

Yoruba Oral Literary Features and Cultural Aesthetics in Odolaye Aremun's Musical Repertoires

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Abstract

Odòlayé Aremun is among few of Nigeran Artists in the south west of Nigeria whose brand of music (*dadakúàdà*) extols cultural heritage of the Yorubá. Textual dexterity is an identifiable and astounding feature that avidly defines this exponent's musical aesthetic. Despite this artistic exploits, explicit and comprehensive scholarly attention has not been engaged in that regard. Hence, it is the intention of this study to take a look at Odolaye's musical repertoires with a bid to unfold diverse textual expressions embodied by his compositions and the impetus within the ambit of Yoruba culture and tradition. This study appropriated functional effectiveness, a theory postulated by Blacking (1973), which adduces choice of cultural criteria for composing African music to functionality. Audio tape containing Odolaye's repertoires, in depth and key informant interviews were employed to amass information that are germane to the research. Descriptively, data gathered from the field were subjected to textual content analysis. Inferences from this study unveiled nuances of Odolaye's tonal /dialectic inflection of Kwara, essentially, the Ilorin variant. The study further showcased a constellation of textual devices contrived by this artist in his compositions, spanning praise chant, tonal play, homage, metaphor, anaphora and proverb. In conclusion, this study ascertained Odolaye Aremun's textual proficiency; an indefatigable input towards Yorùbá cultural sustainability within musical frame work.

Keywords: Cultural; heritage, textual dexterity, musical aesthetic, functional effectiveness.

Introduction

Omibiyi (1981) elicits two essential features that delineate the music of the Yoruba; prevalence of membrane drums and a pastiche of vocal musical types. The advent of Christian missionaries and colonialism among other external influences exponentially reshaped Yoruba music (Vidal, 2016). The reminiscence of these interferences, essentially; Europe and Arab with African cultural heritage is apparent in all domains of humanities. Within the ambit of music, such a reality is evident in instrumentation, forms and styles (Nketia, 1979). An influx of western musical instruments spanning string, wood wind, brass and percussive orchestral has been observed in successive decades to wholly or partially displace the indigenous types which were claimed to have been dedicated to idol worship. From European continent musical forms that were alien to African soil in text, idiom, melody and harmony were ushered in and imposed on the indigenous brands under the guise of religious revival. The advent of western musical culture exerted long term negative impacts on African music. An obvious fall out of this insinuation was contained in gradual extinction of aged long musical compositions including folk songs that extol African cultural heritage. A vast number of indigenes that were custodians of tradition were converted to foreign religion of Christianity. Meanwhile, it should be noted that Islamic-Arabic religious-culture from the Middle East advanced its influences on Africa even much earlier than the Judio-Christian faith. The Islamic proselytes from pagan were indoctrinated in Arabic culture alongside Arabic vocal styles of Qur'an chanting/recitation. One major influence exerted by Islamic Arabic culture on African musical practice resides in musical styles, namely; *wákà*, *wéré*, *sákàrà*, to mention a few (Adegbite, 1989:36) and (Vidal, 2012: 135) the Arabian singing mode and vocal technique.

The influence of Western European culture on African musical tradition is overwhelming. Besides stigmatisation of African folk songs/ tunes and instruments as sacrilegious for Christian worship, the European Christian missionaries in a bid to impose western diatonic melodic mode, disrupted African tonal concept which places premium on the speech mode. Laudable efforts of Nigerians that were trained in formal western musical theory cannot be undermined in salvaging Yorùbá music from Europeans' encroachment. Mention should be made of A. T. Ola Olude, Bola Fadeyi, B. G. Oreiere, among others (Olaniyan, 2001). Meanwhile, the assiduous efforts of Canon Ransome Kuti is deemed commendation in the preservation of Yoruba cultural heritage, essentially, within the ambit of Church music (Owoaje, 2023). Though such nationalists succeeded in translating the English text of Church hymns to Yorùbá version, the inherent European "seal" (hallmark) of western diatonic mode has always been intact till date.

The imprint of European interference with African music transcends religious ambience of hymnody, having been extended to socio context in secular music. It is needful to remark that the foundational exponents of Nigerian popular music, essentially the juju and high life are recipients of western mode. Quite a number of them grew up in the Church and were indoctrinated in the newly adapted European musical culture, the path which the succeeding artists have been treading. However, citing the Yorùbá as a template, an ample size of musicians has been forthright in a bid to salvage African cultural heritage via their musical compositions, notwithstanding encroachment advanced by Western Europe. Notable among such musicians are Aruna Ishola, Ayinla Omowura, Olando Owoh, Isaiah

Kehind Dairo, Dauda Epo Akara, Ebenezer Fabiyi Obey, Sunday Adeniyi, Odolaye Aremu to mention a few. The musicians of discourse emanated from diverse sub genres of Yoruba popular music, spanning *jùjú*, *highlife*, *àpàlà*, *fùjì*, *wákà* and *dadakúàdà*. Though quite a number of them have passed on, their works live after them. Aside advocating Yoruba speech mode, the artists showcase a high degree of Yoruba textual dexterity in their repertoires.

