

Traditional Music in Nigeria: Example of Ayinla Omowura's Music

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Abstract

Music is a universal language of mankind. It is also a product of the creative genius in man. Good music makes this world a desirable place for all. It plays significant roles in shaping the society, takes away sadness and gives us happiness. To this effect, this paper concerns itself with traditional music in Nigeria with a particular focus on Apala- a popular Yoruba traditional music. It traced the origin and forms of Apala as emanating from diverse Yoruba sub-groups and most importantly, examined the significant role of traditional music as agent of change in Nigerian society, it also emphasized that music and musicians are not mere entertainers, but also instruments of social change. The music of Late Alhaji Ayinla Omowura, popularly called Egunmogaji was used as case study.

Keywords: Traditional music, Apala, Ayinla Omowura, Yoruba, Nigeria, Social change.

1. Introduction

Traditional music is that type of music which is created entirely from traditional elements and has no stylistic affinity with western music. Representatives of such traditional music are Apala, Sakara, Waka and Fuji (Euba 1988:126). Traditional music, in many ways, represents continuity with the past and gives opportunity of learning, in order that the present may be better understood (Euba, 1969: 475).

Therefore, music can be said to form an integral part of life in Africa. It follows the African through his entire day from early in the morning till late at night and through all the changes of his life, from the time he came into this world until after he has left it.

Bode Omojola in *Nigerian Art Music with an Introductory Study of Ghanaian Art Music*, discusses the origin of Nigerian traditional music which he traced to Islamic and European contact. He further discussed the emergence of highlife music, orchestral works, and vocal works and concluded with the Ghanaian type of traditional music (Omojola, 1995). On his part, J. H. Nketia in *The Music of Africa* focused on the historical, social and cultural background of musical organisation, musical practice and the significant aspect of styles. The writer concluded by showcasing the inter-relations of music and other related arts (Nketia, 1975).

Again, A. O. Olagunju in *Orin as a Means of Expressing World Views among the Yoruba* views music from another perspective. He grouped Yoruba traditional music into two: religious music and secular music. The writer believes music function in the social structure in four principal ways – as religious rituals, social organisation, as recreation and as a means of expressing world view (Olagunju, 1997).

While Oyebanji Mustapha in *A Literary Appraisal of Sakara: A Yoruba Traditional Form of Music*, discusses the various forms of music which he categories into religious and social. He examined Sakara – a popular Yoruba traditional music from a literary point of view. The writer identifies musical instruments needed for Sakara music, its style, themes, and its poetic device and concluded with the necessity to understand the literary aspect of the Yoruba traditional form of music (Mustapha, 1975). However, Akin Euba in *The Interrelationship of Music and Poetry in Yoruba Tradition* illuminates the connectivity between poetry and music in Yoruba land. He believed that in Yoruba traditional practice, poetry and music are synonymous (Euba, 1975). But, Mosunmola Omobiyi in *The Training of Yoruba Traditional Musicians* established the diversity of music. She stresses that music differs in sound, modes and styles of musical traditions. The book discusses the music and traditional life of the Yoruba part of Nigeria. She went further to identify professional musicians, their characteristics, stages of training and concluded with the need to encourage upcoming generations to learn and preserve traditional music (Omobiyi, 1975).

Again, Akin Euba in *Essays on Music in Africa, (Volume One)* discusses the interrelationship between music and religion in Yoruba society. He stresses the importance of religion in Yoruba society and gives an account of some

divinities and the type of music each of them enjoys. Euba shed light on the roles music plays in Yoruba society particularly in the royal courts. He concluded by discussing some popular Nigerian music and encouraged Nigerian musicians to do better in contributing to world development (Euba, 1988). Anthony King on his part in *Yoruba Sacred Music from Ekiti* examined music in relation to some major divinities of Yoruba culture. He went further to examine the instrument used, majority of which were talking drums and stresses the fact that each of the drums has their meaning and interpretation. The writer concluded by showcasing the relationship between speech tone and song (King, 1961). While, S. O. Olusoji in *Nigerian Dances for Piano (Volume One)* gives a concise background to some Nigerian traditional music such as Waka, Apala, Sakara, Fuji, Juju and so on. A brief biography of the pioneers of those traditional musicians was also examined. The writer highlights the themes and instruments used and also score some of this music on piano (Olusoji, 2010). Again, Akin Euba in *Music in Traditional Society* reviewed the present state of music in Nigeria by discussing the music of Nigerian traditions. He stresses the influence of Arabic and Europeans on Nigerian traditional music. Euba concluded by discussing various scholars' view on the need to preserve Nigerian traditional music (Euba, 1969).

