristica.
- Sicker, Martin. An Introduction to Judaic Thought and Rabbinic Literature, USA: Praeger Publishers (2007).
- Wilson David “A Study on Oral Tradition as a Communication tool”. (2015), *International Journal of Research in Economics and Social Sciences*, Volume 5, Issue 7.

Primary Sources

- Interview with Mr. David, from Erunmu, Ibadan on October 13, 2021
- Interview with Mr. Ade from Mobaland, Otun Ekiti on October 19, 2021
- Interview with Mr. Oladele from Osi, Omumu, Kwara State on September 24, 2021
- Interview with Mr. Ogunfowokan from Ilisan-Remo, Ogun State on September 20, 2021
- Interview with Mr. Taiwo from Ilisan-Remo, Ogun State on September 20, 2021
- Interview with Mr. Femi from Omu-Aran, Kwara State on August 12, 2021
- Interview with Mr. Onifade from Arandu, Kwara State on August 12, 2021.

Ifa Concept on Environmental Pollution

Olukemi Morenike Olofinsao

Department of Linguistics and Languages

Federal University

Oye Ekiti, Nigeria

olukemi.olofinsao@fuoye.edu.ng; olukemimorenike@gmail.com

Abstract

Environmental pollution, expectedly, has been looked at from technological and scientific perspectives. However, this important subject has not been sufficiently examined from Ifá, the wisdom bag of the Yorùbá people of South-western Nigeria. Ifá corpus has revealed the importance of preserving the environment from being polluted. Ifá plays a leading role in teaching some ethics on socio-cultural and inter-personal relationships among the Yorùbá people but also their relationship to the ecosystem. The study will examine the concept of Ifá on the environment using Wande Abimbola's *Ìjìnlẹ̀ Ohùn Ènu Ifá II*, interpreting it with the mirror image approach of sociological framework. It will also evaluate the impact of pollution on the contemporary society. Finally, it will reveal the values of protecting the environment against any form of pollution which may hamper the healthy living of humans and non-human organisms in the environment.

Key Words: Ifá corpus, ethics, environnement, pollution, environnemental externalities.

Introduction

The environment is a principal issue even when society is faced with economic crises, wars, and social problems. It is important because the earth is the only home for humans which provides her basic needs, such as air, food, and other basic needs. Various countries including developed, developing and underdeveloped are making efforts to speed up the control of pollution as to ensure that the rate at which people are exposed to pollutants across their

cities are reduced drastically but in spite of all these efforts, the level of pollution all over the world seems to be going higher, Nigeria inclusive. Pollution according to National Geographic society is the introduction of harmful materials into the environment. It is experienced in Nigeria daily, with citizens living with it regularly. While we cannot do away with natural hazards, we can eliminate those that we cause, minimize those that we exacerbate and reduce our vulnerability to most. (Oloyede & Akinkuade 2022). This and some other warnings against pollution are found in *Ifa corpus* which is the primary data used in this work.

Ifa is a principal divinity in Yoruba religion, culture, and belief systems. It is the repository of all wisdom and the controller of life and death. Hence the description;

Akéré finú sọgbón
Akọ ẹran tí sòkú alá àná dàyè
Èlà ìsòdè
Tí kómọ lóràn bí iyèkan ẹni (Elebuibon: 2004)

The tiny embodiment of wisdom
 The strong animal who turns yesternight's corpse to a living being
 The Èlà of ìsòdè
 Who teaches one like his kinsmen

History to the above descriptive epithet tells us about the greatness of this important divinity. Ifa is all embracing. He is the mouthpiece of all divinities. He knows and shuttles between the earth and heaven. It represents the repository of all information concerning the language, culture, and belief system of the Yoruba people (Elebuibon 2004). The scope of Ifá literary corpus is so encompassing that it entails all the socio-economic peculiarities of the Yoruba people. Nothing on earth was created in the absence of Orunmila also known as Ifa, to whom God gave the reins of the earth. Ifá corpus is an encyclopaedia of Yoruba knowledge, it is the authority to which they resort to any form of information and that is why he is perpetually consulted. Abimbola (2006) corroborated this when he said that Olodumare sent Orunmila from heaven to oversee the earth with his wisdom. That is why whatever he says is executed by the Yoruba people. Ifá divination is regarded as an indigenous cultural health system that is used to fill in the gaps believed to be created by the inadequacy of the people.

Literature Review

Different scholars have worked on Ifá corpus and its structure. Few of them include Abimbola (1976) whose work based on ‘an exposition of Ifá literary corpuses’ gave a detailed meaning for different corpuses of Ifá, while Ilesanmi (2004) discusses on Ifá oratorical corpus, affirming that Ifá natural corpus did not exist in a vacuum. He further established that Orunmila developed an act which later grew up to a system made known to others known as ‘an apprentice system of learning.’ He codified many events he had known into *odù* and each *odù* contained events of *akin* nature with each event narrated as *eṣẹ Ifá* (Ifá oratorical corpus otherwise named Ifá literary corpus by Wande Abimbola). He opined that it be known as Ifá oratorical corpus when it is orally performed but when written using the alphabet system, it would be called Ifá literary corpus. Elebuibon (2004) focuses on Ifá: The custodian of destiny, and he asserted that Ifá is the mouthpiece of all other divinities. He further revealed that Ifá knows and shuttles between the earth and heaven and represents repository of all information, and concluded that he is the custodian of destiny, one who was specially assigned by *Olódùmarè* (the almighty God) to be the great counsellor and redeemer of all other divinities in Yoruba religion and nothing on earth was created in his absence. Akinyemi (2012) focuses on how Ifá had become an instrument of creativity in the hands of video-screenwriters. He highlights different forms in which it was represented in Yoruba video films (secular and religious) including: the exhibition of the iconic objects of Ifá divination, the characterisation of Ifá diviner-priests in actor-diviners, and the recreation of Ifá divination process as well as the accompanying sacrifices. Salami (2015) examines the position of Ifá in Yorùbá religion and the epistemological worldview. He said Ifá as a deity attracts a lot of followership and worship among the Yoruba of Nigeria and in diaspora. He believed Ifá to be the commissioner, from *Olódùmarè* in charge of knowledge and wisdom. This belief accords Ifá the status of a repository of knowledge that has special and specific knowledge of the destiny of individual human beings as well as that of the society. Adeniyi (2015) proclaimed Ifá as a religious practice employed in solving socio-biological problems among the Yorùbá and a medium through which God can be appeased with appropriate sacrifices to rectify any bad fate. However, the significant rule of Ifá divination culture among the Yoruba is played down upon in Ola Rotimi’s drama, ‘The Gods are not to blame’.

Despite the widespread research on Ifá and the Yorùbá culture, Ifá concept on environmental pollution, which is the focus of this work, has received little attention in academic world, further cementing the need for this discuss.

Theoretical Framework: The Mirror Image Approach

The discussion in this essay is based on the mirror image theory, a literary theory propounded by Louis-de-Bonald, a French philosopher, who argued that by carefully reading any nation's literature, a reader would be able to know the type of life the people lived. The theory suggests that literature reflects the society. It views literary works as a conscious attempt by the creative artist to depict events and happenings in the society. The approach performs its "mirroring function in poetry by identifying the social structures that are mirrored by the work of a poet who is a participant in the sociological process" It also considers literature as a tool that gives a comprehensive picture of the nature of the society, its defined social fact and, specific historical period in all its facet. That is why Vasta (2016) submits that every bad and good event in any society is portrayed in their literature. Hence, literature is a mirror of life, a reflection and a social document. Therefore, in applying the mirror image approach to this work, its focus is on how the society is being portrayed and its documentation in Ifá corpus.

Data Analysis

Ifá has been discussed as the wisdom lore of the people, employed in solving human problems and thus cementing need for us to examine its concept on environmental pollution. He gave some warning on how to protect the environment, which if followed will breed a kind of peaceful and clean environment that will promote good health. The Ifá corpus examined is 'Èjì Ogbè' from Wande Abimbola's *Ijìnlè Ohùn Ènu Ifá II*. The excerpt goes thus:

*Erin jẹ jẹ jẹ
 Bẹ̀ẹ̀ ni kò fowó kó asá
 Èfòn jẹ jẹ jẹ
 Bẹ̀ẹ̀ ni kò fowó bọ pòòlò
 Èyẹ kérékéré n fò lókè,
 Bẹ̀ẹ̀ ni wọn ò forí gbági
 A dífá fún Rírí
 Níjọ tí n fomi ojúú sògbéré ọmọ*

(The Elephant walked about
 It did not enter into trap
 The Buffalo also walked around
 It did not enter into trap
 Little birds flying on high
 They did not hit their head on the tree

Ifá divination was performed for Rirí
While she was wailing for lack of children) (Abimbola 2006: 21)

When Rirí was in dire need of children as noted in the introductory verse above, she went to an Ifá priest whose name signified a form of warning whose interpretation reveals the consciousness of animals and birds about their environment. They moved about without injuring one another. This sent a note of warning to humans to be conscious of how they interact with their environment while going in their day-to-day activities in order to protect themselves from danger. Having paid the required consultation fees, the priest performed a divination and told her to perform some sacrifices, to which she obliged. After this, she conceived and gave birth to three children, namely Ọ̀nà (foot-path/road), Ọ̀jà (market) and Ilé (house/home). After some time, Rirí travelled out of the town. On getting back, she went straight to visit Ọ̀nà, her first child, who was so happy to welcome his mother back home. He cooked assorted food for her but Rirí refused to eat. Instead, she declared that she had a problem requiring urgent attention. Rirí said;

Mó tii múlé pòntí
Mó tii mọ̀nà rokà
Mó tii fi gbogbo agbada díran
Nítórí pé àrùn kan n ń se Ọ̀un
Ọ̀nà ní àrùn kín ní n se ọ̀
Tí ọ̀un kò ní lè wò sàń?
Rirí ní àrùn ìgbònsẹ̀ ní
Ó ní ọ̀un fẹ̀ sù ní
Ọ̀nà ní níbo ní o ó a ti ráàyè sù?
O ní gbogbo èrò oko
Gbogbo èrò odò
Gbogbo èrò àlọ
Gbogbo èrò àbò
Ló n gba ọ̀dò ọ̀un kojá
Ó ní máa lọ sọ̀dọ̀ Ọ̀jà
Tii se àbúrò ọ̀un

(Don't yet fill the house with wine
Don't yet fill it with food
Don't yet cook assorted meat
Because I have a disease
Ọ̀nà said what type of disease
That I will not be able to heal?

Rirí said it is diarrhoea
 She said she wanted to defecate
 Where will you defecate?
 He said everyone going to the market
 Everyone going to the river
 Everyone going up
 Everyone coming back
 Will pass through his place
 He said she should go to Ojà
 His junior brother) (Abimbola 2006: 21-22)

From the above excerpt, it is clearly evident that Ifá stood against polluting the environment by speaking against open defecation. Open defecation is the act of passing excreta in open air location instead of hygienic covered location. People may choose bushes, fields, ditches, streets, gutters, sidewalks, motor packs, recreation parks, canals among others. Most people do so because they do not have a toilet readily accessible or due to traditional cultural practices. The phenomenon thus does not just occur in the rural areas but also in the cities, among the educated class in public tertiary institutions, business, and residential areas. Afe Babalola asserted to this in one of the Nigerian newspaper (Vanguard) December 25th, 2019 when he said it is a common experience in some of our federal and state- owned tertiary institutions in a parlance popularly known as throwing shotput. Meanwhile, a lot of effort are being made in Nigeria over the decades to reduce the cases of open defecation just like it happened in the above excerpt in which Ojà sent his mother to his younger brother, Ojà in other to find solution to the problem. On getting there, the same scenario also repeated itself. The conversation went thus:

Ojàá ní àrùn kìn ní nṣe ó
Tí òun ò ní lè wò sàṅ?
Ó ní òun fẹ́ ṣu ní
Ojà ní nibo lo ó ha ti rááyè ṣu?
Igbá aláta niyí
Igbá onírú niyí
Igbá oníyò niyí
Nibo lo ó ha ti rááyè ṣu?
Máa lọ sódò Ilé
Tíi ṣe àbúrò òun

(Ojà said what type of sickness
 That I will not heal?

She said she wanted to defecate
 Where will you defecate?
 The pepper seller's tray is here
 The locust bean tray is here
 The salt tray is here
 Where will you defecate?
 Go to Ilé (House)
 His junior brother) (Abimbola 2006:22)

The example above also indicates Ifá's attribute of environmental consciousness by not allowing Rirí to defecate in the marketplace. This shows that Ifá frowns at environmental pollution. Open defecation poses environmental and health hazards to the people. It pollutes the environment and exposes children and adults to critical health problems like diarrhoea which may lead to untimely death. Ojà considered the health impact of open defecation on the market seller and their goods and knowing its unwelcome adverse effects, he did not allow his mother. Rirí then left for Ilé, her last child's place. She told Ilé the same story and she was allowed in. Their conversation is highlighted below:

Ó ní óun fẹ́ẹ̀ sù ní
Ilé ní àti kín tún wá ní?
O ní ẹ̀ bí èmi ní mo nítàgẹ̀
Ẹ̀ bí èmi ní mo ní sare
Èmi ní mo ní sarẹ̀
Ni Rirí bá rọ̀ gùrì wọ̀le

(She said she wanted to defecate
 Ilé said and what again?
 He said but I own the balcony
 I own the backyard
 I am the owner of the entire mansion
 Rirí then rushed inside) (23)

From the verse, it can be deduced that Ifá advised that the best place to pass faeces is in a secluded place like the house, hence Rirí was granted entrance by her son Ilé.

Pollution is experienced daily in Nigeria. It has become part of us as we live with it without any form of concrete effort made by some individuals to put an end to it. Various forms of pollution experienced include air pollution, water pollution, land pollution, noise pollution and many other forms of

pollution. The Ifá warnings in the above excerpts are the examples of land pollution caused by human waste, such as, open defecation, dropping of refuse and waste in open places, open burning of garbage waste, industrial emission, wildlife, factories, dust, vehicle emission, oil spills, mining activities, intensive farming, and agrochemicals. As it has been earlier said, a lot of effort are being made by Nigerian government to eradicate open defecation. All of which can be averted by individual's efforts, just like the intentionality of Riri's children.

Why should we protect our environment? The world has completely changed from what it was hundreds of years ago. Beyond the spontaneous events initiated by nature itself, humans are continuously adapting the planet to accommodate their needs through careless interaction with their surrounding environment. To this, there is need for environmental protection. Envils Centre on Plant and Pollution (2019) discussed the following as reasons why we should take care of our environment:

a. A Clean Environment is Essential for Healthy Living:

The more we do not care about our environment, the more it will become polluted with contaminants and toxins that have a harmful impact on our health. Air pollution can cause respiratory diseases and cancer, among other problems and diseases. Water pollution can lead to typhoid, diarrheal, and other waterborne/water related diseases. Although we have treatment system and other mechanisms to take care of some of these issues, we never know what faults may occur. Air sustains us and water is a necessity, so we should just do what we can to prevent pollution.

b. The Overall Temperature of Earth's Atmosphere is increasing:

Global warming is causing climate patterns to change. Yes, climate change is real, and humans are largely responsible because our activities have released large amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. Yes, small changes in the average temperature can lead to frequent occurrences of dangerous weather patterns and devastating storms, so "for the sake of our children and our future, we must do more to combat climate change. Yes, it is true that no single event makes a trend. But the fact is, the 12 hottest years on record have all come in the last 15. Heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and floods — all are now more frequent and intense. We can choose to believe that Super storm Sandy, and the most severe drought in decades, and the worst wildfires some states have ever seen were all just a freak coincidence. Or we can choose to believe in the overwhelming judgment of science

—and act before it is too late.” – President Barack Obama (44th U.S. President), 2013.

c. Your Children will Appreciate It

Unless we have some superpower that I am unaware of, we are not going to live forever. So, what type of world do you want to leave for your future family? If you know the dangers that future generations will face due to the problems we have now, why wouldn't you make sacrifices and do something to prevent them from happening?

But there must be the look ahead, there must be a realization of the fact that to waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children, the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed. – President Theodore Roosevelt (26th U.S. President)

d. Biodiversity is Important:

Biodiversity refers to the variety of plants, animals, and other living things in our world. It can be negatively influenced by habitat loss and degradation due to human activity, climate change, and pollution, among other things. We have many of the basic necessities that we need to survive because of biodiversity. We need food that various species provide to eat, water to drink, air to breathe, and materials to provide shelter and other necessities. There are many natural processes that have been formed by various species to provide these necessities. If something happens to a certain organism, an unwanted chain reaction may occur and that may negatively affect us. Loss of biodiversity could also cause other problems. The greater the diversity of life, the greater the opportunity for various discoveries that could make our world a much better place, so let us do what we can to prevent the loss of biodiversity.

e. It is a Reflection of Your Character:

One of my life mottos is, “doing unto others as we would have them do unto us.” Nature gives us so many things for free – clean air, clean water, beautiful landscapes, breath-taking views, and the list goes on. We take so much from nature, but what do we give in return, Pollution? The least we can do is show our appreciation by protecting and preserving our environment. “What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another.” – Mahatma Gandhi (Indian civil rights activist).

f. Earth is our home.