Odolaye Aremun who lived till the early period of 1997 was an exponent and original composer of musical genre designated “*dadakúàdà*”. This prodigy’s musical style, delineated by a constellation of textual expressions, rife with panegyric (praise song), philosophical, proverbial and figurative declarations among others, undoubtedly portends a grip of Yorùbá culture and tradition. It is expedient to take a look at a template (*Olówemòwe*) of Odolaye Aremun’s compositions with a view to interrogate some of the textual expressions and cultural aesthetics in his works.

Biography of Odolaye Aremun

Though, an extensive written documentation has not been sighted at the instance of Alhaji Odolaye Aremun’s biography, the existing record indicates that this Yoruba artist who hailed from Ilorin in the middle belt of Nigeria was born in 1943 and died on the twenty fifth of February, 1997. Odolaye Aremun lived in Yoruba cities namely; Ibadan, Lagos, Ilorin, Abeokuta, Shaki, Okeho and Ibadan where he spent most of his time. A staunch Islamic adherent, the music exponent is bilingual who fluently communicated in Yorùbá and English. An innate attribute of Odolaye Aremun resides in bravery/doggedness, fortified by undaunted truth adherence. These characteristic traits enabled his capacity/audacity as a social commentator to relate to diverse topical issues, spanning social political, socio cultural, socio-economic and vices that ravaged the country in the domain of music during his life time.

The album *Olówemòwe* which this study engaged embodies an array of subjects presented by Odolaye in his stylistic mode of proverbial, philosophical and figurative declarations. Issues of discourse include the deplorable economy and insecurity of Nigeria, the philanthropic acts of certain dignitaries in the society and homage to the stalwarts in the spirit world. Reiteratively, a vast number of messages disseminated by Odolaye in his repertoires are coded in proverbs, metaphors and philosophical declamations.

Literature Review

An extensive literature abounds within the ambit of this study, spanning nature of African music, external influence on African indigenous music, the place of oriki and owe.

Omibiyi (1981) enumerates two attributes that delineate Yorùbá music, namely, the extensive use of membrane drum ensemble, and the adoption of various vocal musical types. According to her, the vocal forms are contrived for religious and secular ceremonies. For instance, *Ijala*, a vocal music is often presented by hunters, *Iyere Ifa* by Ifa priest, *Ekun Iyawo* is usually performed to accompany a bride during her wedding ceremony. Omibiyi’s stance is resonated by Akpabot (1986), elucidating that drum is considered as the foundation of most African music ensembles which fulfils the same

function as the string section of a classical western symphony orchestra. Meanwhile, beyond the confinement of membranophone, Akpabot's designation of drums, embraces all percussive instruments, rattle, gong, among other. Such submissions are insightful in the light of indigenous of African music at inception. However, the interference of external cultures, essentially the Judo-Western and Islamic Arabic variants has deeply reshaped the position of African music. For decades, African countries have witnessed an influx of Western and Arabic instruments that are contemporarily adapted for performing indigenous music. At foundational phase, the Yoruba derivative popular music; *àpàlà*, *fùjì* and *wákà* primarily employed skinned drums and other percussive instruments, essentially, rattle and gong. Recent performance of such sub-genre contrasts the primordial displays with the inclusion of western instruments; piano, guitar, technological devices exemplified by synthesiser. Aside instrumentation, Akpabot alludes to three basic characteristics that distinguish African music from other types of music; rhythm/ metric complexity, the use of improvisation and form. This scholar explicates that a close examination and a trained hear will discern that the internal elements of African music transcend rhythm and melody. Akpabot's allusion is succinct in view of polyphonic harmonic texture that defines African music. This is more observed, particularly in dialectic, ethnic oriented African music which the Yoruba intone. In this context, the speech tonal inflection in part simulates the conventional western harmonic texture concept as parallel second and third are observed.

The contextual and functional nature of African music has been interrogated by scholars. In traditional Africa society, music making is generally organised as a social event. Hence, public performances occur on social occasions when members of a group or a community come together for the enjoyment of leisure, recreational activities, performance of a rite, ceremony, festival, or a communal activity such as building bridges, clearing paths, to mention a few (Nketia, 1979). In consonance with Nketia's insight, Omojola in (1999) in Idolor (2002) explicates that understanding of the conception of music among Africans is strongly hinged on a combination of factors including the words, the contexts of performance, organised procedures, and the nature and meaning intended in a musical performance. This thought is replicated by Olaleye's (2023), admitting the realisation of indigenous music from the context of social events. He advances that music constitutes an essential art used in the daily activities of the Yorùbá people.

Another identifiable trait of African music resides in textual functionality and intelligibility. Blacking (1976) establishes functional effectiveness as a decisive factor affecting the choice of cultural concept with which to compose African music. In consonance with Blacking, Osofisan (1973:89) and Mokwunye (2001:130) elucidate that a musical work is neither appreciated nor accepted by the Nigerian audience if it fails to communicate meaningfully. This discourse is substantiated by Olaniyan (2014), given that African music must be studied within the cultural framework to be effectual. The art of music making entrenched in textual expressions, compositional and performance techniques, styles and structures, is essentially shaped by the taste and choice of its users (music fans) within the cultural context of such making. Still on the concept of functionality, Olatunji (2016) opines that in traditional society (Africa) in which music is closely linked to religion and ritual, beauty is always subordinate to efficacy and

meaningfulness while relevance and simple usefulness are infinitely more significant than the creation of sensually delightful sound pattern.