Interestingly, O. G. Olatogun in *Music and National Unity* examined different unifying factors and usage of music. He discusses the role of music education in national unity, in sport and in mass media. The writer also views its usage in areas such as religion and festivals, and concludes by suggesting some efforts that need to be made to further enhance the unification role of music in the country for a more dynamic and united nation (Olatokun, 2000). Also, T. Ajirire and W. Alabi in *Three Decades of Nigerian Music (1960-1990)*, discuss a wide range of most popular music in Nigeria which includes: Afrobeat, Juju, Pop, Apala, Reggae, Fuji, Gospel, Kalangu, Highlife, Folks, Sakara and Waka. Each chapter of the book was devoted to a particular type of music. Chapter four was dedicated to Apala music with Haruna Ishola's autobiography opening the chapter. The chapter also talked about the style of Ayinla Omowura's Apala music and its uniqueness (Ajirire and Alabi, 1992).

While, Ajetunmobi et al (eds), in *Haruna Ishola – The Life and Time of Baba Ngani Agba*, examined the biography of the late Haruna Ishola, how he started his musical career, his family background and the formation of his Apala group. The book most importantly talked extensively on his form of Apala music, its origin and significance, characteristics, growth of Apala music and above all, the major functions of Apala music in the Nigerian society. The writer also examined his legacy and the future of Apala music (Ajetunmobi, et al, 2009).

It is true that these authors have through their works, significantly contributed towards knowledge. Yet, they have not been able to particularly enlighten and educate the society on the other roles or functions of traditional music aside entertainment, and the roles musicians play as agents of social change. Thus, this paper aims to shed more light on other major and important roles which traditional music play through the music of Ayinla Omowura, and as a result, upcoming generations would benefit tremendously. It is also expected to add to the vista of knowledge.

2. Historical Overview Of Music

In traditional society, there is no universal language of music in Nigeria. That is, each tribe has a musical language of its own (Euba, 1969: 476). Hence the three largest ethnic groups in Nigeria namely Hausa Igbo and Yoruba each have a music language peculiar to each... The Hausa type of traditional music is the royal music of the emir's palace or court. An example is the ceremonial music called 'rok on fada'. It is performed regularly in front of the emir's palace (Omojola, 1995: 3). Igbo traditional music is strongly tied to extra-musical events which provide a means of expressing group solidarity and beliefs from one generation to another. An example of traditional music in Igbo land includes those that accompany initiation rites into the masquerade cult (Omojola, 1995:4). While the Yoruba word "orin" (music) embraces all forms of traditional music in Yoruba culture. Yoruba traditional music consists of both instrumental and vocal music. In other words, when the Yoruba speak of "music" in its totality, it involves drumming, singing and dancing (Olagunju, 1997:23).

There are various forms of traditional music in Yoruba land, most of which can be grouped into two: religious music and social or secular music. Religious music is used during indigenous religious festivals in worshipping gods and entertaining the celebrants and their visitors. Some of the major religious music types are Dundun, Bata, Gbedu and Ikoko. Social music on the other hand is basically used in entertaining people during social activities, festivals and engagements. Apala, Sakara, Waka, Fuji, juju, and many others are the most popular forms of social music (Mustapha, 1975: 517).

The Yoruba are a music loving people. No aspect of their life is devoid of music. In joy or in sorrow, time of meeting and departure, time of exhortation or rebuke and so on. There is always music to express the situation. Music among the Yoruba is a reflection of people's feelings and those feelings center especially around their world view. That the Yoruba enjoy expressing part of their world view through music shows the appealing nature of music in their society (Olagunju, 1997:24 - 25).

3. Origin Of Apala Music

One indigenous social music type which needs exploitation for contemporary appeal is Apala (Olusoji, 2010:40). Apala is a Yoruba popular music whose origin could be traced to many sources cutting across such disciplines as music, linguistics, history, religion, and so on. Some scholars such as Mustapha in *A Literary Appraisal of Sakara: A Yoruba Traditional Form of Music* and S. O. Olusoji in *Nigerian Dances for Piano*, suggest that Apala evolved from indigenous music of the Yoruba and can be regarded as folk songs which later metamorphosed into social music (Olusoji, 2010:40).