It is where we live, so we better take care of it! Would you rather live in a polluted dump?

“Out of all those millions and millions of planets floating around there in space, this is our planet, this is our little one, so we just got to be aware of it and take care of it.” – Paul McCartney (English musician)

g. Air pollution reduces quality of health and lowers life expectancy.

Across the globe, nine in ten people are breathing unclean air, harming their health and shortening their life span. Every year, about 7 million people die from diseases and infections related to air pollution, more than five times the number of people who perish in road traffic collisions.

Exposure to pollutants can also affect the brain, causing developmental delays, behavioural problems, and even lower IQs in children. In older people, pollutants are associated with Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s diseases.

Importance of Environmental Protection

Ogunsote et al (2011) believe that sustainable development is a pattern of economic growth in which resources are used to meet human needs while protecting the environment, so that those needs can be met not only in the present generation but also for generation to come. Furthermore, there is an additional focus on the present generation’s responsibility to improve the future generation’s life by restoring the previous ecosystem damaged and reducing environmental pollution.

Environmental protection means that human beings consciously protect and reasonably make use of natural resources, and at the same time, they prevent the natural environment from pollution and destruction. Meanwhile, environmental protection features all kinds of actions taken by humans to solve the practical or potential environmental issues, coordinate the relationship between humans and the environment, and ensure a sustainable economic and social development.

Controlling the environmental pollution resulting from production and life activity includes controlling the ‘three wastes’ (wastewater, waste gases, and waste residues), dust and radioactive substances, noise, vibration, rancidity, and electromagnetic radiation from industrial production. It also includes the pollution of harmful gases, liquid, noise caused by transportation, maritime shipping emissions, toxic and hazardous chemicals in industrial and agricultural production and people’s living, smoke emissions, sewage and garbage caused by urban life. Ezzati, et al (2005)

Preventing environmental damage caused by the construction and developmental activities includes prevention of environmental pollution and destruction caused by large-scale water conservancy, railways, highways, major ports, airports, large industrial projects and other projects.

Protection of natural environment includes protecting rare species and their living environment, the natural history of specific sites, geological phenomena, and landscape. The environmental protection of the earth focuses on the governance and protection. As the land as already been polluted, it should be protected in line with treatment. Ogunsote et.al (2011) opined that the best way to treat the land (soil, mountains, continental shelf) is via strengthening measures and restoration to their former outlooks. The aforementioned point shows that environmental protection plays a key role in achieving sustainable development.

Conclusion

Our social and economic activities' impact on the environment can change the way its components interact with each other. These changes can result in environmental pollution and contribute to an increase in natural disasters and the vulnerability of the environment. If conscious effort can be made just like Riri's children in the Ifá courpus discussed above, by minimising the negative impact humans make on the environment, the environment will be conducive for all. Such effort should include provision of waste disposal at strategic junctions in the community, enlightenment on the causes, danger and preventive measures of environmental pollution. The Government should ensure that environmental policies are thoroughly enforced and that offenders are punished. They should ensure sustainable and equitable use of resources without exposing the health condition or safety of the people. Finally, the condition and productivity of the polluted areas must also be improved by the government.

References

- Adeniyi, V.O. (2015) "Portrayal of Indigenous Religions and Ifa divination in Ola Rotimi's *The Gods are not to blame.*" *African Indigenous Religions Traditions in Local and Global Contexts. Perspectives on Nigeria. A Festschrift in honour of Jacob K. Oluponna.* Edited by D.O. Ogungbile, 95-102
- Akinyemi, A. (2012) "Old Wine, New Bottle. Ifa Divination Motifs in Yoruba Films." *Yorùbá Journal of Yoruba Studies Association of Nigeria.* 7.1: 1-29.
- Afe, B. (2019) "Open Defecation in Bauchi" Vanguard, Dec.25th, 2019.
- Akindayomi, D. (2023) "Tackling Open Defecation in Nigeria" *Back to Environment, Health and Safety Law Committee Publications.* International

- Bar Association. Elebuibon, Y. (2004) *Ifá: The Custodian of Destiny*. Penthouse Publication Nigeria.
- Ezzati, M. et.al (2005) “Environmental Risks in the Developing World: Exposure Indicators for Evaluating Interventions, Programmes and Policies” *J. Epidemiol. Community Health*. 59:15-22.
- ENVILS Centre on Plants and Pollution (2019) Ministry of Environmental, *Forests and Climate change of India*.
- Ilesanmi, T. M. (2004) *Yorùbá Orature and Culture: A Cultural Analysis*. O.A.U. Press Ltd Ile-Ife.
- Kehinde, A.O. Osadola I.O. Adenuga A. (2023) “Reflection on Nigeria’s Air Pollution Regulation with a View to Learning from the European Union. *ACTA UNIVERSITATIS CAROLINAE- IURIDICA* 1: 105-118.
- Ògúnṣinà, B. (2006). *Sociology of the Yoruba Novel: An Introduction*, Ilorin: Integrity Publication
- Oloyede, R.O.et al. (2022) “Environmental Protection and Disaster Risk for Sustainable Development” *Contemporary Issues and Challenges in Yorùbá Language, Literature and Culture*. Edited S. Adejube, et.al. Ibadan: Masterprint Publishers, 649-661.
- Salami Y.K. (2015) “An Epistemic Critique of Ifá: A Revelatory Source of Knowledge.” *African Indigenous Religions Tradition in Local and Global Contexts. Perspectives on Nigeria: A Festschrifts in Honour of Jacob K Olupona*. Edited by D.O. Ogungbile, 95- 102 WHO/UNEP (1986) *Pollution and Health*. Geneva. W.H.O. Publication.
- Vatsa, S. (2016). “Literature is the Mirror of Society but Must Be Able to See the Mirrored.” *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities*.

Yoruba Indigenous Music as Alternative Tool for Child Education

Sunday Olufemi Akande
Department of Performing Arts
Olabisi Onabanjo University
Ago Iwoye, Nigeria
olufemi.akande@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng

Abstract

Since music is a component of culture, it is essential to education. The importance of Yoruba traditional music in their education cannot be overstated, since the goal of education is to develop a child who is capable of being a productive member of society and who complies with social norms and customs. Given that traditional beliefs, rituals, norms, and social structures are often the foundation of musical notions and practices, the effects of Yoruba music on children become increasingly plausible. This cultural phenomenon research is necessary because of the connections between music, culture, and education. This study looks at how a Yoruba child's education was impacted by the shape, lyrics, and performing techniques of indigenous music. It will also provide a fitting explanation of the background of Yoruba music. A few chosen pieces of indigenous music were examined to establish the use of indigenous music as alternative tool historical, arithmetic, moral and health education. This study concludes that the inherent worth of indigenous music is a useful and alternative tool for teaching Yoruba children, especially in early childhood education. The study suggests that Yoruba people should value the singing of Indigenous music in their homes, community and that indigenous music should be incorporated into the curriculum and taught in elementary, secondary, and higher institutions.

Keywords: Indigenous Music, Alternative Tool, Education, Yoruba Child

Introduction

The impact of music on a child's education has drawn lots of attention in the field of education in recent years. Music and singing are significant parts of our culture. Music is a part of many events in our life, including worship, government and military ceremonies, movies, television, and theater. Our family's natural culture at home now includes music as a part of everyday life. From the moment of their birth, parents have used music to engage and connect with their children, to show them love and happiness, and to calm and comfort them. From birth, a Yoruba mother sings to her kid and introduces him to numerous facets of music. (Nketia 1974).

Because of this innate tendency, music appeals to children's minds and becomes an enticing tool that parents can use to further educate their children. It is impossible to overstate the importance or benefits of indigenous music in a child's education. Pitch and sound are the main characteristics of indigenous music; rhymes, body percussion, dance, dramatization, and games all play important roles. Native American music typically complements games since they allow for simultaneous play and education. These are the community's music, dances, and games; they are an integral element of their culture. They are a component of our Yoruba ancestry, culture, and identity. Native Yoruba music, singing, and dance are intimately linked and play a significant role in Yoruba culture's everyday activities, catering to particular age groups and occasions. Native American music is an essential component of the community's social life and is interwoven into a variety of life-cycle events, including marriages, funerals, festivals celebrating the sowing or harvest season, and rites for initiation and healing. (Akande, 2023).

Yoruba Indigenous Education in Nigeria

Yoruba In Nigeria, Indigenous education predates the introduction of western education. The conventional system combined the concepts of education and schooling. The goal and methodology of the indigenous educational system included the concepts of social and cultural norms and values, as well as acquiring skills. Even in the lack of classrooms, uniforms, and qualified instructors, education continued to take place as teaching and learning took place. In order to continuously promote human well-being, traditional education societies work to improve and conserve the information, skills, and attitudes that have been acquired within their cultural context and legacy. According to Ociti (1973), "Mastery-learning" was the primary focus of education in traditional African communities.

Indigenous education encompasses all facets of human development, not just restricted to teaching moral principles like respect, hard work,

cooperation, sharing spirit, love, and sense of humor. History, family history, mental and physical development, health education, labor dignity, moral rectitude, religion, and appropriate social interaction are all included in the curriculum. In order to restore our rich, useful, and lifelong indigenous education that has previously prevailed throughout Africa, the concepts of literacy and merely academic work are currently being questioned. (Adeyinka and Adeyemi 2002). The Yoruba have lost appreciation for the inherent values of their indigenous education as a result of civilization and the pervasive and well-established western education throughout Nigeria. It becomes necessary to change the narrative by utilizing the potency of Indigenous music in supporting learning. Western education knew the value of music by injecting it in their curriculum and making music one of the foremost subjects taught in schools as introduced by the missionaries.

Indigenous Music of the Yoruba People

The Yoruba people have a rich and varied musical heritage that dates back thousands of years, with numerous regional and national musical traditions across Africa. For the Yoruba people, music has a significant role in their religion. Religious ceremonies and rituals use music and songs to transmit stories from one generation to the next. In Yoruba country, indigenous music serves as a means of expressing cultural identity. It is a component of ceremonial, storytelling, joy, and grief, bringing people together to narrate stories about the past and present of indigenous peoples' lives. Music has a significant role in Yoruba culture. There are vocal and instrumental forms of Yoruba traditional music. In other words, when the Yoruba speak of music in its totality, it involves drumming, singing and dancing (Olagunju,1997). This is not to say that variety is absent in the old traditional music; the music is indeed a subtle blend of repetition and variety, sometimes a single line of varied patterns is balanced against several lines of other activities (Euba,1977). In the West, we are typically observers or listeners. In Yoruba nation, almost everyone plays an instrument or two in addition to singing. Yoruba people perform music in their homes, during social events, and in the marketplace. Furthermore, music is significant in religious, political, and ceremonial life. Music can be used for healing, during challenging times, to announce the arrival of royalty and other high-ranking individuals, as well as during weddings, funerals, and important person visits. Certain Yoruba songs are improvised and repeated. This is a key component in Yoruba music. Repetition is a highly effective stylistic strategy in pre-colonial traditional music.

The Yoruba people make a wide variety of instruments locally, categorized into membranophone, idiophone, aerophone, and chordophone, using

indigenous materials like as gourds, turtle shells, animal horns, and animal skin. These instruments are often used to accompany indigenous music. Beyond, using the instruments as accompaniment, it is important to note that the Yoruba child who is skillful in the making of musical instruments already has a means of livelihood. A child may decide to specialize in the making of instruments and repairs. According to Ajayi (1989), membrane drums also known as talking drums are the most popular musical instruments found among the Yoruba, especially in the palaces. The talking drum is often used to communicate through idiomatic expressions with moral lessons and instructions.

Yoruba Indigenous music encourages cooperation and teamwork. Collaborating on musical projects with others fosters a culture of acceptance and tolerance. Group music-making and listening teaches young people to embrace and respect variety. By requiring pupils to collaborate, it fosters social growth and sharing and listening skills. Through group music-making, children get to celebrate individual differences and develop empathy for the thoughts and perspectives of others. The abilities acquired via music are useful and essential in daily life. Through celebrating and facilitating accessibility and variety, music inspires people to collaborate and try new things with one another.

Some Selected Yoruba Indigenous Educative Songs Health Education

This Indigenous song is often used to educate and intensify the dissemination of information about healthy living. Children are taught lessons on personal hygiene, cleanliness, proper regular bath and the right feeding habit. The text of the song below emphasized the need for having a regular bath or shower which washes away every dirty thing on their bodies after a day work. Yoruba children are always known for assisting their parents in farms and domestic work. In the course of the work, their body becomes dirty and will need to clean up. The nails may also have been exposed to jams and the need to cut their nails regularly is addressed in the lyrics of the song. The need for eating to time to avoid illness like ulcer is also emphasized in the indigenous song and of course moderation in eating to avoid constipation.

Wẹ́ kí o mó, gé èékánná rẹ.

Jẹun tó dára lásikò; má jẹun jù.

Wash yourself and be clean, trim your nails.

Eat on time; do not overfeed yourself.

Score

We Ki O Mo

Subtitle

Composer

Arranger

We ki o mo ge c-kona re Jeun to da-ra la-si-ko ma jeun ju

Indigenous Historical Educative Songs

Through songs children feel more connected to the time, the people, and their struggles (Goldberg, 2001). Take for example the song, “Láyé Olúgbón” tells the story of the Gbongan people in Osun State, Nigeria. Oba Olufi Adewale Asabi was made to work on farm when he was a prince to value the dignity of labor, He ascended the throne of his father in 1926. He was able to unite people and expand his realm. He gave land to strangers freely to settle in their land. The economy of Gbongan boomed and people were able to trade with Ibadan, Oshogbo, Ede. Children that were not born then can be educated about their society. This is collaborate the view of (Euba, 1969) that “ Indigenous music, in many ways, represents continuity with the past and gives opportunity of learning, in order that the present may be better understood”. This experience of history through music sustains and passes on the memory of events.

Score

Laye Olugbon

Subtitle

Composer

Arranger

♩ = 80

La-ye o-lu-gbon Mo ge-bo-run me - je e - wa wo wa lo-ye la-ye A-re-sa

Mo ge - bo - run me - fa e - wa wo wa lo - ye

Láyé Olúgbón, mo ní'borùn méje

During the reign of Olugbon, I bought seven veils.

Láyé Arèsà, mo ní'borùn méfà

During the reign of Aresa, I bought six shawls.

Láyé Àsàbí, mo ra kókò

During the era of Asabi I bought koko(type of green cloth)

Mo ra àrán, mo ra sányán baba aṣọ

Àfòlẹ̀ ló lẹ̀ ní Gbòngán ò dùn; àfòlẹ̀

I bought velveteen, I bought Sanya
,the best cloth

Only lazy people will say Gbongan
town is not interesting
nnly lazy fellows.

Indigenous Moral Educative Songs

According to Nzewi (1991) ‘music accompanies the life of a Black man from the womb to the tomb, being featured at celebrations; to announce the birth of a baby, at children’s games, at peer group functions, at work and leisure, in religion and death. Musical activities go a long way in helping a child to understand his roles in society and learn about his culture and immediate surroundings, thereby preparing him for an effectively independent adolescence. A Yoruba child learns how respect, honesty and how to be a good citizen. Every child is also made to know the consequence of every misconduct or abnormal behavior.

According to “Omo to Moya re Loju”, Every Yoruba child is made to understand the role of the parents and how much they suffer to raise a child. A Yoruba child learns that there should never be a situation that will make him or her dishonor his parents.

Ọmọ tó mọ̀ 'ya rẹ̀ lójú o

Ọ̀sì ní ó ta ọmọ náà pa 2ce

Ìyá tó jìyà nítòrí rẹ̀

Ọmọ tó mọ̀ 'ya rẹ̀ lójú o

Ọ̀sì ní ó ta ọmọ náà pa 2ce

Ìyá tó jìyà nítòrí rẹ̀

A child that is not respectful.

Will live in advent poverty.

A mother who suffers for you.

A child that is not respectful.

Will live in advent poverty.

A mother who suffers for you.

Score

Omo to Mo 'Yare Loju

Subtitle

Composer

Arranger

$\text{♩} = 80$

Omo to Mo 'yare lo - ju o osi ni o ta 'mo na pa Iya to ji - ya ni

to ri re Omo to mo 'yare lo - ju o osi nio ta 'mo na pa

Learning Arithmetic through Yoruba Indigenous Music

Music is seen as a viable tool for teaching and learning Arithmetic. There is a correlation with music and mathematics. They are closely related when they use identical concepts and skills. For example, patterns are found in music, such as in demonstrations of beat or rhythm. It is also found in mathematics when learning about number systems. There is a high correlation between learning music and spatial temporal reasoning, which is primarily used for math skills (Church, 2000). Through the melody of the song “Ení bí Ení”, a Yoruba child gets to learn counting in from one through ten. The lyrics used in the song are also familiar events or activities that takes place in a typical Yoruba environment. The availability of things a child can relate to within the environment also facilitate quick learning.