The foregoing foregrounds the aesthetic worldview of African music which is avidly realised from textual functionality perspective. To an average Nigerian (African), music is functional and contextual (Olatunji, 2016: 23). ‘Contextuality’ and functionality are two inseparable concepts that define African music. Context presents the needed platform for the function. In other word, the latter is dependent upon the former. Given that Yoruba traditional marriage constitutes a context of performance, music becomes functional as it is appropriated at various sections of such an occasion.

Small (1998) advanced that *oríkì* (praise chant) and *owe* (proverb) are two popular Yorùbá oral literary genres, which are considered to engage music; however, it should be noted that the word ‘music’ has no Yorùbá equivalent. The Yorùbá designation of music include drumming, dancing, singing and chanting. The music language relationship has been extensively discussed by (Olajuba, 1981; Olatunji, 2005; Villepastour, 2014). Inference from such studies showcases the literary- musical attribute of *oríkì* (praise chant) and *owe* (proverb) from the perspective of Yoruba oral literature, which mediates between *oro siso* (speaking) and *orin kiko* (singing) of diverse forms, spanning *ijala* (hunters’ chant), *ekun iyawo* (bride’s lament), and *oríkì* (praise chant), to mention a few. In alignment with the foregoing, Agawu (2016), while attesting to the bond between speech text and song text, submits that language is sacrosanct to African language. The interdependence between speech text and song text, wherefore, melody of a song piece is dictated by the pitch contour of the speech text has been further unraveled by Villepastour (2014). Such an allusion is particularly germane in the light of tonal or dialectic inflection that characterises certain ethnic groups of the Yorùbá, exemplified by the Ife, Ijesa, Ondo, Ekiti, Ijebu among others.

Citing dundun contextual usage of *oríkì* as a template, Pruefer (2023) unfolds quite a number of media or subjects that the drummer explores in his deliveries, namely, *oríkì oruko/inagije* (personal names/aliases), *oríkì ile* (lineage) and *oríkì ilu* (person’s town). According to this scholar, notwithstanding the uniqueness of personalities engaged, the contents of any *oríkì* appropriated by the dundun drummer always simulate the aforementioned variables, that is combination of names, lineage, town and character. Identification with the origin (name, lineage or town) constitutes a significant lens of Yoruba worldview of *oríkì*, a scenario that affords individuals intimate relationship with their source. While explicating on devices for eliciting emotions from the audience or listeners, Juslin (2013) draws attention to two major variables: contagion/empathy and association/ autobiography. The former which is mostly applicable to modern art music defines a situation in which an expressed emotion informs a related response from the listener. Meanwhile, Pruefer presents that semantic association/autobiographic memory plays a more substantial role in the performance of *oríkì*. This aligns with Vidal’s (2012) stance that the *oríkì* musician knows the psychological effects of *oríkì* and can manipulate his audience and direct its mood in the way he wants, be it humour, joy, anger or fright.

Reiteratively, it is evident from these illustrations that African/Yorùbá perspective of poetry (*oríkì*) is at variance with the western, stemming from the contextual usage of autobiographical/lineage reference. This advancement further authenticates the contextual/functional nature of African arts, music inclusive.

A proverb designates a reflection of the social values and sensibility of the people in a given society (Adegbite, 2003). A measure of social control, the scholar's allusion to this philosophical declaration is concise. Proverbs are essentially contrived to provoke in-depth reasoning and imagination. The philosophical attribute of proverbs is buttressed by Sheba (2006). Meanwhile, Sotunde (2009) defines a proverb as a "short familiar sentence expressing a supposed truth or moral lesson, imparting knowledge and guiding people's relationships with others. The meaning of proverb is not usually abstracted literarily; rather, this textual expression is often appropriated metaphorically within its contextual usage, hence, its versatile adaptation (Pruefer, 2023). In the similitude of *oríkì*, the content and context of proverb exert immediate effects on emotions, motivations or behavior as elucidated by Sikiru Ayanwale (interview, Nov 2016).

Theoretical Framework: Functional Effectiveness

Blacking's (1976) empirical study is insightful, establishing functional effectiveness as a decisive factor affecting the choice of cultural concepts with which to compose African music. Citing the Venda of South Africa as a case study, he affirms that the functional effectiveness of music seems to be more important to listeners than its surface complexity, questions the use of being the greatest pianist in the world or writing the cleverest of music if nobody was to listen to it, and the human use of inventing or using new sounds just for their own sake.

This thought is resonated by Euba (2001) on the need for musical compositions that speak to Africans. He advances that an African composer who sounds "African" in his work is likely to engage local recognition more than one who sounds like a Western composer such as Schoenberg, Stravinsky and others. Blacking's postulation is in tandem with Mokwunyei (2001) who argues that a musical work is neither appreciated nor accepted by the Nigerian audience, if it fails to communicate meaningfully to them. Hinged on Olatunji's (2016) stance, Mokwunyei's argument primarily adduces to the fact that, to an average Nigerian, music is functional and contextual. Functionality of African music emanates from the contextual ambience of its adaptation. This position underscores the established convention that performance/composition of indigenous African framework does not occur independently, rather, in the context of social event that informs such performance or composition, namely, social ceremonies, festivals, ritual rites among others. Averse to western musical aesthetic connotation which may esteem musical practice, the beauty of African traditional music supremely lies on the functional role for which such music is abstracted.