Akin Euba in *Islamic Musical Culture among the Yoruba: A Preliminary Survey* opined that Apala began during the fasting season, young Muslims got together to perform music to awaken people for the early morning meal (Saari). But an informant said Apala has no particular date of origin, and that it has been in existence and was called "ere f'owo b'eti" (cover your ears). He also added that Apala has been in existence before the likes of Muraina, Alao and even Ligali Mukaiba, but it was popularised by Haruna Ishola and Ayinla Omowura.

One tradition indicates that Ede is the birthplace of Apala. That a man called Balogun and his son Tijani, were Apala singers, as early as 1938. Another suggested that Apala music had long started before 1938. Ajadi Ilorin for instance, was remembered to have played Apala music as early as 1930 (Ajetunmobi et al, 2009:38).

Whatever position is true, what is certain is that Apala evolved among different Yoruba sub-groups that drew their inspirations from popular Yoruba musical forms at different times. An informant also affirmed that Apala music originated from different Yoruba sub-groups. This explains why there are more than three different styles or forms of Apala music, as dictated by the frequency of sound production and combination of instruments used at different times. Each individual developed his own Apala version among the people of his community, getting inspiration from other Yoruba music, local experiences and creative ingenuity. Among such styles of Apala are:

- [i] Apala San-an - (cool beat) Haruna Ishola,
- [ii] Apala Songa – (hot beat) Ayinla Omowura,
- [iii] Apala Wiro – (in between Apala san-an and Songa),
- [iv] Apala Igunnu – (mixture of beat) Musiliu Haruna Ishola,
- [v] Apala Olalomi – (mixture of beat) Ayinla Omowura (Ajetunmobi et al, 2009:39).

Whichever the form, Apala music is noted for its highly proverbial folklore blended with percussive instruments of which drums play a leading role. Apala ensemble consists of Agidigbo (a thumb piano having four or five keys and a rectangular box resonator), Sekere (a gourd rattle) and Akuba. While an informant (Interview: Mama Obatala (70), 30, Balogun Parapo, Itoko, Abeokuta, April 26, 2010.) said Apala has only three instruments – Sekere, Akuba and Gangan. fig 1,2,3

Many artistes have distinguished themselves in the performance and practice of Apala music. Some of the major exponents who nurtured Apala from obscurity to prominence include: Ligali Mukaiba, Haruna Ishola, Ayinla Omowura, Adisa Aniyameta, Raimi Dogo, Lasisi Layemi, Aminu Olaribigbe, Lasisi Onipede and Kasunmu Alao. Some of those still present are Musiliu Haruna Ishola, Y.K. Ajadi, Dauda Epoakara, Bode Davies, Tunji Sotimirin, Femi Lewis and many others (Olusoji, 2010:40).

Composers all over the world and through the era of music have various methods of generating themes for their compositions. The two major factors which have served as agents for the conception of themes by the Apala musicians are religious and social events. The themes of Apala music thus include: religious theme, political theme, eulogical theme, satirical theme, educational theme, praise and cultural theme. The stylistic features that are used in Apala also include: allusion, parallelism, apostrophe, word play and repetition.

4. Ayinla Omowura's Early Life

Waidi Yusuf Gbogbo-Iwo popularly known as Ayinla Omowura was born at Itoko, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria in the 1930s. His mother's name was Wuramotu and his father's name was Yusufu. Ayinla was the first born of his

parents. Yusufu his father was a blacksmith, which he taught all his children including Ayinla. An informant said he drove taxi for a while before he finally chose the music line. fig4

Omwuramotu traveled to Mecca and Medina to perform the holy pilgrimage and thus became an Alhaji in 1975. He had 6 wives and 18 Children. His life was cut short on May 8, 1980 through a fracas which occurred between him and his band boys, and was hit on the head with a beer bottle by his manager-Baiyewu. While other accounts maintain that there was a misunderstanding between Ayinla and Baiyewu not with the band boys. It happened at Itoko, Abeokuta in front of a beer parlour and not at a show. It was said that Omowura had been looking for Baiyewu for a while, so when he spotted him at the beer parlour, he told his driver to go and fetch the police for Baiyewu's arrest. Baiyewu then hit Ayinla on the head with a cup (tumbler) which he was using to drink in a bid to escape police arrest, but this eventually led to Ayinla's death at Ijaye General Hospital Abeokuta (conclusion drawn from several interviews).