Eni bi eni ,eji bi eji ,eta ta gba

Ení bí ení l'omódé kawó

The young ones count money one by one

Èjì bí èjì, iyeṅ l'àgbà n ka ayò

The elders count the pebbles of the Ayo game two by two

Èta bí èta, e jé ká t'ara wa l'óre

Three by three, let us give one another gifts

Èrin bí èrin, ení rín ni là n rín

Four by four, you laugh with those who laugh with you

Àrún bí àrún, Oba má se wá l'árungún

Five by five, may God not allow us to become destroyer of our inheritance

Èfa bí èfà, e jé ká fara wa móra

Six by six, let us draw nearer to one another

Èje bí èje, Olúgbón s'orò, ó k'ìje

Seven by seven, Olugbon performs certain rites on the Seventh day

Èjọ bí èjọ, eni bí'ni làá jọ

Eight by eight, one must take after one's parents

Èsán bí èsán, Oba j'álé ó san wá

Nine by nine, God let our old age be a blessed one

Èwá bí èwá, t'owó t'omọ kó wa wa wálé

Ten by ten, may riches and children follow us home.

Conclusion

The lack of Indigenous education of which indigenous music is paramount, emphasized a representative of Yoruba indigenous child, would continue to deprive a Yoruba child from the rich education benefits inherent in their culture. Stressing that educational instruction take place in indigenous music through the lyrics embedded in Yoruba language. The impact of indigenous

music on a Yoruba child becomes more realistic as musical concepts and practices are usually based on the traditional beliefs, customs, norms and system of a community. Music cannot be separated from the culture of the Yoruba people.

This paper concludes that the intrinsic value of Indigenous Music is a viable tool for educating a Yoruba child. It recommends that Indigenous music should be taught in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in Nigeria, specifically in Yoruba speaking states and appreciated in every home. The inclusion of the indigenous music in pedagogical approaches in the school curriculum would greatly enhance quality delivery of education. Music helps develop cognitive skills like memory, language, reasoning, logic, and arithmetic; music creates important contexts for life skills like cooperating, collaboration, and group effort; music develops rudiments of an aesthetic sense; and that music contributes to school readiness (Holland, 2011).

Reference

- Adeyemi, M.B & Adeyinka, A. A. 2000. "Some key issues in African traditional education." *McGill Journal of Education* 20 (2) 1 – 5.
- Ajayi S.A. 1993. "The Origin and Growth of Baptist Mission Work in Yorubaland, 1851-1960: An Historical Analysis." Unpublished PhD Diss., University of Ibadan.
- Euba, A . 1969. "Music in traditional society." In L. Allagoa (ed.), Lagos: *Nigeria Magazine*, No 101, July/September.
- Euba, A .1977. "An Introduction to Music in Nigeria." *Nigerian Music Review* No.1- 38.
- Franke, V. M. 2012. "Performance Practice of Indigenous song and dance Music of Botswana: The Case of Borankana, Mokomoto and Setapa." *Musicus*, 40(2), 3-10.
- Goldberg, M. 2001. *Arts and learning: An integrated approach to teaching and learning in multicultural and multilingual settings*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Holland, K. E. 2011. "Learning from students, learning from music: Cognitive development in early childhood reflected through musical perceptual tasks." Retrieved from <http://www.usr.rider.edu/vrme/> .
- Hetland , L. 2000. "Learning to make music enhances spatial reasoning." *Journal of Aesthetic Literature Bureau of Education*, 34 (3-4), 179-238.
- Ociti, J.P. 1973. *African Indigenous Education*. Nairobi: Kenya East African Literature Bureau.
- Olagunju, A. O. 1997. "Orin as a means of expressing world-views among the Yoruba." *Journal of Yoruba Folklore* Vol. 1: 23-44

Nzewi, M.1991. *Musical Practice and Creativity: An African Traditional Perspective*. Bayreuth: Iwalewa.

Vaughn, K. 2000. Music and mathematics: Modest support for the oft-claimed relationship. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 34(3/4), 149-166.

Some comments over the Yorùbá origins of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian Religions

Emmanuel Ofuasia
Department of Philosophy
National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)
Decoloniality &
Research Group
University of Pretoria, South Africa
eofuasia@noun.edu.ng; ofuasia.emma@yahoo.com

Abstract

Candomblé is one of many Afro-Brazilian religions that boast of African origins consequent, especially of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In recent times, efforts toward vitiating the transnational link between Africa and Brazil as unstable, historically, and socially have become replete among some scholars – the claim being that merely finding the echoes of Africa in the Americas are not sufficient grounds to ferment an essentialist perception of these Afro-Brazilian religions as purely African. Whereas this research agrees with such scholars that an essentialist understanding of Afro-Brazilian religions is unfair, it contests their outlook that portraying Yorùbá as the origin of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions may be misleading. Hence, for its aim, this research makes etymological and philological assessments of some important concepts central to Yorùbá identity and rituals. Whilst establishing that an essentialist reading will not do, the study explores discourses on sexuality and matriarchal cults, divination, and sainthood.

Keywords: Africa, Afro-Brazilian Religions, Candomblé, History, Yorùbá

Introduction

Dialogues between scholars of religion in Africa and the Americas are vegetative and have yet to command deeper level of contemplation over some

crucial themes. This is not tied to any fault on the part of these scholars. In most instances, the language barrier between scholars of religion in the Americas, on one hand and their counterparts in Africa, is the prime culprit. It is not until recently that relevant works are beginning to receive attention through interpretation from Portuguese to English (Capone 2010). Perhaps, this is one of the strong reasons why there has been very little interaction between them. It is possible that the little interaction between them has informed a large gap, such that in recent times, some scholars argue that even when Afro-Brazilian religions have African origins, an essentialist reading which makes them necessarily African is unstable (Engler 2012). Specifically, this new wave of scholarship is beginning to reconsider how influential the African culture and religion have over these Brazilian religions. Specifically, some of these scholars even go as far as demanding whether it is appropriate to see traditional Yorùbá religious culture as the basis for Macumba, Umbanda, Candomblé and other Afro-inspired religions in the Americas (see Johnson 2002; Matory 2003; Selker 2007; Murphy 2010). Even when these scholars take to this position, it is helpful to point out that there is another arm of scholarship which sees Afro-Brazilian religions as derived from Africa (see Jones and Trost 2005; Johnson 2002). It is therefore the commerce of this disquisition to examine the strengths of that arm of scholarship which is beginning to reconsider the African basis of Afro-Brazilian religions. Focusing on the notion that employing Yorùbá for Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions may be confusing or misleading (see Engler 2012, 22), this research wishes to wade into the matter from the African perspective. Its central thesis is that much as these Afro-Brazilian religions continue to invoke the deities, rituals and religious practices that are typically traced to the Yorùbá, albeit in unique ways, it is impossible to divorce them from this source.

Revisiting the Discourse on the Yorùbá Foundation of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian Religions

As their umbrella term implies, Afro-Brazilian religions are religious cultures that emerged in Brazil but with African origins. Popular among these arrays of religions in Brazil are: Macumba, Candomblé and Umbanda (Jones and Troost 2005). However, in his description of Umbanda, Steven Engler (2012, 13) says it is “distinctively Brazilian religion that came into prominence in the early twentieth century as a hybrid of Candomblé and Kardecist Spiritism, with elements of popular Catholicism and a romanticised appropriation of indigenous figures.” What this implies is that Engler (2012) disagrees with the outlook that Umbanda is less of an Afro-Brazilian religion but more of a nationalized religion which does not have an essentialist character linked

to Africa. Engler (2012, 27) contests that any attempt to reducing Umbanda as well as any other Afro-Brazilian religion to be seen as a derivation from their purported African origin mitigates or diminishes their national contexts and responsiveness to “race-based hierarchy, exclusion and marginalisation in Brazilian society.”

Valid as the argument of Engler (2012) seems, it is important to understand that once the Afro-Yorùbá foundation of Candomblé is established, then the extent to which the Yorùbá influence may be on Umbanda can be settled. This is because Umbanda is a hybrid religion which boasts of some elements of Candomblé. How, then, does Candomblé portray itself as an Afro-Brazilian religion with inspirations from Africa, Yorùbá specifically?

Candomblé is generally believed to have developed around the 1800s in the Bahia territory of Brazil as a result of the slave trade (van de Port 2011). Even when it is a religious culture that evinces an admixture of various races in Brazil, Candomblé continues to invoke practices and relations with the deities (i.e. *Òrìṣà*) in a manner which expresses a strong link with its Afro-Yorùbá root. It continues to express *Olódùmarè* as the Higher God above all forms of deity (Phillips 2015). From his perspective, Steven Engler (2012, 47) adds:

Candomblé is the most important and well-known of many distinct Afro-Brazilian religions. Its key rituals include initiation, divination and the *roda-de-santo* (saint wheel) in which initiated members dance counter-clockwise, to intense, syncopated drumming, until they enter into a trance state, becoming *cavalos* (horses) for the orixás.

Clear as the foregoing is, concerning the *modus operandi* and belief system of Candomblé, some scholars such as Steven Engler (2012) are beginning to question if Candomblé’s Afro-Yorùbá root is in anyway reliable since other African sources, for him, may be influential as well. Engler (2012, 23) expatiates: “Insofar as “Yoruba” points to a transnational bridge between Africa and Brazil, the foundation of this bridge is unstable both historically and socially on both sides of the Atlantic.” In another passage, Engler (2012, 22) writes: “In general terms, using “Yoruba” to describe Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian traditions is potentially confusing for several reasons.” What then are these reasons?

The first reason which Engler (2012, 22) provides concerning why the use of the term “Yorùbá” for describing Afro-Brazilian religions is possibly confusing is that the term is limited only to Òyó state or group. From this, he infers that the Yorùbá culture was expressing continuous shifts in practices in West Africa at a time which parallels the practices of such beliefs in the Americas. Then he concludes: “... Yoruba traditions in Africa and the diaspora

developed in a mutual influential dialogue” (Engler 2012, 22). This is an outlook which is also upheld by Matory (2003). Unfortunately, Engler (2012) is not explicit concerning the ways that this so called “mutual influential dialogue” ensued. One may however infer that what he means by this dialogue is captured in Robin Law’s (1997, 205) words: “African ethnicities were subject to transformation through the process of displacement across the Atlantic; and conversely...new ethnic identities constructed in the diaspora could be fed back into the homeland through the repatriation of ex-slaves to Africa.”

One important thing to mention at this juncture is that the Yorùbá is an ethnic group original to the south-west region of Nigeria, but which did not see itself thus until around the mid-20th century for nationalist and political reasons (Falola 2018). What this means is that in the 1800s when Candomblé was taking its first “induction” in the Bahia region of Brazil via West African slaves, there was nothing like a Yorùbá nation but various empires and towns such as Ilé-Ifè and Òyó. Perhaps this lack of a collective identity at this period accounts for why there are various appellations to describe them in the Americas – “lucumi” in Cuba, “nagô” in Bahia in Brazil as well as “mina” in Rio de Janeiro (Reis and Mamigonian 2004). Whereas Engler’s (2012) point may be seen as the lack of Yorùbá identity when Candomblé was developing in the Americas, his little history of those that would later conglomerate as Yorùbá in West Africa as well as the etymology and philology of the terms “lucumi,” “nagô” and “mina” are clear illustrations of his knowledge of Yorùbá history and influence not only in West Africa but in the Americas too.

To riposte Engler (2012) and Law (1997), it is helpful to relay that repatriated slaves that returned to Nigeria may be grouped into two: the *Saro* and the *Amaro*. The former were referred to as Nigerian creoles or simply *Saro* (i.e. those who came from Sierra Leone) (Faluyi 2001). Although they are scattered in many parts of modern Nigeria, they are mostly found in the Ebute-Metta, Olowogbowo and Yaba areas of Lagos (Faluyi 2001). Some moved to Abeokuta as some others moved to the Niger Delta regions of the country (Dixon-Fyle 1999). Prominent among them are Herbert Macaulay, Samuel Johnson, Henry Carr, Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Funmilayo Ransom-Kuti. A central feature of this group is the profession and practice of the Anglican faith (Dixon-Fyle 1999).

Another group of returnee slaves are those called the *Amaro*. In other instances, they are also called the *Nago* in Brazil. Most of them returned to Nigeria from Cuba and Brazil with Portuguese and Spanish names such as Mendes, Da Silva, Gomes, Fernandez and were mostly Catholics (Faluyi 2001). Even when the terms, *Amaro* and *Nago* are no longer used to refer to them in Nigeria, they are still referred to as *Aguda*, a Yorùbá term for Catholics (Faluyi 2001). Prominent among these are: Sir Adeyemo Alakija and

Chief Antonio Deinde Fernandez. Although this group did not make any attempt to alter Yorùbá traditional religious beliefs, they remained fervent Catholics that reside mostly in an area in Lagos Island called *Popo Aguda*, whose English equivalence is “Brazilian Quarters” (Bashir 2018). Another area where their influence was felt was in the area of architecture as most of the returnees where artisans who returned to Lagos with their building skills that evinced the touch of Brazilian architectural designs (Vlach 1984).

Based on this analysis, it is even more confusing how Engler (2012) and Law (1997) arrive at the conclusion that returnee slaves may have influenced the Yorùbá religious culture. In other words, following the established fact that most of these returnee ex-slaves to the Yorùbá parts of Nigeria professed and practiced the Catholic faith, there is a contradiction over the speculations of Engler (2012) and Law (1997) that the Yorùbá traditions and those in Brazil developed in a mutual influential dialogue. To be sure, these repatriated ex-slaves did not evince any trace of tangible dialogue from their Brazil experiences with the religious culture of the homeland. Whereas the next sections consider, elaborately, Engler’s (2012) first reason regarding why employing Yorùbá for describing Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian traditions as prone to possible perplexity, for the meantime, his second reason needs to be disclosed.

The second reason why the use of the term “Yorùbá” in describing Afro-Brazilian religions, for Engler (2012) is misleading is because Yorùbá influence is one among some other ethnic influences from Africa. Engler (2012) cites that Central African settlers (Bantou) and the Fon of Dahomey also had some influences on the development of Afro-Brazilian religions but it is in Candomblé that one is able to notice clearly the dominant influence of the Yorùbá. To therefore eliminate these other influences to settle, essentially, for only the Yorùbá, Engler (2012) finds perplexing. On this showing, Engler (2012, 24) makes the submission that “it is untenable to both acknowledge Afro-Brazilian’s agency in appeals to “Africa” in the work of constructing their religious and cultural identities, and yet hold that terms like “Yoruba” have some stable transnational referent, whether ultimately in Africa or not.” Perhaps the implication of this assertion is that these religions too ought to drop the appellation of “African” or “Yorùbá” and commence the use of “Afro-Brazilian” too, in their Africa homelands since they may have been influenced by the Brazilian returnees. However, as the brief reaction to the first reason has revealed, such mutual dialogue is absent.

Before engaging critically with Engler’s (2012) position, it is helpful to understand that he is not the only who arrives at his conclusion concerning the unreliable use of the term Yorùbá to refer to Afro-Brazilian religions. Joseph Murphy (2010, 407) too explains that “It is difficult to argue that the diaspora

model fits the contemporary state of Yoruba religious traditions.” This is an outlook which is redolent as well in Robin Law (1997).

How to understand “Yorùbá” in relation to Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian Religions

Since the historical and social characters of the Yorùbá in Africa and the silence of the intangible Brazilian influence on Yorùbá religious cultures in Africa are the reasons for Engler’s (2012) [along with other scholars such as Murphy (2010); Law (1997)] insistence that Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian as Yorùbá-derived is confusing, then it is important to first restate for these scholars their understanding of “Yorùbá.” Through this, one can have a good grasp of the Yorùbá with their influence and dominance as an ethnic group in West Africa. A brief lesson in the history of the Yorùbá, as well as the philology and etymology of some terms used in referring to them is therefore imperative at this juncture. It is the conviction of this research that once these are disclosed, then, it becomes clear that indeed Yorùbá religious practices informed and shaped Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions with the converse impossible.

Furthermore, one must not wish away the “improvisations” brought into these Yorùbá religious practices by its Brazilian adherents. Specifically, the Brazilian improvisations of Yorùbá religious practices in areas such as sexuality, divination, sainthood, spirit possession and matriarchal cults. These improvisations disclose why this study agrees with Engler (2012) that an essentialist reading of these Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian. In other words, they did not take hook, line and sinker, Yorùbá religious practices. Evidence of their own “revisions” are present, hence why an essentialist perception is needless since some of these “revisions” are alien and have not been inducted into the religious practices of the Yorùbá in Africa. The starting point however is the notion of who the Yorùbá are.