At the core of this functional effectiveness of African music lies the textual factor. Effectuality of song text has been probed by scholars. Merriam (1964) asserts that song texts to some degree convey the themes which guide the composition at hand. He further notes that textual language unravels thought which might otherwise be restrained.

Predicated by Euba (2001), texts appear to be a major signifier in Africa, justified by the appropriation of texts practically in all types of music, vocal and instrumental. The scholar alludes to the speech surrogate role played by the leading instrument. These elucidations are terse and logical in respect of premium placed on song texts. Reiteratively, African music is contextual in composition and performance, is avidly defined by the textual context and textual content.

Blackening's concept of functional effectiveness is succinct within the context of this study, considering the multifaceted role of African music; religious, social, moral, educative, ceremonial to mention a few. Odolaye Aremun, whose works, were abstracted for this study had won acceptance by the Yoruba audience and beyond, stemming from textual dexterity. The intricate/proficient adaptation and adoption of figurative speeches, spanning metaphor, anaphora, personification, proverbial declarations, *oríkì* (praise chant) and a pastiche of philosophical expressions by this veteran are quite gratifying. Odolaye Aremun's works among other roles, are contemplative for listening pleasure, didactic and portrayal of moral rectitude.

Yoruba Oral Literary Features and Cultural Aesthetics in Odolaye Aremun's Works (Olówemòwè)

The appellation (*olówemòwè*) ascribed to Odolaye Aremun, stemmed from coded style of narratives that deciphered his musical compositions. However, from the Yorubá semantic perspective, textual expressions with which *Olówemòwè*'s works are nuanced transcend proverbial declaration. Other textual expressions encapsulated by the compositions are *oríkì* (praise song), homage, dialectic inflection, metaphor, anaphora and alliteration.

Oríkì (Praise Chant)

As an aged long tradition which combines speech text in poetry structure with music, Vidal (2012:151), elucidates on the descriptive nature of *oríkias* applicable to animate and inanimate objects. This stance is in tandem with Odolaye's allusion to panegyric of four dignitaries premised on either of their philanthropic inputs or political doggedness. Personalities engaged by the artist in succession were Aremu Alao Arisekola, Alhaji Adedibu, Akanji Ogundoyin and Alhaji Aminatu Abiodun.

Alao Arisekola was acknowledged in his life time, consequent upon his acts of benevolence. This Ibadan native was noted to have advanced the course of humanities, essentially in Ibadan environs in diverse measures; education, economy, health among others. The following textual excerpt attests this subscription:

Aremun Alao, <i>aásìkí Ìbàdàn</i>	Aremun Alao, the Ibadan glory
Asọ <i>Àlàbora</i> Ìbàdàn	The covering cloth of Ibadan
t'awọn ọmọ <i>Olúyòlẹ́</i> n dàbora	that protects the Oluyoles
Enikan soso <i>tín tójú inú ilú.</i>	Just an individual, caring for an entire community

In metaphorical allusion to the covering cloth, the excerpt just presented interrogated the significant role played by Alao Arisekola in providing succor for the entire Ibadan populace.

While Arisekola's philanthropic deliveries were eulogised by Odolaye, the political profile and sturdiness of Alhaji, Adedibu; an Ibadan indigene acquainted with native/ grass root politics was figuratively expounded by the same artist. Textual lines below present the discourse:

Ikú tii méja kako`òkòò mi	Death that reshaped the fish
Aseni báni darò òkòò mi	A pretentious afflicter husband
Ajenilówó mó seé sìn òkòò mi	An unapproachable debtor.
Òdándá tii fowò alásejù tále	He who humiliates the extremist
Oníkan kòò Adédibú gbàá	A refuge for the ostracised.

This template supplies two ambivalent attributes of Adedibu. The political doggedness of this stalwart does not obviate his benevolent acts. The destitute of the society still revel in Adedibu's philanthropic disposition, despite his designated political stubbornness.

Homage/Appeasement to the Spirit World

An essential procedural feature in African performing art lies in homage and appeasement to superior authority or power. Such authority could be contained in seniority within the ambience of performing art or at other instances construed metaphysically in the spirit world view. Musicians and other performing artistes are the most vulnerable to this scenario. An act of this nature is inevitable to enable successful deliveries. The following excerpt portends this discourse.

Moríba moríba	My homage, my homage
Moríbàa dàgboro	I give homage to dagboro
Ebora lágbó Ega	Lagbo Ega deity
Oládimeji abàgbòn gbègèdè	Oladimeji with a draw jaw
Ìbà ní ọwọ Ajíbólá, ará ilú ètè	Homage to Ajibola of Ete community
Àbèní ará ilú èèdú	Abeni of Eedu community
Olòòsuñbéré abirù tínrín	a lizard with a slimy tail
Bóbá dúlójú adú lènu	possessing black eyes and mouth
Afíjú àdàbàtínjẹ láàrin òrófó	A elegant dove that feeds amidst the vultures
Afínjú ẹyẹ tìnjẹ ní gbangba ilé Ọba	An elegant bird that feeds in the Kingsquare

Quite a number of imageries reside in this excerpt; animate and inanimate are contrived to showcase the metaphysical and mystical power embodied by witchcraft.