5. His Musical Career

Alhaji Ayinla Omowura's musical career took off when he started with a brand of music called 'Olalomi' in the early 1950s; this brand of Apala music was so popular that he became the darling of the young people both in Nigeria and the West Coast. This brand faded with time. His career took a new dimension when he joined "EMI" records in 1970 and recorded a single titled 'Aja to foju d'ekun' (<http://www.Ayinla Omowura Biography>, July 12, 2009).

Alhaji Ayinla Omowura's music is highly entertaining with strong, energy-driven rhythms and melodic lines spiced with thought provoking, proverbial and anecdotal lyrics. He established himself as a force to reckon with in the practice and performance of Apala music. Ayinla's influence has manifested itself on the youth and their execution of the various social music forms of today, a trend which is a glaring testimony to his innovativeness, and depth of his creativity. The young generations of Fuji performers headed by Wasiu Alabi Pasuma are direct disciples who have imbibed the musical spirit of Omowura (Olusoji, 2008:63).

Some of the hit tunes recorded by him include: "Anu won lo se mi", "Owo Udoji", "Late Oba Gbadebo", "Danfo O si were", "Taxi Drivers", "Awa kii se Olodi won", "Aja to foju d'ekun", "25x40", "Festac 77", "Challenge Cup" and many more. Omowura has 22 albums to his credit within 10 years of his musical career. The 19th and 20th album - 'Awa kii se Olodi won', and '25x40' were his last records and were released after his sudden death in 1981 by 'EMI Records' which later became known as "Ivory Music". An informant (Interview: Mr. Mufutau Adeleye (70), M Ade Record, Adatan Roundabout, Abeokuta, April 27, 2010) said his band released two other albums thereafter, thus Ayinla has 22 albums all together.

Ayinla Omowura in his days was popularly known as the king of Ragamuffin Apala. He was wholly a street-bred, street tutored and street acclaimed songster. Many of his followers and admirers who were mainly youths and traders were fascinated by his brand of Apala music, usually couched in slangs, uncouth and bawdy words. They gave him such titles as 'Alhaji Costly' due to his penchant for expensive jewelries and attires, and the 'Egun Mogaji' of Egbaland, given to him by the Egba kingdom to show his exploits and prowess in Apala Music (Olusoji, 2008:64).

6. Impact Of Ayinla Omowura's Music On Nigerian Society

In African society, music is accorded a great importance because of its uses, impact and achievement. Previous chapter shows how music could be used as a medium of information and communication, as a means of advertisement, a potent means of preserving history, as a means of admonishment and exhortation and lastly, as a medicine for the soul. Here, this chapter will examine the basic impact of Ayinla Omowura's Apala music on Nigerian society.

7. Socio-Cultural And Religious Impact

Music in Nigeria is always functional. It has been closely knitted with lots of social activities such as sporting activities, mass media, to mark ritual activities, like weddings or funerals and most importantly, for entertainment and artistic enjoyment. There are renditions for different occasions for stimulation. For instance, music helps to keep the rhythm of workers on the field especially farmers, mechanics, hunters, weavers, dyers, bricklayers, carpenters and even traders.

Nowadays music has been associated with sporting activities and it seemed music is the delicious soup with which

the sumptuous dinner of sports is taken. Artistes have produced works aimed not only at providing support but also to boost the morale of the national teams as well as restore confidence in the mind of both the spectators and the masses. (Olatokun, 2000: 132 - 133) Example of such music was performed in Ayinla Omowura's album tagged the 'Challenge Cup'. He Sings:

comentiri to n'lo ni gboro
mo fe yan leti araye
ni Legosi '74) 2ce
iroyin o to afoju ba
Challenge Cup ton gba ni josi (Ayinla Omowura and his Apala group, volume 6:1:1.)

The above song is translated thus:

The commentary that is prevalent now
I want to bring it
to the hearing of the world
in Lagos '74) 2ce
seeing is believing
in the Challenge Cup they played
not quite long ago.