In modern times, it is easy to say that the Yorùbá are Nigerians. However, this assertion was non-existent about a century ago. This is why it has been suggested that “Many elders involved in rural Yoruba society recall that, as late as the 1930s, ‘Yoruba’ was not a common form of political identification” (Laitin 1986, 8). Although the term, Yorùbá is etymologically derived from the Hausa “Yarba,” which denotes “dishonest trader,” (see Isichei 1983), it became a unifying force for political reasons in 1945 via the reference: *Ègbẹ̀ Ọmọ̀ Odùduwà* (a group of descendants of *Odùduwà*). In this connection, Elizabeth Isichei (1983, 132) writes: “a number of Yoruba kingdoms and Benin have traditions that they were founded by sons or grandsons of Oduduwa.”

With Odùduwà, being the perceived founding father of this ethnic group, with variations in the Yorùbá dialect, this became a rallying point politically. Following from this, it is correct that by the time Candomblé commenced in the Bahias in 1800s, there was nothing like Yorùbá but a group of people who found themselves in the Americas as slaves speaking the same language. This is how the Cuban “lukumi” then comes to the fore.

The etymology of the Cuban “*lukumi*” is a term which denotes the referring of these slaves to one another as a group who speak the same language. Philologically speaking, the word “lukumi” is a corrupt version of the slaves’ reference to one another as: “ó̀lùkú̀mì” which means “my fellow” or what the Briton means when s/he says: “Hey mate!” Recall, at this era there was no Yorùbá ethnic group even in the homeland and these were captured slaves who found themselves in a foreign land, but speaking a similar dialect and willing to bond.

Regardless, these speakers of these various dialects presently occupy south-west Nigeria and claim Ilé-Ifè (House of Spreading) as their original home (Olojede 2011). The point is that it was at Ilé-Ifè that they started migrating away and several variations in the dialects ensued. Although the people that would later identify as the Yorùbá have an origin that may be situated as divine and migratory, these are beyond the scope of the present study. An important point is that aside the divine origin for which they claim, there are about three migratory stories: Mecca, ancient Egypt and north-east Africa (see Olojede 2011; Dasaolu & Ofuasia 2020). A common ground among these narratives is the reference to Ilé-Ifè as the origin of these descendants of *Odùduwà* who would later identify as Yorùbá.

To be sure, it has been discovered that Ilé-Ifè was “a settlement of substantial size between the ninth and twelfth centuries” (Willet 1971, 367). There are reports of bronze works depicting an *Ò̀ḡ̀nì* (paramount ruler of the descendants of *Odùduwà*) of Ifè with his consort in thermoluminescence dating as far back as the 14th and 15th centuries (Calvocoressi & David 1979, 19).

Another prominent settlement which is very important in the history of those that would later come to be referred to as Yorùbá territory is *Ò̀yó*, which has been radiocarbon dated to have been thriving since around 1100 A.D. (Calvocoressi & David 1979, 19-20). There used to be the *Ò̀yó* Empire which was so vast that “in the reign of *Ojigi*, Dahomey was forced to pay *Oyo* tribute” (Isichei 1983, 134). This vastness of the *Ò̀yó* Empire has been attributed to serve as one of the reasons for its collapse since the Empire’s expansion “bred weakness and division, and the state then stood on the brink of collapse” (Isichei 1983, 134). Perhaps this is how the use of “nagô” in Bahia in Brazil as a referent term for the ethnic group which would later identify as Yorùbá

took root. The term “*nagô*” was derived from “Anago,” which is a term for the Fon of Dahomey who were annexed as *Òyó* tributary (Matory 2005, 38).

From this brief socio-historical analysis, Engler’s (2012) failure to see a connection between those that would later identify themselves as Yorùbá and the Fon of Dahomey, the “anago,” is clear. This is further buttressed by the findings of Oladele Balogun (2009) that *Òyó* is not limited to modern day south-west Nigeria but expands as far as present day republics of Benin (formerly Dahomey) and Togo. However, Imperial Will following the 1884/5 Berlin Conference has made these territories to be administered by the French, whereas Nigeria where the Yorùbá are presently populous was handed to the British.

From these philological and etymological exertions, Engler’s (2012, 23) argument that the persons who would later identify themselves as Yorùbá were referred to as “mina” in Rio de Janeiro is circumspect. More so, this also reveals the extent to which he understands Yorùbá history and its place in West Africa and the Americas. The word “mina” refers to West African slaves that were acquired from the Gold Coast, which is modern day Ghana. Gold Coast, in Portuguese means “Costa da Mina” (see Law 1997; Hall 2003). What this portends is that the persons that would later identify themselves as Yorùbá had already been added to another dominant ethnicity from the same West Africa. Unfortunately, Engler’s (2012) knowledge of Yorùbá history, again, may be called into question vis-à-vis his understanding that there was mutual dialogue between Africa and the religious practices of the diaspora for which he provides no single expression of such.

What may be gleaned from this brief historical analysis is that the Yorùbá foundation of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions is not in doubt. It is also true as Engler (2012) notes that whereas the Yorùbá was undergoing some shifts, these shifts are mainly political and have nothing to do with their religious beliefs which had been settled even before their first slave and religious “representative” set foot on the shores of Bahia. To therefore deny or even question the Yorùbá origin of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions is needless.

However, the assertion of Engler (2012, 24) that “we should not be too quick to essentialize Africa by finding its echoes in the Americas...” now needs to be given attention. It is indeed true that even when Africa and precisely, the Yorùbá serve as the origin of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions, it is not the case that they are necessarily reducible to this origin. This is because the Brazilian versions of these religions express and evince some practices that may be considered alien within the core beliefs of their Yorùbá origin. Hence, any essentialist assessment of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions may be unfair because it may discard the “adjustments”

and “improvisations” made to its original beliefs in order to suit their applicability and relevance in Brazil. As a way of being sure, it is now important to turn to three of these: sexuality and matriarchal cults, divination, and sainthood.

A Yorùbá-essentialist assessment of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions regarding the place of sexuality and matriarchal cults will not help in the preservation of the originality of these Afro-Brazilian religions concerning how they serve the needs of the locality. In her study of Candomblé, Ruth Landes (1947) perceives it as a matriarchal religion which excludes men from positions of priests. The research of Landes, which was based on Candomblé as practiced in Salvador goes on to reveal that the religion is so matriarchal to the extent that it does not permit men to be “possessed” by the deities (i.e. *Òrìṣàs*). This had led to the general suggestion that Candomblé was a cult matriarchate and a homosexual religion (Allen 2012).

This matriarchal and homosexual underpinning of Candomblé is not in any way related to its Yorùbá origin. It is a testament of Engler’s (2012) assertion that any Afro or Yorùbá-essentialist conception of these religions will not do. Incidentally, Candomblé seems to have also gained reputation among homosexuals since “...it enabled gay men to be open about their sexuality without fear of castigation or ostracism. For these men, Candomblé, unlike other religions, not only accepted, but celebrated and affirmed their sexuality (Allen 2012, 20). The presence of homosexuality and a matriarchal cult in the Yorùbá homeland, aside the cult of *Ọ̀ṣún*, which is mostly matriarchal, will be perceived as an aberration of tradition. However, since it can address some pressing social needs in Brazil, a Yorùbá-essentialist does not apply. This therefore reveals the extent to which these Afro-Brazilian religions are experiencing shifts that makes them offer a different outlook from their origins. However, this “adjustment” has not been exported back to the homeland. So, this makes one to wonder how “...Yoruba traditions in Africa and the diaspora developed in a mutual influential dialogue” (Engler 2012, 22). The influence of the former on the latter with the latter’s need to adjust to the needs of the locality are too clear to require further elaboration. This is also present in *Ifá* divination as practiced in the Americas.

A consideration of the divination techniques of Afro-Brazilian religions also attest to the fact that they have developed and improvised when compared with what obtains in their origins. This is the case with the shell game rendered in Portuguese as *Jogo de Búzios*, which is their approach to *Ifá* divination.

Traditionally, *Ifá* divination in most instances, uses the divining chain technique (i.e. *òpèlẹ̀*), which comprises of “a chain of thread formed by knotting

eight shells of the fruits of the *òpẹ̀lẹ̀* tree. Each shell is curved, creating a convex and concave side” (Ofuasia 2019). The shells are “connected by a double chain to make four pairs. Each group of four pairs gives one of the 16 divination symbols, which tell the future of the diviner’s client” (Eglash 1999, 93). As a result, the signature of the *òpẹ̀lẹ̀* evinces a column of four vertical markings, where double vertical strokes depict even numbers as single strokes connote odd numbers. If the *òpẹ̀lẹ̀* is not used, then in most instances, *ikin*, which comprises of sixteen palm nuts, is used. There is also another practice popularly called *ẹ̀ẹ̀rindinlogún*, which is made up of sixteen cowries. Although the divination practices in the homeland are diverse, these are the most common.

Lastly, in the homeland, irrespective of the divination technique, it is the insight of *Ọ̀rúnmilà*, the knower of the destiny of everyone and the creator of *Ifá* divination along with sixteen of his disciples that is sought but not that of the *Ifá* diviners (Ofuasia *et al.* 2021). It is therefore no surprise that *Ifá* and *Ọ̀rúnmilà* both refer to the deity whereas the *Ifá* is used also for the system of divination (Abimbola 1976). This has been validated too by Bascom (1941) thus: “The word *Ifá* is used to mean both the system of divination and the deity who controls it; and this deity is known as *Ọ̀rúnmilà*.”

Jogo de Búzios, a divination technique popular among the Candomblé explores the use of shells (Neto *et al.* 2012). It is true that “the “*Jogo de Búzios*” is composed of 16 shells and only the priests can consult *Ifá* through these shells” (Neto *et al.* 2012, 4). In a related development, Bastide and Queiroz (2001), in their assessment of the Candomblé of Bahia, discover that that some priests utilized 32 shells for the same divination. Two things may be noticed at this juncture. First, *Jogo de Búzios* which is a version of *Ifá* practice in the Americas uses shells. Second, these shells may be as much as 32, something alien to *Ifá* as practiced in the homeland. The third point, which shows another place of radical departure, is that rather than seeking the insight of *Ọ̀rúnmilà*, as it obtains in the homeland, Voeks (1997) attests that *Jogo de Búzios* divination seeks the insight of *Èṣù*. Neto *et al.* (2012, 4) corroborates this outlook thus: “During divination via the *jogo de búzios*, *Exu* transmits the messages of the divinities to the *terreiro* priest or priestess (*pai/mãe de santo*) who in turn translates them for the client or adept.”

If Afro-Brazilian religions replace *Ọ̀rúnmilà* with *Èṣù* in their divination system and it works for them, this clearly explains how they have improved since arrival and practice in the Americas. It is also important to relay that *Èṣù*, being one of the primordial divinities in the Yorùbá pantheon has a variety of names among the various places that would later identify as Yorùbá centuries before he was “exported” to the Americas (Akande and Ofuasia 2021). In this connection, Teresa Washington (2013, 315) explains that:

The Yoruba call him Èṣù, Èḷẹgbára, Lanroye and Èḷẹgbà, but he has many names from different homes. To the Fon he is Legba; in African America, he is Papa Joe; in the Caribbean he is Papa Labas and Loa Legba; in Brazil he is Exu. He is the God of duality, multiplicity, duplicity, confusion, and evolution. Èḷẹgbà is one of the most significant divinities, and his origin texts, manifestations and contributions are innumerable.

It is noteworthy to know that the word Èṣù is a combination of a prefix ‘È’ (you) and a verb ‘ṣù’ (i.e. to harmonize or bring together). Hence, Èṣù may be seen as “one who brings people or issues together for harmonious existence” (Adekola 2013, 58).

Unfortunately, however, the personality of Èṣù among all the Yorùbá divinities has suffered the most. This is because Samuel Johnson (1921, 28), like Ajayi Crowther before him had surrendered that Èṣù passes as the Biblical Satan, the Evil One, the author of all evils. When one considers the personality of Èṣù rendered in *Odù Òturìpòn Mèjì*, his appellation as “He who belongs to opposing camps without shame,” underscored this conception.

There are interpretations that portray him as an entity that descended into Ilé-Ifẹ, present day Òṣún State in Nigeria, with the Odùs and served as the messenger among them (Epega 1904, 26-7). Another account reveals that he was born at Ilé-Ifẹ by Olòjà (Epega 1931, 21). There is no consensus regarding the origin of Èṣù. This is evident in one of his praise names:

King of Kétu land

Alákesi of Èmèrè

The mighty one of Mògún

Atúnwàṣe of Bíní land

Prosperous man on the throne

He who pleads for the oppressed (Adekola, 2013:59)

Whereas the foregoing hints that Èṣù is affiliated to Kétu (Benin Republic), Èmèrè (Kogi state), Mògún (Osun state) and Bíní (Edo state), it is interesting to note that he also enjoys worship in different cultures including Africans in Diaspora. An important point is that these perceptions of Èṣù have not received any tangible influence from Afro-Brazilian religions even when they have made a habit of adjusting Yorùbá religious beliefs to suit the needs of their locality. Another way through which this appropriation of Yorùbá in the Americas plays out is evident in sainthood.

Candomblé is one instance of the Afro-Brazilian religions that have been able to engage in the synchronisation of Yorùbá deities with Catholic saints. For instance, *Yemojá*, which in Candomblé and Portuguese is called Iamenjá

is depicted as “Our Lady of Navigators.” Dom Phillips (2015) expatiates on the place of *Yemojá* as a sea goddess or deity who receives flowers or champagnes from Afro-Brazilian worshippers on the eve of every New Year. Phillips (2015) adds that she is sometimes associated with the Virgin Mary. Another deity in the Yorùbá pantheon which has also received Catholic sainthood is *Ògún* who is usually associated with St. George in Rio de Janeiro, St. Antony in Bahia St. Peter in Cuba and St. Michael in Trinidad and Tobago (Barnes 1997). The agenda is not to give a full list of the entire Yorùbá pantheon with their equivalent saint names. The overriding agenda is that when these pantheons and the beliefs that gird them arrived in the Americas with African slaves, they were revised and adjusted to harmonise with the climes in which they found themselves.

Interestingly, this “shift” in paradigm which is redolent in Candomblé has not been applied to the homeland since the repatriation of slaves from Brazil and other parts of the Americas. Following from this and other instances and arguments employed in this session, Engler’s (2012, 22) claim that “... Yoruba traditions in Africa and the diaspora developed in a mutual influential dialogue” has no element of truth in it. Similarly, Law’s (1997, 205) assertion that “African ethnicities were subject to transformation through the process of displacement across the Atlantic; and conversely...new ethnic identities constructed in the diaspora could be fed back into the homeland through the repatriation of ex-slaves to Africa” is also circumspect since the repatriated slaves have not been able to influence the homeland with the religious exposures whilst in the Americas.

Conclusion

Having been able to establish the idea of “Yorùbá” and its centrality in the belief system and practices of Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions, it needs to be restated that indeed an Afro-essentialist reading of these Afro-Brazilian religious traditions is not fair. This is an important point which Engler (2012) emphasizes. These religions did not just take without any improvisation. The fact that they can tweak elements of divination, openly admit homosexuals and make some Yorùbá cults matriarchal as well as venerate the Yorùbá deities as saints after the Catholic order indicates why they are no longer Yorùbá strictly speaking even when their origin cannot be divorced from Yorùbá. The influence of Yorùbá over Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions has also been argued as one that is overriding. The Fon of Dahomey also have a Yorùbá background as the brief excursion of Yorùbá history has revealed. Since this holds, the influence of other ethnic groups such as the Bantou are not comparable with that of the Yorùbá. The similarities in the names

of the deities and ritual practices of homeland Yorùbá vis-à-vis Candomblé and other Afro-Brazilian religions in addition to the etymological and philological exercises in the preceding parts of this research are clear indications of the overriding Yorùbá influence. Hence, it is appropriate to conclude that Yorùbá serves as the origin of Candomblé and similar Afro-Brazilian traditions, but it does not essentialize them.