Metaphor

In metaphoric declarations, actions, things and ideas or places are alluded to by words or phrases attributed to another actions, things, ideas or places. The concept entails juxtaposition between two entities. Vivid image of the phenomenon in the discourse is engraved in the subconscious mind of the audience, thus memory is animated. Besides fostering memory, the affinity of the audience towards musical compositions is overtly aroused. Monotony and boredom that often becloud literal presentations of words or phrases are further averted. Corroboratively, a metaphor is pertinent, consequent upon its ability to provoke in-depth reasoning, thoughts and imagination, emanating from the

comparison launched between the image and the object being probed. A vast number of textual expressions that are generally designated proverbs are structurally metaphoric. The following template is succinct:

Asọ àlàborun Íbàdàn	The covering cloth of Ibadan people
T'á wọn ọmọ Olúyòlé n dà bora	that covers the Oluyoles
Enìkan soso tíntójú ará ilú.	Just an individual caring for an entire community

In the excerpt, Odolaye Aremun amplifies the benevolent trait imbued in Arisekola, who consistently intervened in alleviating adversity that plagues the present society. In this scenario, this philanthropist was metaphorically depicted as the covering cloth (asọàlábora) who unwaveringly provided succor for people in Ibadan land. Such benevolent disposition by Arisekola is explicitly elucidated by the phrase “enìkan soso tí n tójú ará ilú (just an individual that cares for the welfare of the entire community). Considering the far reaching influence of Arisekola, at the instance of his wealth, one other metaphorical statement was disseminated by Odolaye Aremun;

Ekun kan soso ti n da inu igbe ru: A single leopard that terrorises an entire jungle

Anaphora

A derivative of parallelism, anaphora is delineated by Baldock (2001) as an arrangement of similarly constructed clauses, sentences or verse lines in a pairing or other sequence, suggesting some correspondence between them. Vidal (2012) buttresses this stance while alluding to devices that are contrived in the technique of repetition for composing Yorùbá songs; segmental, phrasal or word repetition within the linear unit on the one hand, and replication of the entire linear unit on the other hand. Epistrophe simulates anaphora with respect to lexical repetition or matching of words or group of words. Two essential instruments appropriated by anaphora are repetition and lexical matching. In consonance with Vidal's insight, phrasal repetition is prevalent in Odolaye's compositions, in which case, reprise (direct textual replication) ensues. On the other hand, rather than reprise, lexical matching may be apparent such that two or more phrases are synthetically related. Both variants may be observed in the same musical passage, which are either showcased in the prefix, middle or suffix. It is needful to present templates of instances just unfolded.

Edákun emáà jékí tọwọ́ ọbọ	Kindly retain whatever the hand holds
Edákun emáà jékí tẹ̀sẹ̀ ọgbọ̀n dànù	Kindly retain whatever the foot holds
Edákun emáà jékí tilẹ̀ ọ pọ̀ ju tẹ̀nu lo	Kindly apply temperance in all instances.

In this allegorical allusion, phrasal repetition is sighted in the prefix “edákun emáà jékí”. Contrastingly, tọwọ́ ọbọ́, tẹ̀sẹ̀ ọgbọ̀n dànù and tilẹ̀ ọpọ̀ ju tẹ̀nu lọ which are situated in suffix constitute lexical matching. Sometimes, averse to prefix location, phrasal repetition may be placed in the suffix, exemplified by the following excerpt:

Èkó náà la wáyí	Here we are in Lagos
Olúu Nàìjíríà la wáyí	Here we are in Nigeria headquarter
Mushin la wáyí	Here we are in Munsin

Òdòò Mòòmódù la wàyí

Here we are with Mohamed.

Apparently, from the successive sounding of the textual lines; “Èkó náà”, “Olúu Naijirià”, “Mushin” and “òdòò Mòòmódù” is produced lexical matching. “Lawàyí” has remained constant at the end (suffix) of each textual phrase or line.

Alliteration (Àwítuńwí Kónsónàntì)

Alliteration is deciphered as a constellation of words characterised by the same sound of the first consonant which are arrayed in a close series. Meanwhile, it should be remarked that the descriptive definition ascribed to alliteration is not abstracted from the letters of the consonants, but the sounds. This figurative declaration is encapsulated in the following excerpt:

Won à si máa wùwà kántankàntan (m-r-d-r), régberègbe (m-r-d-r), rádaràda (m-r-d-r), ránhunrànhun (m-r-d-r).

Premised on the earlier elucidation, it is obvious that the enlisted words commence with diverse consonant letter. However, the same sounding emanated from them is attested by solfa notes (m-r-d-r) supplied. One other instance in which alliteration is harnessed by Odolaye resides in his homage to the spirit world:

Kín là n fàní ẹnì tóní ọwó Ayéòlèètèun	Of what use is he that claims superiority over forces
Tí n tuń janu, tí n tuń sagbaja, tí n tuń minu.	flouting about, boasting about, Mocking

The expressions “janu”, “sagbaja” and “minu”, though bear distinct first letter consonants, carry similar sound (d-d), (d-d-d), (d-d), which is the preoccupation of alliteration.