Traditional music such as Apala is one of the strongest agents of cultural reflection. One method of finding out about culture of a people is to examine how they conceptualise their music. Music is a stable cultural trait and therefore provides a useful basis for determining the diffusion of other cultural traits. For instance, an ancient African drum in a museum may be an object of the art, but musicologist will want to play on it so as to find out what kind of sound it produces and to what use it is put, an archeologist will be interested in examining the woodwork to determine its make and age. While a historian will be curious about its historical origins and dispersal patterns (Ogunbona, 2003: 119). In the same vein, music is used during national festivals like the festivals of arts and culture, Independence Day celebrations and so on. Below is Ayinla Omowura's music on the national census conducted in Nigeria in 1973.

Anfani senso yi po
fun eni ti o leti sunmo mi nibi
November 25, 1973
lojo Sunday...
.....(Ayinla Omowura and his Apala group, volume 5:1:1).

It is translated thus:

Advantages of census is much
for those who do not understand move closer to me
November 25, 1973
on Sunday..

Apala music has a very prominent role in religion as it unites the mind with the body and soul and equally serves as a perfect linkage with God. Music also set one free from physical and spiritual bondage. The role of music in religious observance of the Yoruba cannot be overstated. Either in traditional or in the foreign religions, music is an important adjunct to all religious services. (Olusoji, 2008:34) Music has spiritual functions especially in the worship of various deities, giving thanks, purification of the individual groups or community, warding off evil forces, imagined or real enemies as well as appeasing offended deities for violation of taboos or social morality. (Ajetunmobi, et al, 2009:44) Ayinla Omowura's Apala music has this spiritual function in that they talk about God's protection, love, kindness, generously and hope. Various forms of prayers are said during the performance of Omowura's music; he offered prayer of long life for his clients and fans and the society. In all, prayer is an important feature of Apala music. Ayinla Omowura in his volume 13 urged the society to offer prayers to God, so that all will be well with our land, economy and the world at large. He sings:

Ile aye den yi lo sopin)2ce
Omo Adamo se n' roju aye

gbogbo nkan lo ti won bi oju
Gari two naira ko ju teni meji...(Ayinla Omowura, volume 13:2:1)

It is translated thus:

The world is coming to an end (2ce)
Everyone, are you seeing what the world
is turning to,
everything has become very costly
two naira Gari
is not enough for two people...

8. Political And Economic Impact

One major issue that dominated most of the compositions of Apala musician is politics. Political satire is one form of poetic device used by the people to express their grievances against political office holders. Some of the compositions of Apala music are laden with political messages either for or against an important political personality in the society or its political affiliations (Olusoji, 2008:120- 121). Current events, particularly political developments are continually encoded in popular song texts.

Apart from political affiliations, composers of Apala music have also actively participated in political discourse through their music. For instance in political gatherings today, music are the instruments used for canvassing support for aspirants in an election. It is also used to pull down or tarnish the image of opponents. Thus, musicians have brought to the fore, important social, economic and political problems bedeviling the Nigerian states and the Yoruba in particular (Olusoji, 2008:120-121). Therefore, musicians are in their own right political cum musical enigmas, held in awe by their supporters and can sway political fortunes in favour or against any politician in the society. The example given below is an excerpt from Ayinla Omowura's music- "Eyin oselu wa" (You our politicians).

Leader: K'okunrin ri ejo, ki obirin pa
ki ni awa nfe

Chorus: ki ejo ma se lo la wa n'fe
k'alagbada ko k'agbada
ka jo ma se Ijoba ko 'leewo
ki Naijiria sa ti r'oju

(Ayinla Omowura, volume 16:1:1)

The song is translated thus:

Leader: if a man sees a snake
and a woman kills it
what do we want?

Chorus: what we want is for
the snake not to escape
be it civilian or not, let us govern together
provided Nigeria is at peace.