References

- Abimbola, W. *An Exposition of Ifá Literary Corpus*. Oxford University Press: Ibadan (1976).
- Adekola, O.A. “Èṣù Elegbara in Yorùbá Spiritual and Religious Discourse.” In *Èṣù: Yorùbá God, Power and Imaginative Frontiers*, edited by T. Falola. North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press (2013).
- Akande, M. A. and Ofuasia, E. “Èṣù and the Logic of ‘Èjì-Ò’gbèta’ in Traditional Yorùbá Thought System.” In *The Evil Personae in African and African Diaspora Religions*, edited by D. Oguntola-Laguda, 98-112. Lagos: Free Enterprise Publishers (2021).
- Allen, A.S. “Brides without husbands: Lesbians in the Afro-Brazilian religion Candomblé.” *Transforming Anthropology: Journal of the Association of Black Anthropologists* 20(1), (2012.) pp 17-31.
- Balogun, O.A. “A Philosophical Defence of Punishment in Traditional African Legal Culture: The Yoruba Example” *The Journal of Pan African Studies* 3 (3), (2009) 43-54.
- Barnes, S.T. ed. *Africa’s Ogun: Old World and New 2nd edition* Bloomington: Indiana University Press (1997).
- Bascom, W. R. “Ifá Divination: Comment on the Paper by J.D. Clarke.” *JAI*. XLI (1941).
- Bashir, O.A. “Amaro (Brazilian returnees) and Cultural Diffusion in Lagos: A Study of Lagos-Pacific Cultural Relations.” Official Conference Proceedings of The European Conference on Arts & Humanities (2018).
- Bastide, R. and Queiroz, M.I.P. *O candomblé da Bahia: rito nagô Companhia da Letras*, São Paulo: Brazil.
- Calvocoressi, D. and David, N. 1979. “A New Survey of Radiocarbon and Thermoluminescence dates for West Africa.” *Journal of African History* (2001).
- Capone, S. *Searching for Africa in Brazil: Power and Tradition in Candomblé*. London: Duke University Press (2010).
- Dasaolu, B.O. & Ofuasia, E. “On the Origin, Migration and Identity of the Yorùbá People.” In *Yoruba Nation and Politics since the Nineteenth*

- Century: Essays in Honour of Professor J.A. Atanda*, edited by T. Falola & D. Olubomehin, 261-273. Austin, Texas: Pan African University Press (2020).
- Dixon-Fyle, M. *A saro community in the Niger-Delta, 1912-1984: The Potts-Johnsons and their Heirs*. New York: University of Rochester Press (1999).
- Eglash, R. *African fractals: Modern computing and indigenous design*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press (1999).
- Engler, S. "Umbanda and Africa." *Nova Religion: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* (2012) 15(4), 13-35.
- Epega, D.O. *The Mystery of Yoruba Gods*. Ode Remo: Imole Oluwa Institute (1931).
- Epega, D.O. *The Basis of Yoruba Religion*. Lagos: Ijamido Press (1904).
- Falola, T. *The Falola Reader on African Culture, Nationalism Development and Epistemologies*. Texas: Pan African University Press (2018).
- Faluyi, K. "Migrants and the Economic Development of Lagos from the Earliest times to 1800." *Lagos Historical Review* 1, 68-83 (2001).
- Hall, G.M. "African Ethnicities and the meaning of "Mina." In *Trans-Atlantic Dimensions of Ethnicity in the African Diaspora*, edited by P.E. Lovejoy and D.R. Trotman, 65-81. London: Continuum Books (2003).
- Isichei, E. *A History of Nigeria*. New York: Longman (1983).
- Johnson, P.C. *Secrets, Gossip and Gods: The Transformation of Brazilian Candomblé* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press (2002).
- Johnson, S. *The History of the Yorubas*. Lagos: CMS Books (1921).
- Jones, C.M. and Trost, T.L. *Teaching African American Religions* New York: Oxford University Press (2005).
- Laitin, D. *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1986).
- Landes, R. *City of Women*. New York: Macmillan (1947).
- Law, R. "Ethnicity and the Slave Trade: 'Lucumi' and 'Nago' as Ethnonyms in West Africa." *History in Africa* 24, 205-219 (1997).
- Matory, J. L. *Black Atlantic Religion: Tradition, Transnationalism and Matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press (2005).
- Murphy, J.M. "Yoruba Religions in Diaspora." *Religion Compass* 4(7), 398-410 (2010).
- Neto, N.A.L., Voeks, R.A. Dias, T.L.P and Alves, R.R.N "Mollusks of Candomblé: Symbolic and ritualistic importance." *Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine* 8(10), 1-10 (2012).
- Ofuasia, E., Oladipupo, S.L. and Akomolafe, M.A. "'Is it Possible to do Post-modern Philosophy Unbeknownst?": On Sophie Oluwole's and Maulana

- Karenga's "Deconstruction" of the Ifa Literary Corpus." *Philosophy Africana* 20(2): 83-106 (2021).
- Ofuasia, E. "Ifá Divination as an Exercise in Deconstructionism." *South African Journal of Philosophy* 38(3), 330–345 (2019). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02580136.2019.1656961>
- Olojede, F. The Exodus and Identity Formation in View of the Yoruba Origin and Migration Narratives. *Scriptura*. 108, 342-356 (2011).
- Phillips, D. "What do some Afro-Brazilian religions actually believe?" *The Washington Post* (2015)<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/world-views/wp/2015/02/06/what-do-afro-brazilian-religions-actually-believe/> (Last accessed October 17, 2022).
- Reis, J.J and Mamigonian, B.G "Nagô and Mina: The Yoruba Diaspora in Brazil." In *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, edited by T. Falola and M.D. Childs, 77-110. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press (2004).
- Selka, S. "Meditated Authenticity: Tradition, Modernity and Postmodernity in Brazilian Candomblé." *Nova Religion: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Traditions* 11(1), 12-23(2007).
- Washington, T.N. "The Penis, The Pen, and the Praise: Èṣù, the Seminal Force in African American Life, Literature and Lyrics." In *Èṣù: Yoruba God, Power and Imaginative Frontiers*, edited by T. Falola, 315-348. North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press (2013).
- Willet, F. "A Survey of Recent Results in the Radiocarbon Chronology of Western and Northern Africa." *Journal of African History*. 12 (1971).
- van de Port, M. *Ecstatic Encounters: Bahian Candomblé and the Quest for the Really Real* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press (2011).
- Vlach, J.M. "The Brazilian House in Nigeria: The Emergence of a 20th Century Vernacular House Type." *The Journal of American Folklore* 97(383), 1-15 (1984).
- Voeks, R.A. *Sacred leaves of Candomblé: African magic, medicine, and religion in Brazil*. Austin: University of Texas Press (1997).

A Literary Study of Tópé Àlàbí's *Lógán Tí Ó Dé*

Taiwo Opeyemi Akinduti
Department of Yoruba.
Osun State University, Nigeria.
taiwo.akinduti@uniosun.edu.ng

&

Anu Oluwakemi Wale-Ọlaitan
School of Liberal Arts and Social Science
African University College of Communications
Accra, Ghana.
kwale-olaitan@ucc.edu.gh

Abstract

Tópé Àlàbí is a renowned Yorùbá artiste, whose gospel music is widely recognized within and outside of Nigeria. In one of her titles, *Lógán tí Ó Dé*, she makes it explicit that barrenness goes beyond biological classification. In Àlàbí's opinion, any void in human's life means barrenness. The lyrics reveal that the significance of barrenness is associated, not only with childlessness, but also with individuals who are unable to keep pace with their equals in the world of achievement. By using Schleiermacher's hermeneutics, this essay explored how Tópé Àlàbí's *Lógán tí Ó Dé* deconstructs the import of barrenness, reveals people's attitude towards the barren and indicates the effects of people's view of the barren. In addition to listening to, and transcribing Tópé Àlàbí's *Lógán tí Ó Dé*, oral interviews were conducted with twelve selected individuals. The study concludes that metaphoric expressions in music could help project a people's understanding of their socio-cultural environment.

Keywords: *Lógán Tí Ó Dé*, sociocultural, barrenness, gospel music, Yorùbá belief system.

Introduction

Music is a natural gift that enables an individual to give expression to his/her emotions in his or her own way. Holistically, “music can provide interpretive framework that allows one to generate inferences” (Boltz, 2004:1196). The inferences that are drawn from music could create a lasting impression, by which attitudes are influenced. Music, as an oral genre conveys multiform interpretations to listeners. Such can be found in Tope Alabi’s kind of music. Her category of music is what is commonly regarded as gospel music. Ojo (1998) sees gospel music as a distinct kind of music composed and rendered by men and women who call themselves Christians, and to their music as ministration of the Good News in songs. Ojo’s (1998) observation makes it obvious that men and women who regard themselves as embracing the Christian faith are the singers of gospel music. Since religion adherents in the world of Islam also compose and render music that express their beliefs, it is imperative to distinguish that Tópé Àlábí’s *Lógán tí Ó dé* is a Christian Gospel Music. Music, depending on a listener’s taste is so awesome that it can speak straight to the heart. It is endowed with the potency to move its listeners to excitement, it can as well reduce them to tears (be it tears of joy or sorrowful tears). The rationale behind our submission is that humans’ emotions are involved when music is being played. Practically the full range of an individual’s emotions finds music appealing and soothing. Little wonder Layade (2018) remarks that “musical art is a profession assume not only because of pressure of impoverishment and the need to survive, but also because they find great delight in music as an aspect of oral poetry and cultural identity.” Okafor (2005:1) explains that music should be culturally expressed, determined, interpreted, and addressed or colored by the culture and the cultural environment of the people. From Okafor’s (2005:1) explanation, we deduce that a people’s music and cultural environment should be able to complement each other. That is, a society’s music is expected to influence its customs and vice versa. In other words, it connotes that there should be an interconnection between music and the people’s cultural environment. Sunday-Kanu (2017:96) posit:

New direction in every facet of life is inevitable in this ever-changing world. Over time, so many aspects of human lives have undergone and evolved various evolutions as a result of change. These changes are very reflective in the cultural, social, economic, and religious life of human society. Music as an aspect of culture evolves as the experience and culture of the people changes [sic].

The position of Sunday-Kanu (2017) indicates that the belief system of a people is usually affected by the passage of time. Music is a genre that swiftly expresses the change in people's view of utterances, attitudes and even body languages as necessitated by daily events and further understanding. Tópé Àlàbí's *Lógán tí Ó dé* makes this submission quite explicit, as the analysis of her song will show. Nettl (1983:237) quotes Merriam (1967a:3) thus:

All people, no matter what culture, must be able to place their music firmly in the context of the totality of their beliefs, experience and activities, for without such ties, music cannot exist.

Merriam's (1967a:3) observation, as indicated by Nettl (1983:237) points out that music must be well situated within the context of cultural experience and societal affairs. Earlier, Merriam (1964:28) expounded that music is inter-related with the rest of culture. According to him, music "can and does shape, strengthen and channel social, political, economic, linguistics, religions and other kinds of behavior." Sunday-Kanu (2017:96) asserts that "music of any age or time is meant for the people of that generation and must be meaningful to the people of the time." This study's analysis of Tópé Àlàbí's *Lógán tí Ó dé* will confirm the veracity of the above assertion.

Theoretical Framework

The study applies Friedrich Schleiermacher's modern hermeneutics to analyse the diverse meaning of barrenness implied in Tópé Àlàbí's *Lógán tí Ó Dé*. Findings establish that the origin of the Greek verb *hermeneuein*, meaning to interpret, from which hermeneutics is derived is not really known. Even though it is not a religious term in the actual sense, hermeneutics has forged an essential connection with religion. Originally, hermeneutics was used in the interpretation of biblical texts, with time though its application came to cut across literary, philosophical, and psychological texts among others. This theory has been identified "as theoretical reflection on the principles and rules of interpretation and understanding." Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was credited with being the founder of modern hermeneutics. He was seen as a major figure in the early Romantic Movement. Schleiermacher is of the opinion that the nature of the understanding by which a text is read and interpreted should be concentrated upon, rather than the nature of a particular text, this is what he regards as 'art of understanding'.

Schleiermacher's hermeneutical 'art of understanding' has a bipolar structure. Here, a grammatical (objective) dimension is distinguished from a psychological or technical (subjective) aspect in the art of understanding. Using a

grammatical (objective) aspect requires that the interpreter be grounded in the linguistic and cultural modes of expression in which the author lived, while the psychological or technical dimension requires the interpreter to comprehend the unique subjectivity of the author as expressed through the unified whole of the work. This latter task favors what Schleiermacher calls 'divination'. By 'divination', he means the ability of an interpreter to accurately decipher what is on the mind of the author. Schleiermacher's ideas are said to have immense influence on the development of hermeneutics. - (Green, 2005). In this study, we will adopt the grammatical (objective) dimension that requires an interpreter of a text to possess a great deal of knowledge in the cultural modes of expression that the author finds him/herself.

The examination of the work also warrants a critical exploration from a feminist perspective, considering the inherent gender-specific nature of the primary issue. However, there are several arguments challenging the barrenness as detrimental to marriage since the contemporary feminist praxis frowns at the assessment of female worth by their success or otherwise in the realm of motherhood.

Historically, the discourse surrounding motherhood has been a subject of intense debate among feminists, originating with early feminists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Shulamith Firestone, Kate Millett, and Betty Friedan. These notable women from the first and early second waves of feminism have highlighted "a strong link between women's oppression and women's naturalized position as mothers" (UC e-books collection, 5).

A critical analysis of Simone de Beauvoir's seminal work, "The Second Sex," by Gerda Neyer and Laura Bernardi (2011), highlights Beauvoir's assertion that the attribution of concrete equality to women through maternity is fraudulent. Beauvoir contends that motherhood, is a defining characteristic that relegates women to the status of "others" and confines them to immanence (Neyer and Bernardi, 2011, 5). This perspective becomes particularly pronounced in the historical context where women's individual successes are intrinsically tied to their ability to fulfill their natural responsibility and the societal expectation of motherhood.

Contrary to this narrative, some feminists argue against the conventional notion of motherhood, particularly in contemporary times especially in the light of advancements in Assisted Reproductive Technology, which has created social motherhood as against natural or biological motherhood. Neyer and Bernardi (2011) observe that feminists reject the assumption of motherhood as an innate quality in women, they advocate for a clear distinction between biological and social aspects of motherhood. They conclude that "the social perceptions of motherhood are constructed so as to allow the exploitation of women as bearers of children and as rearers of children" (6).

Consequently, these different perspectives suggest that barrenness, from the feminist standpoint, may not be perceived as a significant issue, as it relieves women from the contested “natural responsibility” constructed by society for the exploitation of women. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that this perspective may not be universally applicable as the implications of barrenness in an African traditional society differ markedly from the Western-centric feminist lens and theoretical frameworks. In navigating these complexities, it is imperative to recognize the limitations of applying a singular feminist perspective to diverse cultural contexts.

General Survey of *Lógán tí Ó Dé*

In Christians' Bible, barrenness is used in reference to men and women, land, livestock, and lack of godly qualities.¹ In the same vein, the Qur'an features the issue of barrenness in men and women; it also calls a disastrous day barren.² In Ifá literary corpus, specific mentions are made of the dilemma of those that are contending with barrenness. These are Ọṣun,³ Olúódi,⁴ Ọlójà kan-òkìtì-ẹfọn⁵ among others. The resolute step each took to break free from barrenness is also indicated.⁶ The lyrics of *Lógán tí Ó dé* pinpoints barrenness in various phases to corroborate the existing views.

Lógán tí Ó Dé is split into 15 stanzas. In stanza 1, the singer, though using a first-person singular pronoun, represents the musing and consciousness of certain individuals, who are invariably found wanting in certain sphere of human endeavors, because of their lot in life. Stanza 2 appraises divine intervention and the attendant relief:

*Èmi mọ ohun ojú mi ti rí,
Mo mọ ohun etí mi ti gbọ
Èmi mọ ohun ojú mi ti rí,
Mo mọ ohun etí mi ti gbọ
Lógán tó gbọ iró ayọ rẹ ò Olùgbàlà,
Ayé mi létò
Lógán tó gbọ iró ayọ rẹ ò Olùgbàlà,
Ayé mi létò*

1 See Exodus 23:26; Deuteronomy 7:14; 2 Peter 1: 5-8.

2 See Súrah 3:38-40; 19:5, 8; 22:55; 51:29.

3 Ọṣun- Yoruba Goddess of water, fertility, purity, sensuality, beauty, love and abundance

4 Olúódi- a barren female character in the tale narrated by an Ifa Priest

5 Ọlójà kan-òkìtì-ẹfọn- a barren female character in the tale narrated to a client by an Ifa Priest

6 The Ifa verses that contain the resolute steps taken by barren female characters, as required by Ifa are: Ọyẹkútúá; Ìrosungúdá; Ọbàràrẹtẹ; Ogbèwèyìnwò.