Textual/tonal Play (Ìfòhùndàrà /Ìfòròdàrà)

In this context, a play of word is advanced where a single word or even a statement is repeatedly or consistently disseminated as a whole or in part. Such a dramatic display is gratifying, showcasing interplay of textual and musical aesthetic. In certain instances, the interchanged are not necessarily semantically corresponded. Mention should be made of the following templates:

Bí èyàn bá gbóngbóngbón	However wise a person seems
Kóso agbón mọ̀dídí, tié ó ba	let him tie wasp to the buttock, he would be humbled
Bí èyàn ẹn sì gògògò, kó fí gògò	However foolish a person seems, let him hang
Kórùn tié óba.	drum stick on the neck, he would be humbled

From this excerpt, interplay ensues between two pairs of words which are not related in meaning. “Gbóngbóngbón (act of being wise) and agbón (an insect) that is essentially defined by its stinging nature. The interest in this medium is not primarily contained in the meaningfulness, but rather in the rhythmic sounding of these words. Another tonal play is presented as follows:

Ayán ò gbòdò yan
Èrà ò gbòdò ra

Must not be threatened by the cockroach
Must be threatened by the ant

In this metaphorical statement, two objects, *aáyán* (Cockroach) and *èrà* (small ant) alongside their actions; “yan” and “ràá”, both of which imply to torment and irritate are interplayed. In this context, the depicted objects and their activities are semantically aligned. The two insects; cockroach and small ant, being destructive and irritating pose threat to man.

Dialectic Inflection

One distinctive trait in Odolayes’ repertoires lies in the nuances of his native, ethnic bound dialectic inflections. He maximally appropriated such a device in the album engaged for this study. A few of them are presented as follows

Akúápá

Akuapa is the Ilorin dialectic derivative relative of *akúárápá*. Two letters of the Oyo “a” and “r” from Oyo flection are missing from Odolayes’s expression.

Rélulè

In the context of the usage the word “*relulè*” suggests crest falling, a state of failure which literally connotes falling down of an object from a great height. The conventional Yoruba word for *relule* is “*jabò*”; “*subululè*” or “*jalule*”.

Àferí-igi

This ethnic based short phrase is abstracted from a proverbial statement “*abuke kú isé dé, òkú tí kíí sunlè à forí igi*”. Such a textual declaration underscores the Yoruba culture and tradition which holds a special burial rite of hanging the humped on the tree. Again, Odolaye engaged dialectic inflection to disseminate *àferí igi* rather than *àforí igi* which conforms to the conventional Yoruba intonation of Oyo.

Tíèi àgbà tíèi ní sègi àsíkánlé

In allusion to the affluence of a prominent philanthropist (Ogundoyin) in Ibadan land, Odolaye Aremu harnessed a popular Yoruba slogan “*sègi*” an acclaimed state of exceedingly wealthy. The phrase “*tíèi dàgbà (not yet old) tíèí ní sègi àsíkánlé*” resonates Ilorin dialect. Meanwhile, the Oyo which constitutes the conventional Yoruba dialect reads “*tí kò tíi dàgbà tó fí ní sègi àsíkánlé*”. “*sègi*” in this context designates “riches”. The statement implies that at a tender age, the personality being interrogated has already become wealthy. The expression; “*tíèi*” suggests “without” or “not yet”: having not yet approached an adult status such an individual is already economically established.

Proverb

Proverbs are textual and philosophical expressions contrived to advance an in depth knowledge of phenomena, concepts, illustrations or situations. They constitute a figure of speech that simulates metaphor in the use of imageries. Contrastingly, proverbial expressions as opined by a Yorùbá textual analyst; "Prince Bisi Adesigbin" in an oral interview, are often delineated by two phrases or principal statements; the antecedent and

the consequent. Adegbite (2003) deciphers proverb as a reflection of the social values and sensibility of the people in a given society. A measure of social control, the scholar's allusion to this philosophical declaration is concise. Analogous to other figures of speech, proverb spurs innate contemplations and reasoning in the recipients/audience, emanating from the imageries advanced. Corroboratively, such constructions stem the tide of monotony and boredom of addiction to familiar texts. A vast number of proverbial expressions are abstracted by Odolaye in "Olówemòwè".

Àgbà ní báníi sèlú The older people cares for the community
Ọmọ kékeré ní bání túnlé ẹnise. The younger people take care of once home compound.

An identifiable trait of proverb resides in the two sets of statements or phrases; antecedent and consequent; principal and subsidiary, call and response. Severally, a proverb that is devoid of the consequent is considered incomplete. The meaning or content of proverbial declarations is largely vested in both the antecedent and the consequent antecedent. In the proverb just presented, the indispensability of old and young in the society is noted. Both the antecedent (Àgbà ní bá ni sèlú) and the consequent (Ọmọ kékeré eni ní bání túnlé ẹnise) underscores the need for mutual synergy among diverse age groups of the society, notwithstanding the level of operation. While exulting the doggedness and indefatigability of a political stalwart of Ibadan (Adélabú) in life time, Odolaye was expressive in the following proverbial declaration:

Adédibú, oòjẹgbàá ọrọ ọtán Without you winning, two thousands, troubles persist
Ojẹgbàá ọrọ pin. You, winning two thousands, troubles cease.