As political and economic power is inseparable in government, so it is in music. Thus, musicians eulogize individuals in government in order to enrich their pockets. An excellent rendition of music on functions could evoke deep rooted emotions from lovers and fans, who in high spirit could 'plaster paper currency' on the forehead and other parts of the body of the musician. This act is popular, and is called spraying. It is the expected reward for good performance. (Ajetunmobi:42)

Aside from reward of an excellent performance from the fans, the music industry has become a very lucrative business in present day Nigeria. It is no longer seen as a job of nonentities, but rather they are called celebrities. An informant (interview: Mr. Mathew Aremu (55), 32, Balogun Parapo, Itoko, Abeokuta, April 26, 2010) gave account of how Ayinla Omowura in his life time uses his money to help and cater for the needy. Also record sellers make huge amount of money from the sales of these records. An informant (interview: Mr. Mufutau Adeleye (70),

M. Ade Record, Adatan Roundabout, Abeokuta, April 27, 2010.) said Ayinla Omowura's music sells ten times better than contemporary music.

9. Philosophical Impact

Apala music has a pivotal place in African society. It is used not only for social events but also to warn, correct, admonish and exhort. Apala music of Ayinla Omowura is laden in historical information and lessons of history for those who care to learn and the messages are always clear. The theme of warning is an important composition in Apala music. It may be against indiscipline in children, infidelity in women and indolence in men. In the example below, Ayinla Omowura warns women against bleaching and the repercussion there in.

omoge iwoyi, o fe baye je.
duro bi Olorun ba se da e
ma ba awo je fun eni bie
kan ma si e mo tori afe aye
o bora tan o di oyinbo (Ayinla Omowura volume 15:1:2).

The above song is translated thus:

young ladies of these days
they want to corrupt the world.
Remain as God created you
do not spoil your skin for your creator
so that you will not be mistaken for someone else
because of the vanities of this world
you have turned into white persons

In another dimension and as a way of preaching good morals, the Yoruba have songs that condemn acts of wickedness and bad character. These types of songs go further to complement the place of good character among the Yoruba. Hence, the Yoruba have songs that spell out retributive justice to any perpetrator of wicked acts in a way that the perpetrator as well as his offspring will reap the fruit of any of all wicked acts perpetrated. This reflects in the following song:

Eni ro'bi simi
ibi a ba o
iya yin ni won ma jigbe...

It is translated thus:

Whoever thinks evil towards me
will see evil,
it is your mother that will be kidnapped.

Going further, the Yoruba believes good character is the bedrock of whatever one becomes in life. It is their strong belief that good character can bring one fortune while bad character can bring doom. This good character is called 'Iwapele'. Anyone whose character is adjudged good is an 'Omoluabi' among the Yoruba. This includes respect for old age, loyalty to one's parent's, honesty in all public and private dealings, devotion to duty, readiness to assist the needy and the sick, sympathy, sociability, courage and itching desire for work, and many other desirable qualities. The Yoruba's consider the above qualities so important and cannot escape being expressed in music.

10. Educational Impact

In like manner, Ayinla Omowura incorporated into his compositions, themes which propound enlightenment; corrective, reformatory and educative purposes in the society. Given the environment in which music is omnipresent; and participative, children are born into this natural musical environment and unconsciously begin to learn the basic patterns of their musical culture by precept and example, the moment they are born. Music education therefore begins from infancy and it continues in adult life through a variety of processes. Thus Ayinla Omowura's Apala music correct and educate both young and old, male and female, literate and illiterate. He sings:

iya nbe fun omo ti o gboran
ekun nbe fun omo to n'sa kiri
afowuro sofo ranti ojo ola o
iya le rodo ki baba roko
ko ranti pe
yio ku e pelu iwa e...

The above song is translated thus:

a child that fail to yield
to advice will suffer and wander.
Wastrel, remember tomorrow o
your mother may die
and you may equally lose your father,
remember you will be left
alone with your character...

The above song admonished children who refuse to go to school to desist from the habit, and also told them the likely outcome of their disobedient act. Ayinla Omowura's music also educates and encourages women to remain steadfast in their husband's house and discouraged all forms of fornication. He warns:

Pansaga ranti ojo ola o)2ce
o je rori e wo ki o tun bo.