(I well know what my eyes have seen,
 I know what my ears have heard
 I know what my eyes have seen
 I know what my ears have heard
 At the instant of hearing your sound of joy, oh Savior,
 My life became settled
 At the instant of hearing your sound of joy, oh Savior,
 My life became settled)

Stanza 3 reveals the singer's awareness of hurtful remarks and name-calling from the world around her. In stanza 4, the singer counts on the prompt deliverance from her Savior (as if it had already occurred) for the betterment of her lot in life:

*Mo mọ ohun ayé mà ti wí,
 Mo mọ ohun èyàn mà ti sọ
 Wọ̀n ti pè wá ní àgàn rí,
 Bóyá wọ̀n ti pè ẹ̀ lólòṣì rí*

*Ṣùgbọ̀n lógán tó dé o, Olùgbàlà
 Layé mi létò
 Ṣùgbọ̀n lógán tó dé o, Olùgbàlà
 Ayé ẹ̀ létò*

(I am aware of what people have said,
 I am aware of what humans have commented,
 They have tagged us barren at some point,
 Perhaps they have called you wretched at some point

But at the instant of my savior's intervention,
 My life became settled
 But at the instant of my savior's intervention,
 Your life became settled)

Stanza 5 further establishes what is hinted at, in stanza 3. Here, the singer describes a life of discomfort, a life that is devoid of success, as being in disarray. She points out how such an unpleasant condition does attract and give room to name-calling (insulting names) and cruel remarks from fellow humans. In the same stanza, the chorus, *Lógán tí Ó dé* evinces a steady build-up of suspense:

Ayé tó ti dàrú tẹ̀lẹ̀tẹ̀lẹ̀ o, lógán tí Ó dé
Òrọ̀ tí ènìyàn ti fi sàlùfàní rẹ̀,
Lógán tí Ó dé
Òrọ̀ tí kò dára tí a ti sọ sí ọ
Lógán tí Ó dé
Orúkọ̀ tí kì n ẹ̀ tìrẹ̀ ta ti pè ọ,
Lógán tí Ó dé

(A life that was formerly miserable,
 At the instant of His coming
 People's disgusting expressions
 At the instant of his coming,
 Stabbing words that have been said against you
 At the instant of His coming
 Abusive names that people have given you
 At the instant of His coming)

Stanza 6 breaks the suspense and hit the nail on the head, indicating unequivocally that the Savior's action brings about a settled life:

Àní lógán tí Ó dé o, Olùgbàlà,
Ayé ẹ̀ létò
Lógán tí Jésù dé o, Olùgbàlà
Láye ẹ̀ létò

(Surely at the instant of the Lord's coming,
 Your life became settled.
 At the instant of Jesus, the savior's coming
 Your life became settled)

Stanzas 7-9 make it more specific that if an individual lag behind in terms of material, marital and other achievements, his/her ears must be prepared to listen to unpalatable utterances that spell out his/her barren status. Be that as it may, the singer keeps expressing hope by her repetition of *Lógán tí Ó dé* (At the instant of his arrival) and the abrupt positive turn around by virtue of the Savior's arrival:

Kò sórúkọ̀ táyẹ̀ ò lẹ̀ peni
Wọ̀n a máa peni lagan lònà gbogbo
Bó ò bá lówó lẹ̀wọ̀ àgàn ni,
Bó ò bá bímọ̀ o, àgàn ni

Bó ò bá tẹgbẹ̀ kò dàgbà àgàn ló jẹ́

*Ṣùgbón lógán tí Ó dé,
Sọ pé lógán tí Ó dé*

*Àní lógán tí Ó dé, lẹ̀sẹ̀kẹ̀sẹ̀
Lógán tí Ó dé,
Ààà, lógán tí Ó dé o Olùgbàlà,
Layé ẹ̀ létò*

(People could call you diverse names
In many ways, one will be tagged barren
If you are unwealthy, you are barren
If you are childless, you are barren
If you have little achievement and lag behind, you are barren

But at the instant of His coming,
Say at the instant of His coming

Surely, at the instant of His coming, immediately!
At the instant of His coming
Ahah! at the instant of His coming, oh Savior,
Your life was settled
At the instant of His coming, oh Savior,
Your life became settled)

In stanzas 10 and 11, Tópé Àlàbí stresses that the instant arrival of the deliverer does transform all the offensive names that the 'have-nots' have had to contend with, for a time, to pleasant names:

*Instantly ló n jẹ́ bẹ̀ẹ̀,
Bó ẹ̀ n dé báyìí,
Wọ̀n dẹ̀ yí orúkọ padà
Lógán tí Ó dé, é e è
Lógán tí Ó dé
Ènì tá a pè lágàn
È máa sọ wí pé
Lógán tí Ó dé
Àwọ̀n tá ti forúkọ aburú pè nílẹ̀ wọ̀nyí
Lógán tí Ó dé*

Àní lógán tí Ó dé o Olùgbàlà,
Layé ẹ létò
Lógán tí Ó dé o Olùgbàlà,
Layé mi létò
Àní éé, lógán tí Ó dé o Olùgbàlà,
Layé mi létò
Àní lógán tí Ó dé o aṣẹdà,
Layé mi létò

(That is to say instantly,
 As soon as He arrives
 Appellations change
 At the instant of His coming, for real
 At the instant of His coming
 The so-called barren
 Keep saying
 As soon as He arrives
 Those that have been called bad names all around
 At the instant of His coming

Surely at the instant of the Lord's coming
 Your life was settled
 At the instant of the Lord's coming
 My life is settled
 Surely at the instant of the creator's coming
 Your life became settled)

Stanza 12 evinces other endearing titles of the deliverer. These are *Ọlọrun*,⁷ *Ìràwọ̀ Ọ̀wúró*⁸ and *Alágbára*.⁹ Tópé Àlàbí accentuates that her deliverance from barrenness was made possible by the intervention of God. According to her, God's remembering her for good makes it possible for her to give grand testimonies:

Àní lógán tí Ó dé ọ̀, Ọlọrun ọ̀,
Layé mi létò
Ìràwọ̀ ọ̀wúró ọ̀mọ Mary yọ sínú ọ̀rọ̀ mi
Layé mi létò

7 In the Yoruba belief system, *Ọlọrun* means He who owns the heaven. The English version of the term is God.

8 *Ìràwọ̀ Ọ̀wúró*- Yoruba version of the biblical term that means Morning Star.

9 In Yoruba language, *Alágbára* means Mighty One.

Ah, alágbára ní Shiloh ló bá rántí mi sí rere
Layé mi létò
Ènu mi wá kún fún èrì ò gbogbo
Layé mi létò

(Surely, at the instant of God's coming
 Your life became settled
 Morning star, Mary's son intervenes in my manner
 My life became settled
 My mouth is full of testimonies
 My life became settled)

Àlàbí expands that the great change that overtakes her life remains the result of the timely arrival and thoughtful action of her deliverer. She indicates that the positive change in her life constitutes a shock to her foes as s/he watches her in disbelief. She reiterates with passion that her overcoming of her barrenness is truly due to the instant arrival of the deliverer (stanza 13-14):

Ayé mi gba iyípadà òtun ò lógán tí ó dé
Layé mi létò
Ayé mi bá létò lètá bá n wo iran mi
Layé mi létò
Ayé mi létò lètá bá wo iran mi,
Layé mi létò
Òtá káwọ̀ rọ̀, ènu wọ̀n gbẹ̀ tán lóri ojú kan
Layé mi létò

Eè, lógán tí Ó dé ò Olùgbàlà,
Layé mi létò

She heartily expresses her gratitude to Jesus whom she repeatedly addresses as Olùgbàlà¹⁰ in previous stanzas for who he is – The Deliverer from the awful state of barrenness (stanza 15):

Thank you, Lord Jesus for all that you are

Àlàbí's expression, "for all that you are" could be interpreted to mean that if Jesus chooses not to be who he is, escape from the grips of barrenness could either have been a challenge, or outright impossibility.

10 Olùgbàlà is a Yoruba word for Savior.

The Metaphor of Barrenness in Tópé Àlàbí's *Lógán tí Ó Dé*

As earlier mentioned, *Lógán tí Ó Dé* (At the Instant of His Arrival) is made up of fifteen stanzas. Salient points are going to be generated from all of them. However, the main focus of this study is on stanza 3, where the word *àgàn*¹¹ makes its first appearance; stanza 7, where the import of barrenness is enumerated and stanza 10, where those who are labelled barren are urged to remain hopeful. Whatever is relevant in other stanzas will be discussed under the three identified stanzas.

The word 'barren' is not unfamiliar to the human family. Across the 3 major religious groups in Nigeria – Traditional Religion, Islam and Christianity, 'barren' is a commonly used word. In the Bible, the first mention of 'barren' was made in connection with Sarah, the wife of the famous Patriarch, Abraham.¹² The reason Sarah was called was made clear in the aforementioned text thus: "she had no child." Like first century Christians and modern-day Christians, pre-Christian servants of God believe that faith is a prerequisite to gaining God's favor. So, if Sarai desired to win the battle against her prolonged barrenness (up to age 90), she must believe in God's ability to solve the problem.¹³ When the prophecy concerning her giving birth was made by an angel, Sarai laughed in disbelief,¹⁴ but she was corrected,¹⁵ because she needed to exercise faith, if she must become a mother, and this in spite of her old age. Genesis 21:2 relates that "Sarah became pregnant and then bore a son to Abraham in his old age". The Qur'an attests to references to women with no child as being barren.¹⁶ For instance, Anabi Zakariya spoke of his wife as being barren.¹⁷ For possible solution, Zakariya besought Allah thus: "My Lord! Bestow upon me of Thy bounty goodly offspring."¹⁸ The statement that follows this clearly shows that he exercised faith in Allah's ability to grant his request: "Lo! Thou art the Hearer of Prayer."¹⁹ His faith pays off as it is said to him by

11 *Àgàn*- This Yoruba term could mean infertile/infertility, desolate/desolation, sterile/sterility, lack, want, fruitlessness etc.

12 See Genesis 16:1

13 See Genesis 18:10-15

14 Verse 12

15 Verse 14

16 See Súrah 3:38-40; 19:5,8; 51:29.

17 See Súrah 3:38-40

18 Verse 38

19 Ibid.

an angel: “So it will be. Allah doeth what He will.”²⁰ In the Ifa corpus known as *Ọyẹ̀kútúá*,²¹ the following verses were extracted:

Rògbòkú awo Ọ̀ṣun
Ló dífá fỌ̀ṣun
Ọ̀ṣun ní ñ fomi ojú sògbéré ọmọ
 (Rògbòkú, the Ifá priest of Ọ̀ṣun
 Performed divination for Ọ̀ṣun
 Ọ̀ṣun is mourning her inability.
 (barrenness) to produce children)

Ọ̀ṣun²² was one of those deities that descended from heaven to earth to fulfill the responsibilities that each of them was saddled with, by Olódùmarè.²³ Her major challenge was barrenness, her inability to have an issue, which according to the above extract, was a source of great sorrow for her. She struggles to free herself from the awful state by taking a certain step as shown in the extract below:

Wón ni kó rúbọ, kó lè bímọ...
Ó sì rúbọ,
Ọ̀ṣun sì bímọ lópòlópò
 (She was asked to perform a sacrifice, that she may birth...
 She performed the sacrifice,
 Hence, Ọ̀ṣun mothers several children.)

The examples above lend support to the belief that barrenness cannot be done away with by mere wishful thinking or baseless conviction. They show that the war against barrenness could be overcome, if only appropriate steps are taken. Taking steps, according to this study's analysis of *Lógán tí Ó Dé* and the examples given above, often yields positive results. Tópé Àlàbí is of the opinion that divine intervention is necessary if one must be rescued from the bondage of barrenness.

20 Verse 40

21 *Ọyẹ̀kútúá* was recited by Oladiran Matthew Ademola, PhD, an Ifa Priest with three chieftaincy titles in Ogbomosho, one of the ancient towns in Oyo state, Southwest, Nigeria.

22 A female primordial Deity in the Yoruba belief system.

23 Olódùmarè refers to the Supreme Deity in the Yoruba Pantheon.

Barrenness: Lack of Societal Recognition and Acceptance (Social Poverty)

Poverty differs in scopes and dimensions (Yusuff 2018:207). As a phenomenon, it is not only multidimensional, but has different manifestations. As such, it can be defined from the economic and social angles (Akanke 2018:5-6). Thus, poverty indicates “a reduced (or complete lack of) access to material, economic, social, political or cultural resources (Phillip and Rayhan 2004:7). In stanza 3 line 3 of *Lógán tí Ó dé*, Tópé Àlàbí sings: “*wón ti pè wá ní àgàn rí*” (they have tagged us barren in times past). Since Tópé Àlàbí employs “us” a first-person plural pronoun, it is obvious that she is making reference to herself as well as others. Other people in question are members of her band. Thus, she has in mind a time, when she and her band were struggling to gain publicity. We are able to listen to the musician’s testimony on her experiences during the period of challenges, in stanzas 1 and 3, as shown in the extract below:

... *ojú mi ti rí*
 ... *etí mi ti gbó*
 ... *ayé mà ti wí*
 ... *èyàn mà ti sọ*
 ... my eyes have seen
 ... my ears have heard
 ... the world has commented
 ... humankind has spoken

The Yorùbá for the most part, do express themselves in this manner: “my eyes have seen,” “my ears have heard” to relate an unpleasant condition or a traumatic experience that they have gone through. Besides, those expressions are meant to describe people’s indifferent and unconcerned attitude to the plight of others. Simply put, the expressions describe the plight of people of all ages who may be battling with bitter remarks and unfair attitude from others, on account of their inability to make it in life.

Geremek (1994:4) remarks that “the gravest effect of poverty is the degradation of human dignity associated with it.” Tópé Àlàbí makes it quite clear that negative reactions towards the poor are always felt by them. Her feelings of disapproval and sometimes, outright rejection are expressed in the words “*Èmi mọ/Mo mọ*” (I well know/I know). The musician’s use of “*Èmi mọ*” (I well know) sounds emphatic. It indicates that her bitter experience and the lashing words that are deafening to her ears, even though unpalatable, are quite memorable.

The aftereffect of unkind behaviors and unwholesome remarks about the barren is shown to be highly appalling in stanza 5. Those cruel attitudes are specifically shown to be disgusting talks, painful utterances and name-calling. Tòpẹ̀ Àlàbí expresses the effect of apathy and insulting words on her life and by extension, on the life of those that the world around them have seen as failures, on account of their being barren: “*Ayé tó ti dàrú*” (A life that had been in disarray).

“*Ayé tó ti dàrú*” (A life that had been in disarray) is found in line 1 of the 5th stanza. There is no gainsaying that “*ayé tó ti dàrú*” strongly portrays the bitter feelings of an individual who is already down, but is still being beaten. It is obvious that “society has become accustomed to look down upon the poor with disdain.” Little wonder, a definition by the UN has it that “poverty is a violation of human dignity.”

Barrenness: Material Poverty, Childlessness, Setbacks and Failure

A popular Yorùbá adage vividly illustrates the dealings of most people with the economically barren thus: *Òsì ní ñ jẹ ta ní mò ó rí? Owó ní ñ jẹ mo bá ó tan.*²⁴ This saying evinces the helplessness of the poor. Just as it has earlier been indicated by Akande that “poverty has different manifestations,” the poor in this stance do not only mean those who are materially empty, rather it encompasses all those that are unable to achieve what their peers are achieving or better still, have achieved. In the same vein, the latter part of the proverb, *owó ní ñ jẹ mo bá ó tan,*²⁵ does not only refer to the wealthy class, rather it embraces all those who are viewed as achievers. That is, those who have successfully ascended the diverse ladders of success, as it were. Tòpẹ̀ Alabi expresses how badly she fared, while she found herself within the clutches of material poverty, at a particular point in her life. According to her, the situation was so bad that she could not afford to adorn herself with expensive jewelries. Since people hardly pay attention to the materially impoverished, the musician received little or no assistance from people who could afford to offer help. Thus, she made do with what she could afford. For instance, even though, she desired to appear in gorgeous outfit, she did put on modest dress, with an insignificant pair of earrings or no earrings at all.

In an ideal situation, it is the materially ‘barren’, people who lag behind in life, not because they are indolent, but because they have been unfortunate,

24 Nobody claims relationships with the poor; everyone claims to be related to the rich. (The translation of this Yoruba proverb to English is done by one of the authors of this article).

25 Meaning, everyone claims to be related to the rich.

having experienced disappointments, or being victims of natural disaster, and/or economic crisis, that should be rallied around. About the less privileged people, Adesoji (2020:152) remarks, “their lowly status notwithstanding, they are humans who should be treated with some modicum of respect, on the basis of their humanity.” Should friends and families empathize with the ‘barren’, show them affection, and make them feel loved and cared for, such manifestation of genuine concern will definitely serve to prevent feelings of worthlessness that can result to depression, and in extreme cases, suicide. In stanza 7, Tópé Àlàbí states point-blank that if a person achieves little or nothing, and is generally perceived to lag behind his peers; such a person may be tagged ‘barren.’ In line 1 of this stanza, Àlàbí sings:

Kò sórúko táyé ò lè peni
Wón a máa peni lagan lónà gbogbo
 (People could call one all sorts of names
 In many ways, one will be tagged barren)

The above extract reveals that people, who are generally unsuccessful, can be described as barren, and individuals are called barren “in many ways.” By “many ways,” Àlàbí implies that such statements can be put forward in many ways, through thoughts and actions.

More often than not, women who have endured several years of childlessness in their marriage contend with unfair treatment from their in-laws. Women in this category are especially pained when the love that exists between them and their spouses, starts dying out simply because of their inability to bear children. A childless woman become more conscious of this awful marital challenge especially when another woman protests against the “recurring errands” that her child is being made to run for the barren woman, either directly or through her action.

Abrupt layoffs from jobs can also reduce an individual to the status of the barren. A married man who is traditionally regarded as the breadwinner of the family could find the shock of sudden loss of job more cutting, when his once loving wife starts despising him. The consequential effects of a breadwinner losing his livelihood are loss of self-esteem, aggression, and resignation. Worse still, after sympathizing for a while, most friends do keep their distance from a man that has lost his livelihood, lest he and his family become a liability on them. As humans with emotions, withdrawal by friends could be very devastating, adding salt to the injury.