The artist in the above statement intricately engaged two apposite words "tan" and "pin", both of which connote a state of completeness or exhaustiveness. Within the ambit of conflict resolution the synonyms delineate concord or burying old hatchet. Literally, "egbàá" is a Yoruba numerical figure translated as two thousands in English. Meanwhile, "jẹ" depicts "to win". Contrastingly, "oòjẹ" implies "you do not win". Odolaye's allusion to Adedibu's political inclination and disposition is explicit in this proverbial expression. In other word, the political giant of discourse is deciphered as undaunted and irresistible politician who never bowed to failure.

Discussion of Findings

Odolaye's birth era and nativity exerted profound influences on his arts. His generation is marked by zero tolerance to social menace that strews postmodern world. Such a stance is characterised by copious berating utterances contrived by Odolaye to stem the tide of such social plagues. Though this musician hailed from Ilorin (home town), the relocation to major Yorùbá cities enabled his proficiency in Yorùbá oral history and tradition. The foregoing is evident in the constellation of textual traits that delineate his works; figurative expressions, proverbial and philosophical declarations, declaration. Meanwhile, Odolaye's Islamic religious background which afforded him a wealth of experience in Qu'ran recitation and sermon presentation (waasi) constituted an impetus at the instance of his adoption of folktale narratives to arouse his audience listening pleasure. Odolaye Aremun's bravery/doggedness, corroborated by an appreciable height of integrity

advanced moral justification which enabled his capacity/ audacity as a social critic and commentator. Thus, this undaunted musician was able to interrogate and censure government policies and members of the public on subjects that are related to social, socio political, socio cultural, socio-economic and vices that ravaged the country within the ambit of music in his life time.

The Ilorin dialectic inflection that embodies Odolaye's repertoires is implicative for abating monotony that may emanate from incessant appropriation of the Yorùbá conventional tonality. Though, from the perspective of speech text, ethnic oriented expressions fall short of conventional credibility, such a measure succinctly invigorates audience listening pleasure. Severally, Ilorin tonal inflection in the similitude of other Yorùbá ethnic variants; Ijesa, Ekiti, Ondo, Ife, Egba, Ijebu, to mention a few aptly presents a characteristic sonic effects that augments his dexterous textual expressions. This development in gospel music is a landmark that aligns with Emielu's submission on the concept of "unity" and "variety". Odolaye's innate adaptation of Ilorin dialect has created a uniqueness on which his music repertoire is hinged.

Nuances of textual expressions which designate Odolaye Aremun's music, citing "Olowemowe" as a template present a hallmark of "indigeneity". African music aesthetic is supremely vested in textual intelligibility and functionality (Blacking). This reality is encapsulated in a Yoruba adage, "kinlonko" which literally may imply what type of music is being displayed. However, such a declaration metaphorically accentuates non acceptance of the musical performance in question. Proficient and artistic a musician may sound, if the textual content of his music does not appeal to the specific needs of the people; moral, educational, economic, medical, social among others, the performance is deficient. This stance underscores the contextual nature of African music which the Yoruba brand resonates. Figurative, proverbial and philosophical declarations that attend Odolaye's repertoires are not only functional, but constitutes Yorùbá linguistic dexterity deciphered as "ewa ede" (beauty of language). Functionally, figurative expression such as anaphora foster message retention while the use of imageries and philosophical declaration, namely; metaphors and proverbs often engrave the image of the phenomenon in the discourse in the subconscious mind of the audience, thereby, animating memory.

Odolaye Aremun's unalloyed allegiance towards African cultural heritage in general and particularly, Yoruba traditional music is gratifying. Reiteratively, the foregoing is evident in the intricate engagement of textual expressions by this renown exponent of dadakuada/sakara music. Mention should be made of other Nigerian patriots at the domain of music; I.K Dairo, Olando Owoh, Aruna Isola, Ayinla Omowura, Sikiru Ayinde Barister, Ayinla Kolligton, Sunny Ade, Ebenezer Fabiyi Obey, to mention a few. The list is extensive, however, almost all these forerunners of Yorùbá indigenous music are already deceased. Thus, the Yoruba postmodern society is destitute of such laudable and credible textual expressions. Though solace is drawn from the recorded works of such exponents in audio tape and video, complimented by social media including Youtube, Instagram, the life performances will ever be out of reach by the public essentially, the advocates and fans of such musical types or genres. As laudable as Oriki is within oruba cultural context, this textual attribute of Odolaye composition is not accorded the rightful preference in recent

times. Perplexedly, a vast number of the Yoruba; old and young are not abreast of their praise names, while others even deem it contemptuously to be aligned with. The efficacy of Odolaye Aremun's composition transcends the current historical epoch, though his live performance has ceased, the recorded works are apt, not only for promotion, but also for sustainability of African cultural heritage, which Yoruba exemplifies. Odolaye's assumed task of social commentary is quite commendable and terse for arousing government's sensitivity at various level to dereliction of duty. As it is severally observed, the concerned authorities are often indifferent to such pleas, however, the awareness launched has its place for posterity.

The Significance of Odolaye Aremun Music

The aesthetic of Yorùbá music lies heavily on textual effectiveness. Premium is placed on the text since the intended messages of songs are drawn from it. Notwithstanding the height of musical virtuosity brought into any composition or performance before Yorùbá audience, if such repertoire is deficient in textual messages that could appeal to practical experiences and feelings, it lacks credibility. This stance informs a Yoruba popular saying "kí lónko", literally translated as "what is he/she singing". "Ko" depicts "to sing". Metaphorically coined, kí lónko implies "what messages is the song advancing or disseminating? To such an audience, the musical presentation of discourse has not aroused their desirable interest. Odolaye Aremun could be applauded in the present context. His distinct and clarity of expression, coupled with the sonorous/ metallic voice is gratifying for message assimilation by his respective audience.