Translated thus:

Fornicators remember your tomorrow
you had better think straight
and beg your creator

Ayinla in the above song established the fact that prostitution or fornication can never yield any good thing but rather, yield doom. It is clear that some, if not most, of Ayinla Omowura's music teaches, encourages, and helps to reform the society. A good example is Ayinla's admonition against skin bleaching which was released in track 2 of volume 15 of his music. It was noticed then that skin bleaching drastically reduced because the song was used to make jest of skin bleaching in every nook and cranny of the Yoruba society

11. Conclusion

Core issues such as the origin of music, evolution of Apala music of the Yoruba, the interdependence and interrelation between Apala music and the society, its usefulness and impact were addressed in this paper. The origin has been traced to many sources by scholars. Nevertheless, the paper established that Apala music originated from diverse sub-groups of the Yoruba, this had a more profound impact than other sources highlighted in the paper. The study established that Apala music is of more than three forms. One is of cool beat, while the others are funkier. Some major exponents of Apala music were examined, while the works of Ayinla Omowura was fully utilised as reference.

The paper examined the significant role of music as an agent of change in the society by emphasising the enormous impact of Apala music and also established that musicians act as agents of change in the society, rather than mere entertainers. The Apala music of Ayinla Omowura was used to buttress this view point.

Most importantly, the paper established traditional music as agent of social change in the society via its impact. The Apala music of Ayinla Omowura was again used to establish these impacts. They include: socio-cultural and religions impact, political and economic impact, philosophical impact and educational impact.

Aside from discussing topical issues, Ayinla Omowura's music is composed to eulogise. It is full of praise singing in honour of wealthy personalities and prominent kings in the society. His music educates, corrects, advertises and it is full of satirical themes. Above all, Ayinla's music is directed at reflecting the place of history in Nigerian society. This is so because his music has been used as a mirror to give a visual picture of past events which are of

great importance and has equally aided the documentation of the history of the Nigerian society. In all, Omowura's music serves as the watch dog of the people especially on governmental issues.

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Note 1: "Iwapele: means "gentle person", while "Omoluwabi" means "good character".

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Fig 1: Sekere



Fig 2: Akuba



Fig 3: Gangan

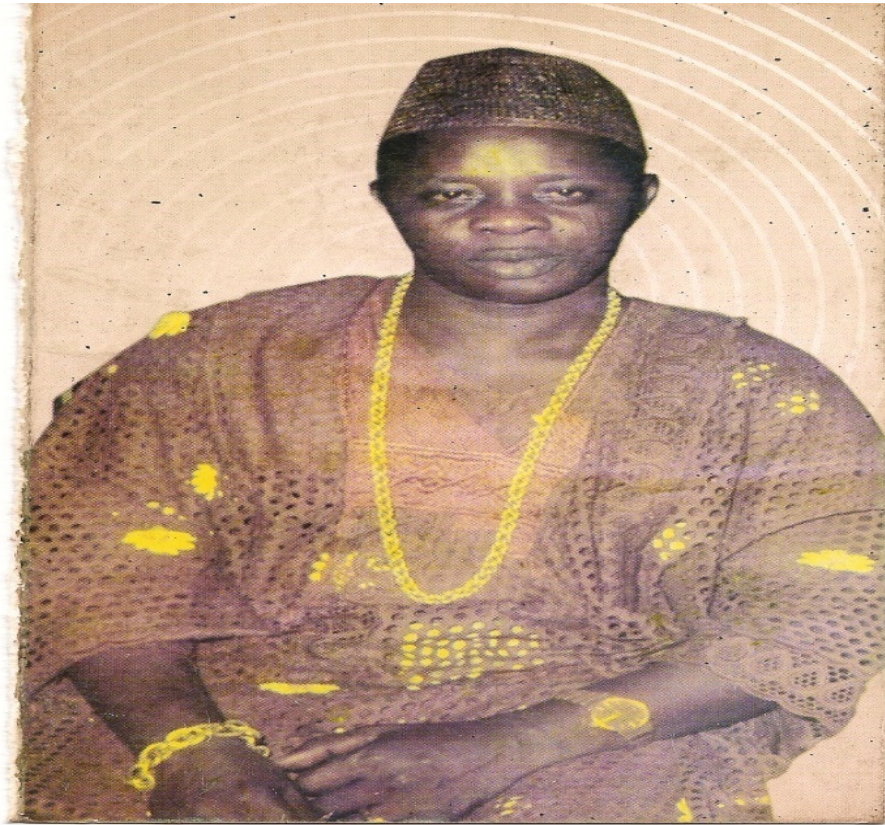


Fig 4: Late Alhaji Ayinla Omowura