Another instance is that of a teenager who is struggling to pass an examination, for instance, Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME).²⁶ S/he may sincerely put in his or her best in preparation for the examination. Despite best efforts, s/he might keep performing below expectation. In most cases, the most painful aspect is when a student is one or two marks below the cut-off marks. When matters turn out this way, only a few parents tend to exhibit some understanding and keep encouraging their ward. Parents who toil to raise fund for purchasing a form and enrolling their child in an expensive coaching center to get him/her well prepared for the examination may unconsciously utter words that increase the bitterness of the child who may already be battling with feelings of worthlessness. The situation may be further complicated when close friends who have already been admitted into tertiary institution distance themselves from him/her.

Tópé Àlàbí's music makes it emphatic that one's failure to keep pace with his/her equals in the world of achievement or even outpace them portends by all standards that the individual is barren. By the time people feel unloved and rejected, be it verbally or by action, their psyche becomes affected. They tend to view life itself as unfavorable to them. Little wonder, the number of young people committing suicide is skyrocketing. Virtually, everyday news features the pathetic stories of young people taking their lives. Youths who do not want to experience the bitter treatment experienced by the barren, take to committing cybercrime, that they may get rich overnight and rescue themselves and their families from the clutch of poverty that paint them barren, all over.

If a young man hails from a lowly background (a poor and unpopular family), the rich may vow that should their daughter choose him as her future spouse, that will be over their dead body, no matter how highly educated the intending husband is. Disappointingly, the fiancée's parents would be so passionate about their stand that one cannot but wonder if poverty is contagious or irreversible. After much fruitless persuasion from the lady, she and her lover may decide to elope. There have been cases of ladies who threaten to take their lives if their parents determinedly refuse to give their consent. There have also been cases of ladies who resort to outright self-murder. Cases of those who abandon true love on account of parents' disapproval is not uncommon. Certain ladies in this category do eventually fall into the wrong hands and become caught up in a loveless marriage. If such a union that is forged based on high socioeconomic status does not end in divorce, it may result in one of the spouses killing the other. What is the genesis? The parents' view of the man that their daughter truly loves as being 'barren', on account of his

26 An examination conducted for entry into all Colleges of Education, Polytechnics and Universities in Nigeria.

humble background and their resultant rejection of him. All the aforementioned scenarios interpret the part of the song that goes thus:

*Bó ò bá lówó lówó àgàn ni,
Bó ò ba bímọ o, àgàn ni,
Bó ò ba tégbẹ, ko dàgbà àgàn ló jé*

(If you are not wealthy, you are barren
If you are childless, you are barren
If you have little achievement and
Lag behind, you are barren)

So, to escape from all the unpleasant situations that typify barrenness, the barren, in certain cases, may try out illegitimate means to escape barrenness. However, in her song, Tópé Àlàbí makes it explicit that the despicable condition of barrenness is not beyond redemption, as this will be discussed in the next sub-heading.

Fruitfulness: The Positive Outcome of Divine Intervention

Throughout her music, Tópé Àlàbí repeatedly stresses that there is no 'barrenness' that cannot be solved by God. She points out that divine deliverance is always on point, and at the appropriate time. She makes it clear that God's involvement in solving the plight of the barren will surely result in the desirable condition. In stanza 13, she calls it '*iyípadà ọ̀tun*' 'new transformation'.

Tópé Àlàbí explains that transformation from the state of barrenness means change of designation. Those who have been made to feel that there exists a void (barrenness) in their life, either on the basis of material poverty, childlessness or backwardness, but who, on account of God's mercy have wriggled free, will now be treated honorably. This joyous transition from want to abundance according to Àlàbí, will be so shocking to the scoffers that they would become speechless:

*Ayé mi létò, lẹ́tá bá wo iran mi . . .
Ọ́tá káwọ̀ rọ̀, ẹnu wọ̀n gbẹ́ tán lórí ojú kan . . .*

{My life becomes so settled that the enemy watches me . . .
with bended hands and dry mouth, s/he adopts a perplexed stance}.

Lógán tí Ó Dé encourages all those who are struggling to make it in one area or the other, to keep their focus on God for solution to their predicament. She makes this point stand out through her repetition of *Lógán tí Ó dé...layé mi/ẹ létò* (At the instant of his (Jesus) arrival... my/your life became settled). The meaning of *ayé mi/ayé ẹ létò* (my life/your life became settled) which features in Tópé Àlàbí's song, 22 times, is, I stopped being barren or I became fruitful. With the expression *Lógán tí Ó dé layé mi/layé ẹ létò* (at the instant of his arrival my life/your life became settled), Tópé Àlàbí is advocating hope. She is, in effect, counteracting the action of individuals who resort to taking their God-given life through suicidal action. This may happen because their environment, rather than embrace the 'barren' and make them feel loved and cared for, despises, and treats them as outcasts and nonentities.

Authorial Musing

Lógán tí Ó dé affirms that music is didactic, just like other oral genres. It enables its listeners reflect on human relationships. That is, the effect of humans' action or inaction on an individual. Music also possesses the potency that will help individuals develop imagination and comprehend themselves and their environment. It teaches moral values and could function as fortification against several unbecoming situations and circumstances that affect people's minds.

To save the socio-cultural environment from worsening an already complicated situation, parents need to instill empathy in their wards right from an early age. When they grow up they will be able to help, rather than hurt hearts that are already injured. A Bible injunction makes these points clearer: "Teach a child how he should live, and he will remember it all his life."²⁷ It simply conveys the thought of practicing what has been inculcated, without giving up at any point (all his life). Humans thrive on loving attention from one another. This is especially so when there exists a vacuum.

Conclusion

This essay employed Tópé Àlàbí's *Lógán tí Ó Dé* to appraise the significance of barrenness and its multi-layered meanings in the contemporary Yorùbá society. It closely analyzed the diverse meanings of barrenness in relation to varieties of contextual allusions from the Yorùbá traditional religion's, Qur'anic and biblical perspectives. *Lógán tí Ó Dé* makes it explicit that, in addition to signifying childlessness and wretchedness, barrenness also portends retrogression and backwardness. The lyrics indicated the apathetical and callous reactions of the modern Yorùbá society toward the 'barren'

27 See Proverbs 22:6. (Good News Version).

(the 'have-nots'). These included name-calling and insulting remarks. It also revealed that unfair treatments could result in miserable life for the barren. Tópé Àlàbí's recurring lyric, *Lógán tí Ó Dé...layé mi létò* (at the instant of his arrival... my life became settled) is quite engaging and encouraging. It reassures all those that are looked down upon and despised, because of a void (barrenness) in their life to keep a tight grip on the hope that someday, their afflictions will become a thing of the past. She connotes that the disappearance of barrenness through Jesus' help will be so instant, that it would just be as if the sufferer had never experienced such an affliction and the attendant pain, and anguish. This paper concludes that the belief system of a people can be modified on the basis of further societal experience and socio-religious reconstruction.

Works Cited

- Adesoji, Abimbola Omotayo. "Beyond Thoughts and Words: Meanings, Contradictions and Contexts in Yoruba Value System". *Philosophy and Culture: Interrogating the Nexus*. In Omidire, A.O., Oladosu, J., Fasiku, G. and Alumona, V. (Eds.). Salvador: Segundo Selo. 2020, Pp. 125-158.
- Akande, Akinmade Timothy. "Poverty and Humanity: An Overview". In *Poverty and the Humanities*. Eds. G. Adeoti, M. Olatunji, A. Akande, and A. Ogunyemi. Ibadan: Bookminds Publishers. 2018, pp. 3-12.
- Boltz, Marilyn Gail. *The Cognitive Processing of Films and Musical Soundtracks*. Haverford, 2004. "Feminist Literary Criticism and Motherhood" in UC Press E-Books Collection, 1982-2004. <https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft1d5nb0ft&chunk.id=d0e330&toc.depth=1&toc.id=d0e44&brand=ucpress> Accessed November 10 2023.
- Geremek, Bronislaw. *Poverty: A History*. Blackwell Publishers, 1994.
- Green, Garrett. *Hermeneutics. The Routledge Companion to the Study of Religion*. Routledge, 2005.
- Gordon, Dave. Indicators of Poverty and Hunger, 2005. www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/ydiDavidGordon_poverty.pdf 'Layade, Atinuke Adenike. "Mutual Connection of Music to Poverty and the Increasing Revitalised Possibility for a Disconnection." *Poverty and the Humanities*. In Adeoti, G. Olatunji, M., Akande, A. and Ogunyemi, A. (Eds.). Ibadan: Bookminds Publishers. 2018, pp. 65-86.
- Merriam, Alan. *The Anthropology of Music*. Northwestern University Press, 1964.
- Merriam, Alan. *Ethnomusicology of the Flathead Indians*. Aldine Press, 1967.
- Nettl, Bruno. *The Study of Ethnomusicology Thirty-one Issues and Concepts*. New Edition University of Illinois Press, 1983.

- Neyer, Gerda and Laura Bernardi. *Feminist Perspectives on Motherhood and Reproduction*. In Working Paper 2011: 4, Stockholm University Linnaeus Center on Social Policy and Family Dynamics in Europe, SPaDE.
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. (1977). *Hermeneutics: The Handwritten Manuscripts*. Scholars Press, 1977.
- Sunday-Kanu, Rita Adaobi. "Contemporary Performance Practice of *Egbelegbele Sei* Cultural Group on Television Broadcast: Its Modifications and Reliance." *West African Journal of Musical Arts Education*. West Africa Sub-Region: Pan African Society for Musical Art Education. Vol. 4, no. 1, 2017, pp. 95-108.
- Good News Bible – Today's English Version*. The American Bible Society, (1976). *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc, 2013.
- Ojo, Matthew. "Indigenous Gospel Music and Social Reconstruction in Modern Nigeria." *Mossionalia: The Southern African Missiological Society Journal*. vol. 26, no. 2, 1998, pp. 210-231.
- Okafor, Richard Chijioke. *Music in Nigerian Society*. New Generation Books, 2005.
- Philip, Damas and Rayhan, Israt. *Vulnerability and Poverty: What are the causes and how are they related?* Term Paper for interdisciplinary Doctoral Studies Program at ZEF, Bonn, 2004, pp. 1-28. < [http://studyres.com/doc/13488548/vulnerability –and –poverty—what-are- the-causes-and-how-ar...>](http://studyres.com/doc/13488548/vulnerability-and-poverty-what-are-the-causes-and-how-ar...)
- Yusuff, Sikiru Abiona. "Societal Liabilities: Bus Conductors and the Discourse of Poverty in Ile-Ife" *Poverty and the Humanities*. In Adeoti, G. Olatunji, M. Akande, A, and Ogunyemi, A. Ibadan: Bookminds Publishers, 2018, pp. 205-235.

Transcribed Audio CD

Tòpé, Àlàbí. *Lògán tí Ó Dé*. Naija Music, 2019.

YORÙBÁ STUDIES REVIEW

Volume 9, Numbers 1&2, Spring & Fall 2024

ISSN 2473-4713

The *Yorùbá Studies Review* is a refereed biannual journal dedicated to the study of the experience of the Yorùbá peoples and their descendants globally. The journal covers all aspects of the Yorùbá transnational, national, and regional presence, both in their West Africa's homeland and in diasporic spaces, past and present. The journal embraces all disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and the basic /applied sciences in as much as the focus is on the Yorùbá affairs and the intersections with other communities and practices worldwide. The journal will foster and encourage interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches dealing with a wide range of theoretical and applied topics including, but not limited to: cultural production, identities, religion, arts and aesthetics, history, language, knowledge system, philosophy, gender, media, popular culture, education and pedagogy, politics, business, economic issues, social policy, migration, geography and landscape, environment, health, technology, and sustainability.

Yorùbá Studies Review seeks to serve as the platform for a new generation of transformative scholarship that is based on cutting-edge research, novel methodologies, and interpretations that tap into the deep wells of Yorùbá epistemology and ontology. YSR will also publish critical review essays, book reviews, and scholarly debates on topical issues.

The *Yorùbá Studies Review* will publish research and review manuscripts in the five languages that are primarily used in the Yorùbá world— English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Yorùbá. Where possible, abstracts of papers will be translated into English.

A section on “Archives” will reprint older materials to provide a wider access to a variety of documents.

A section on “Archives” will reprint older materials to provide a wider access to a variety of documents.

The *Yorùbá Studies Review* is hosted by three institutions:

The University of Texas at Austin

The University of Florida, Gainesville

The University of Ibadan, Nigeria

All posted materials should be addresses to: Editorial Office

Toyin Falola

Yorùbá Studies Review

Department of History

The University of Texas at Austin

104 Inner Campus Drive

Austin, TX 78712-0220

Subscriptions

The subscription rate in the U.S. and Canada is \$30 per copy for individuals, and \$150 for annual subscriptions for institutions. For overseas subscriptions, postage will be added

For general inquiry, send e-mail to: toyinfalola@austin.utexas.edu

Editorial Board Members

George Àlàó is in the Africa Department of the French National Institut for Oriental Languages and Civilisations (INALCO), Paris, France and a member of the French Research team *Equipe d'Accueil (EA 4514 PLIDAM) Pluralité des Langues et des Identités: Didactique, Acquisition, Médiations*. He holds a doctoral degree in the area of comparative African literature from Université Rennes 2 – Haute Bretagne in France and is presently teaching Yorùbá language and culture at INALCO in Paris. Dr Alao's current research interests include second language acquisition, multilingualism and multiculturalism, media and pedagogy, and contemporary Yorùbá diaspora.

Fúnṣò Aiyéjìná is professor emeritus at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago where he served as the Dean of Humanities and Education. He is a poet, short story writer, and playwright. His collection of short fiction, *The Legend of the Rockhills and Other Stories*, won the 2000 Commonwealth Writers' Prize, Best First Book (Africa). He also won the Association of Nigerian Authors' Poetry Prize in 1989 for his first book of poetry, *A Letter to Lynda and Other Poems* (1988). Professor Aiyejina's poetry and short stories have been published in many international journals and anthologies including *The Anchor Book of African Stories*, *Literature Without Borders*, *Kiss and Quarrel: Yorùbá/English - Strategies for Mediation*, *The New African Poetry*, and *The Penguin Book of Modern African Poetry*. His stories and plays have been read and dramatized on the radio in Nigeria and

England. Professor Aiyejina is a widely published critic on African and West Indian literature and culture.

Tunde Ajiboye is professor in the Department of French, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. He had his first degree from University of Ibadan where he was awarded a First Class (Honors) in French in 1974. He subsequently went for a doctorate at Université de Nancy II, Nancy, France where he had a doctorat de 3e cycle in linguistique appliquée in 1978. He started his university teaching career at Obafemi Awolowo University (then University of Ife), Ile –Ife, Nigeria in 1976 as a Graduate Assistant in the Department of Foreign Languages. He later moved in 1986 to the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria where he became Professor of French in October 1990. Professor Ajiboye has published a long list of books and journal articles. His research interests in peace studies include the nexus between language, communication and conflict. He teaches Language and Communication at the Centre for Peace and Strategic Studies.

Akínbíyì Akinlabí is professor of Linguistics at the Rutgers University and President, World Congress of African Linguistics. His research interest areas include phonology (Phonology --- tone, harmony, prosodic structure, under-specification theory); morphology (phonology interaction, prosodic morphology); Optimality Theory; and West African Linguistics, especially of Benue-Congo languages. He is the author of *Yorùbá: A Phonological Grammar* and editor of *Theoretical Approaches to African Linguistics*. His other publications have appeared in such professional journals as *Linguistic Inquiry*, *Lingua*, *Canadian Journal of Linguistics*, *Studies in African Linguistics*, *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*, *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*, and the *Journal of West African Languages*, among others.

Karin Barber is emeritus professor of African Cultural Anthropology at the Center for West African Studies, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. She is internationally recognized as a leading scholar in the fields of Yorùbá oral and written literature, Yorùbá religious ideas and practices, and Yorùbá popular traveling theater. Her principal research interests are the sociology of literature and popular culture, with special reference to the Yorùbá-speaking people of Nigeria. Dr Barber has published widely in the field of Yorùbá, oral literature, and popular culture. Her book *I Could Speak Until Tomorrow: Oriki, Women and the Past in a Yorùbá Town* (1991), which won the Amaury Talbot Prize for African Anthropology, awarded by the Royal Anthropological Institute, has been hailed as ‘truly innovative.’ She is also the author of *The Generation of Plays: Yorùbá Popular life in Theatre* (2000), which won the international Herskovits Award for the most important scholarly work in

African Studies published in English. Among Dr Barber's other books are *Yorùbá Popular Theatre: Three Plays by the Oyin Adejobi Company* (1994) and *The Anthropology of Texts, Persons, and Publics: Oral and Written Culture in Africa and Beyond* (2007). She is also the editor of *West African Popular Theatre*, (1997), *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self* (2006), *Print Culture and the First Yorùbá Novel: I. B Thomas' 'Life Story of Me, Segilola' and Other Texts* (2012), and *Africa*, the journal of the International African Institute.