The integration of "oríkì" (praise chant) into Odolaye's compositions is exclusively availed by a dearth of musician with a firm grip of Yorùbáoral history and innate memory skill. Such rare opportunities vested in Odolaye Aremun succinctly foster the Yoruba's acceptance of his musical brand. "Oríkì" is apt for bringing the historical lane of the audience into limelight. Through oríkì, people in postmodern era are acquainted with their origin and ancestral details including cultural evolution, the past heroes, beliefs and norms of a society among other benefits (Adegbite, 1989). Besides keeping the society abreast of primordial life, oríkì is terse in arousing nostalgia in the personalities being praised. This stance is enabled by the textual content of the songs. Irrespective of age group, this African heritage often animates inspiration and willpower to deliver in tangible as well as in intangible terms.

In a society plagued with social ills, such as Nigeria, the textual context and content of Odolaye's compositions is credible for engendering moral rectitude. Through proverbial and metaphorical media, such deliveries are exigent for stemming the tide of menace in our society. An excerpt below attests to this position:

Elòmù àsí máa wùwà bí ẹni pékò ní jáde láyé mọ	Some individuals comport themselves as if they will live eternally
Àsímáa hùwà kántankańtan, régberègbe, Rádaràda, ránun, rànun	Such endeavor to be persistently deviant outrageous and recalcitrant
Edakun emáàjékú ókàa mọọ yín lówó	Kindly take cognizance of death

As a social critic, Odolaye's commentaries transcend personal or individual entity. Severally, subjects pertaining to the government are interrogated by this artist. Again, in the album *Olówemòwè*, contracted for this study, Odolaye Aremu tactfully engaged the imageries of epileptic person (*akúápá*) and lunatic (*wèrè*) to dwell on the prevailing economic ambience in the country, emanating from ineffective leadership. The following lines bespeak this scenario

Akúápá òmòpé n tí ñ sùn òda	The epileptic is insensitive of his ailment
Bí akúápá bá mòpé n tí ñ sùn òda	If the epileptic is sensitive of his ailment
Akúápá òní mọ́ ré lulẹ́ ñ gbàogbo	the epileptic will not be falling down incessantly

Another impetus engendered by Odolaye's music is contained in listening pleasure. Nuances of figurative and philosophical expressions in the compositions, spanning metaphor, anaphora, textual play, proverbial declaration do not only foster Yorùbá aesthetic of textual intelligibility, such devices also enliven listening pleasures. Monotony of literal language/textual dissemination is abated. The use of imageries exemplified by metaphor ascertains message retention since subjects of discourse in music are vastly engraved in the subconscious minds of the audience.

It is needful to applaud the laudable inputs of Odolaye Aremun alongside other Yorùbá artists that assiduously strive for cultural identity, cultural stability and cultural continuity within music sphere. Such a giant stride is imperative in the light of cultural marginalisation and moral decadence that are beclouding post modernism.

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the current cultural compromise that plagues various sectors of our society, particularly the arts, including music, a vestige of exponents, exemplified by Odolaye Aremun abounds. Citing "*olówemòwè*" as a template, nativity and a firm acquaintance with Yorùbá culture and tradition avidly infiltrated into Odolaye's works. The foregoing is evident in myriads of textual expressions, namely; "*oriki*", homage to the spirit word, dialectic inflection, figurative declarations such as metaphor, anaphora, textual as well as proverb. Odolaye's compositions are apt for amplifying Yorùbá aesthetic of textual intelligibility, moral rectitude, cultural identity and cultural sustainability.

Recommendations

Citing Odolaye Aremun repertoires as template, an immense cultural heritage resides in African indigenous music. Urgent interventions are inevitable to salvage such treasures from extinction for posterity and foster composition and performance. Musicians are custodians of culture and traditions. They are the mouthpiece of government and advocate of rectitude and societal values. Enabling ambience is needful for their arts to thrive. Government at various level of abstraction; local, state and federal should rise to apprehend challenges that plague the music industry. Intentional security, economic relieve and stemming the tide of piracy are a few measures that government could strategise to realise such mission.

An appreciable degree of esteem/worth should be vested in the musicians, essentially, those that are proponents of cultural heritage and traditions by the members of the public. They should no longer be assessed as the downtrodden and commoners of the society. A corroborative/collaborative effort is expedient between the musicians and the researchers to ensure sustainable research tasks. Investigators should be accorded endearing media by the musicians. Unfortunately, some of the artistes are often inaccessible at pre-field and post-field stages, a scenario that could be adduced to greed, mistrust and sense of insecurity.

This study resided within the framework of Ayinla Omowura's music (textual expressions). Ample opportunities abound to explore other scope, spanning characteristic tonal inflection, compositional techniques, musical element among others. Meanwhile, works of other indigenous musicians that extol African traditions are available for interrogation by prospective researchers. Late Isaiah Kehinde Dairo, Olando Owoh, Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, Adedara and Aremun exemplify the foregoing.

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