Michele Reid-Vazquez is assistant professor in the Department of African Studies, University of Pittsburgh. Her research and teaching focus on the African Diaspora in the Atlantic World History, with an emphasis on late eighteenth to early twentieth-century, particularly the comparative Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Haiti, and Trinidad), the African Diaspora in Latin America, race and gender relations, immigration and identity during the age of revolution. She is author of *The Year of the Lash: Free People of Color in Cuba and the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World*. Her on-going project on *Caribbean Crossings: Comparative Black Emigration and Freedom in the Age of Revolution* explores the ways in which the American, Haitian, and Spanish American revolutions sparked multiple black emigration movements.

João José Reis is Professor of History at the Universidade Federal da Bahia in Brazil. He received his PhD in History from the University of Minnesota. He has been a Visiting Professor at the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), Princeton, Brandeis, Texas (Austin), and Harvard. He has also been a research fellow at the University of London, the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences (Stanford), and the National Humanities Center. Reis' books in English include *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The 1835 Muslim Revolt in Bahia* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), *Death is a Festival: Funeral Rites and Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (North Carolina, 2003), and *Divining Slavery: An African Priest in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), and *Alufaa Rufino, a Muslim African in the Black Atlantic (c. 1822 - c. 1853)* (Oxford U. Press, forthcoming 2016-17), co-authored with Flavio Gomes and Marcus Carvalho. Professor Reis is currently working on his third biography of an African who lived in Bahia as a slave and then a freedman.

Robert Simon is associate professor of Portuguese and Spanish at Kennesaw State University where he currently serves as the coordinator of the Department of Foreign Languages Portuguese Program. He has earned academic degrees and certificates in the United States, Spain, and Portugal. He has taught

both Spanish and Portuguese languages, and has investigated the presence of surrealism, mysticism, and postmodernism, the un-centered subject, and the notion of the paradigm shift through literary and cultural manifestations vis-à-vis Contemporary Iberian poetry. Dr. Simon has written on themes of nationality in the Post-colonial context of Luso-African literatures (African literatures in Portuguese language), particularly Contemporary Angolan poetry, as well as on the presence of the Postcolonial voice in Iberian poetics. His own original poetry, composed in English, Portuguese, and Spanish, elaborates on the themes of love, travel, and self-imposed barriers to interpersonal relationships and communication. His academic publications include *Understanding the Portuguese Poet Joaquim Pessoa, 1942-2007: A Study in Iberian Cultural Hybridity*.

Guidelines for Submission to *Yorùbá Studies*

Review

Major Focus

Yorùbá Studies Review is devoted to all aspects of the Yorùbá transnational, national, and regional presence, both in their West Africa's homeland and in diasporic spaces, past and present. The journal embraces all disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and the basic /applied sciences in as much as the focus is on the Yorùbá affairs and the intersections with other communities and practices worldwide. The journal is open to interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches dealing with a wide range of theoretical and applied topics including, but not limited to: cultural production, identities, religion, arts and aesthetics, history, language, knowledge system, philosophy, gender, media, popular culture, education and pedagogy, politics, business, economic issues, social policy, migration, geography and landscape, environment, health, technology, and sustainability.

Language of publication

The journal will publish original research and review manuscripts in the five languages that are primarily used in the Yorùbá world— English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Yorùbá. Where possible, abstracts of papers will be translated into English.

Frequency of Publication

2 issues during each academic year, in the fall (October) and spring (April) semesters respectively.

Evaluation Procedure

Manuscripts are peer-reviewed by at least two specialist readers.

Submission Guidelines for Contributors

1. The manuscript must be in Word, Word Perfect, or RTF throughout.
2. The manuscript must be prepared for blind review. Contributors should refer to previous publication in third person (“as Adeboye Babalola noted”) and to an institution where research was conducted as “institution X.” Names can be reinstated after the review process. Contributors should not put their names anywhere on the manuscript, especially not in headers.
3. The entire manuscript must be double-spaced throughout, including footnotes, references, and tables. It must be in Times New Roman, 12-point type with 1-inch margins. Do not use boldface or capitalize all the letters in a word. Avoid underlining (**and italics for emphasis**).
4. Manuscript must be formatted for 8.5 by 11 inch paper (American letter size).
5. Save all tables, charts, figures, photos, and illustrations in separate file and submit along with your chapter. Insert in the text files callouts that indicate where each illustration should be placed. The callout should be placed on its own line following the paragraph in which the table or illustration is first referenced and should be surrounded by two angled brackets: <Insert Table 1.1 here>
6. Use the indentation function in the paragraph formatting window to indent paragraphs a half inch. Do not insert tabs or spaces to achieve indentation. For block quotes, please indent by half inch with left justification only (generally quotations with less than one hundred words should not be blocked).
7. If your article is subdivided, identify subheads by typing <1> immediately before the subhead. If a subsection is further subdivided, so that there are two levels of subheads, identify the second level subheads with <2>. A third level, though discouraged, is identified with the code <3>.

8. The use of a word in Yorùbá requires translation in this format: word in English (*Yorùbá translation*), e.g., **EXAMPLE** In order to ensure consistency in the use of diacritics or tone marks for Yorùbá words, the following is a list of style rules that should be adopted:
 - a. Capital initials but no italics for all tone-marked proper nouns, including but not limited to personal names, names of cities, societies, and associations or organizations. Names of ethnic groups and their languages should be capitalized and tone-marked, but never italicized. Always refer to Yorùbá, the Yorùbá, and Yorùbáland. **For reasons of consistency and citation, names of authors should not be tone-marked.**
 - b. Italics and tone marks (but no capital initials) for titles that are not part of proper nouns listed in **a.** above. For example, òrìṣà, baálẹ̀, àfin, ọ̀ba, et cetera;
 - c. Italics and tone marks for shorter sample of Yorùbá texts embedded in body of work, but with no quotation marks.
 - d. Longer Yorùbá texts (poetry, songs, etc.) should be italicized, tone marked, and indented.
9. After acceptance, the author must obtain written permission from the copyright holder to use any copyrighted material. Authors are also responsible for supplying professionally drafted figures, suitable for reproduction, and are responsible for obtaining necessary permissions. Camera-ready illustrations may be submitted in hard copy or in electronic format.

Manuscript Style

We recommend you follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* 16th ed. (University of Chicago Press, 2010), on virtually all matters of style, punctuation, capitalization, and hyphenation. We therefore require US-style punctuation (e.g. use double quotations marks, and single quotation marks for quotations within quotations, and place commas and periods inside quotation marks). Here are a few style preferences to pay attention to in particular:

*Use the serial comma for series linked with *and* or *or*.

*Use the month-day-year format for dates. So, June 23, 2015, rather than 23 June 2011.

*Hyphen, en dash, and em dash:

The hyphen (-) indicates compound meanings, like *hard-fought victory*.

The en dash (–) denotes a period of time or pages, e.g., 1997–2006 or 23–36.

The em dash (—) is used in stylistic variation with commas and parentheses.

*Truncate the last number in page ranges as follows: 1–5, 43–44 (do not truncate when the last number is only two digits), 100–102 (do not truncate when the first number is a multiple of 100), 106–7 (don't repeat the 0), 131–38, 188–213

*Use ellipses to indicate omissions from quoted passages. In general do not bracket ellipses. If ellipses appear in the original quotation, please explain this in the note citation (e.g., ellipses in original)

*Spell out whole numbers from zero through one hundred and round multiples of these (i.e. whenever a number one through one hundred is followed by “hundred,” “thousand,” or “million.” For example: thirty-two, one hundred, nine thousand, three hundred thousand, 6,560, or 460,000.

*For percentages, use numeral and the word percent (e.g., 57 percent).

Notes and Work Cited

NB: For in-text citation, follow the template (Akinyemi 2017: 10–20).

Notes: Insert only footnotes (no endnotes please) using Microsoft Word's automatic notes feature. Never key in note numbers manually.

Works Cited: Include only but all the works cited in your essay using the following style (**which is different than Chicago**):

Single authored book: Washington, Teresa N. *Our Mothers, Our Powers, Our Texts*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Joint authored book: Falola, Toyin and G. O. Oguntomisin. *Yoruba Warlords of the 19th Century*. Trenton: Africa World Press, 2001.

Multi-authored book: Drewal, Henry John, et al. *Yoruba: Nine Centuries of African Art and Thought*. New York: Center for African Art in Association with H. N. A. Abrahams, 1989.

Edited book: Falola, Toyin and Matthew Heaton, eds. *Traditional and Modern Health System in Nigeria*. Trenton: African World Press, 2006.

Chapter in an edited book: Oyelaran, O. O. “Linguistic Speculations on Yoruba History.” In *Department of African Languages and Literatures Seminar Series I*, ed. O. O. Oyelaran, 624-51. Ile-Ife (Nigeria): University of Ife, 1978.

Journal article: Ojo, M. O. D. “Symbol of Warning, Conflict, Punishment, and War and their Meanings among the Pre-Colonial Yorùbá Natives: A Case of Aroko.” *Antropologija* 13.1 (2013): 39-60.

Dissertation: Olabimtan, Afolabi. “A Critical Survey of Yoruba Written Poetry 1848-1948.” Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Lagos, Lagos (Nigeria), 1974.

Manuscript Length

We invite original manuscripts of 25-30 pages (not exceeding 10,000 words including references and endnotes). Each article must include an abstract (not more than 150 words) that summarizes the work's argument, method, findings, and significance and a cover sheet containing the manuscript title, the name address, office and home numbers, fax number, email address, and full names and institutions of each author. Book reviews must not exceed 1000 words.

Submission

Contributors should submit digital files of original manuscript as email attachment to Yorubastudies@gmail.com (cc toyinfalola@austin.utexas.edu). Manuscripts submitted simultaneously for publication elsewhere, including on the web, will not be considered. Authors must therefore inform editors at time of submission of similar / related versions of the manuscript that have appeared or are being considered elsewhere.

Please Note

Opinions expressed in the *Yorùbá Studies Review* **are not necessarily those of the editorial staff. The order of publication of individual articles does not imply relative merit.** The journal is hosted by three institutions:

The University of Texas at Austin

The University of Florida, Gainesville

The University of Ibadan, Nigeria

List of Evaluators

In addition to co-editors and advisory board members, the following scholars evaluated papers submitted to the journal this year.

Wale Adebamwi
Aderonke Adesanya
Ezekiel Ajani
Akin Alao
Olalere Adeyemi
Tunde Babawale
Adesegun Fatusi
dele Jegede

Simeon Aderibigbe
Adeshina Afolayan
Olusola G. Ajibade
Usman Aribidesi
Olutayo Adesina
Tunde Bewaji
Bode Ibrinke
Adedotun Ogundeji

Niyi Okunoye	Sola Owonibi
Bukola Oyeniyi	Chinyere Ukpokolo
O. B. Adeniji	Olutayo Charles Adeshina
Michael Afolayan	A. A. Adeyemi-Suenu
S. P. I. Agi	Akin Alao
Morenikeji Asaju	Elugbaju Ayowole
Jumoke Yacob-Haliso	David O. Ogungbile
Samuel Oloruntoba	O. O. Olubomehin
Ehinmore M. Omolere	Babajide Ololajulo
Mobolanle Ebunoluwa Sotnsa	Fatai A. Badru
Akinloye Ojo	Wale Adegbite
Kole Odutola	Kola Oyewo
Yunusa Salami	Adeola Adijat Faley

2024 J.A. ATANDA PRIZE FOR THE BEST ESSAY ON THE YORUBA

Joseph Adebowale Atanda was a passionate historian who dedicated his scholarship to the historiography of Africa, especially that of the Yoruba. Popular among his publications are *The New Oyo Empire: Indirect Rule and Change in Western Nigeria, 1894-1934*, *An Introduction to Yoruba History and Baptist Churches in Nigeria: Accounts of Their Foundation and Growth*. The robust contributions of Atanda to Yoruba Studies have enhanced the existing knowledge of the Yoruba history, culture and spirituality, as well as the colonial and postcolonial relation. More than two decades after his demise, his scholarship remains relevant, and more increasingly so.

It is on this premise that the *Yoruba Studies Review* decided to celebrate and honor his distinctiveness with the J.A. Atanda Prize for the Best Essay on the Yoruba, and in doing so, promote and preserve the legacy he embodied. The objective is to promote and revive the socio-cultural and religious significance of the Yoruba, and as a result contribute to the stream of revivalist efforts geared towards the resuscitation of the African spirit. For it is in the history, language, culture and worldview that the spirit flourishes.

The J.A. Atanda Prize for the Best Essay on the Yoruba is worth \$500. The J. A. Atanda Prize represents a solid and remarkable platform for the promotion and further development of Yoruba Studies.

Timeline

- Preliminary Evaluation: January 1 – August, 2024
- Longlist Announcement: September 2024
- Shortlist Announcement: October 2024
- Announcement of Winner: November 2024

Review and Evaluation Guidelines

Only the essays published (or to be published) in *Yoruba Studies Review* qualify for this award. While all submissions are acceptable in English, we especially encourage essays written in Yoruba.

We also welcome translation of essays on the Yoruba, but the prize would be shared between the translator and original writer (if still alive).

Where an unpublished essay receives the prize, the entrant gives the exclusive right to edit and publish the work upon selection for longlist in *Yoruba Studies Review*. The editors of *Yoruba Studies Review* will choose the best essays according to a professional and rigorous set of guidelines covering data quality, originality, and contributions to knowledge.

The editors of *Yoruba Studies Review* will constitute a jury for each year. The short-listed essays will be sent to members of the jury for final determination of the winner.

Jury, 2024

Chair: Dr. Bose Afolayan, University of Lagos
Members: Professor Mobolanle Ebunoluwa Sotunsa,
Babcock University
Dr. Gabriel Ayoola, University of Michigan,
Secretary to the Jury: Kaosarat Aina, University of Georgia

2024 ISAAC OLUWOLE DELANO BOOK PRIZE FOR YORUBA STUDIES

With over 40 works that border on history, literature, linguistics, biography, religion and sociology, popular among which are *Owe L'Esin Oro*, *Atumo Ede Yoruba*, *A Modern Yoruba Grammar*, *Iran Orun*, *Josiah Ransome Kuti: The Drummer Boy who Became a Canon*, *Aiye d'aiye Oyinbo*, Isaac Delano committed his lifeworks to the proper documentation, preservation, presentation and teaching of the Yoruba language and culture as well as the being of the existence of Nigeria in his works as *The Soul of Nigeria* and *Notes and Comments from Nigeria*.

It is on this premise that we have honored his lifetime efforts and achievements with the Isaac Delano Prize for Yoruba Studies to recognize outstanding works, including those of fictions, that continue to uphold and represent the legacy that icons like Isaac Delano lived for. It is our dream, like his, to promote and revive the socio-cultural, political and religious significance of Yoruba, and in so doing contribute to the stream of revivalist efforts geared towards the resuscitation of the African spirit, for it is in the language, culture and worldview that the spirit flourishes.

The peculiarity of Delano's scholarship is the diversity it embraces, which is evident in his various contributions to the survival of the Yoruba language, culture and religion; in the same vein, the Delano Prize for Yoruba Studies encourages and welcomes diverse submissions that can (uniquely) contribute to the sustenance of the totality of the Yoruba people. This prestigious prize is especially aimed at scholars and young creatives whose endeavors contribute to the understanding and enhancement of (the) Yoruba. Also, it is our aim to highlight the underrepresented aspects and dimensions of Yoruba; hence, the submissions are not only open to Yoruba people located in Africa, but also everyone with a shared Yoruba ancestry, as well as scholars of Yoruba Studies.

At the moment, the Delano Prize for Yoruba Studies is worth \$1,000, which does not only make it one of the robust prizes for Yoruba Studies in Africa but also one of the most prestigious recognition in the world for Yoruba scholarship, according to its deserved recognition at the international level. It is our hope that, in so doing, the Delano Prize would be a solid and remarkable platform for the promotion and further development of Yoruba, in continuation of Isaac Delano's legacy.

Timeline

- Submission: January 1 – August, 2024
- Longlist Announcement: October, 2024
- Shortlist Announcement: November, 2024
- Announcement of Winner: December, 2024

Submission Guidelines

- The work must be creatively inclined towards the people, culture, place, language and history of the Yoruba people. The book must be published between 2016 and 2022. Edited books do not qualify.
- The narratives can be either factual or fictional, or the mixture of both; however, the genre must be clearly indicated by the participant, which does not in any way influence/constrain the chances of the submission, as originality, creativity, and delivery are principal criteria.
- The submission is global, open to everyone irrespective of nationality or color.
- Four copies of the book must be submitted either by the author or publisher to:
- Toyin Falola, Department of History, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712, USA

JURY, 2024

Chair:	Professor Toyin Falola
Members:	Tunde Babawale, University of Lagos Professor Pamela Smith Professor Akin Akinlabi, Rutgers University
Treasurer:	Dean, School of Social Sciences, Babcock University
Secretary:	Damilola Osunlakin, Ahmadu Bello University