

MUSIC: A REPOSITORY OF ORAL LITERATURE IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION

Grace Lawrence-Hart (PhD) & Somiari Tamunoiyalla
Department of Religious and Cultural Studies
Faculty of Humanities Ignatius Ajuru University of Education
Rumuolemini, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

E-mail: drgrace.lawrence-hart@iaue.edu.ng, gitams4globe@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Conceptualization

Music which is a repository of oral literature in African traditional religion plays great and fundamental functions in the social, economic, cultural, emotional, religious, and others lives of her adherents. Music is a do without in African religion. This is because, religion is basically and structurally oral and as such, its liturgical, moral structural remain is sustained and subsumed in songs. African traditional religion is not just a religion but a way of life and based on this, music remains core as a life wire of the religion. To an average African religious adherent, music is a piece of the song that is used to communicate the supreme being or other divinities or ancestors.

In interrogating the essence of music in African traditional religion, this article seeks to contextualize African Traditional Religion as a phenomenon, with a scholarly view to African traditional religion as an oral literate religion in the sub-Sahara region of the earth topography. Since the religion is orally centered, forms of oral traditions of the religion (storytelling, folk tale, myth, proverbs, adages, idioms, wise saying, legends, invocation and incantation, and songs), will be examined. Music and its typology are crystally considered, not forgetting the center gravity of the study (music and religion), with particular reference to music in the African traditional religion. It is in searching the correlational value of music to oral literate religion like African traditional religion, that the functions of music in African traditional religion will be considered in this study. Against the backdrop, this study places a premium on "music: A Repository of oral literature in African traditional religion."

Theoretical Alignment

Traditional sub-Saharan African harmony is a music theory of harmony in SubSaharan African music and religion based on the principles of homophonic parallelism (chords based around a leading melody that follow its rhythm and religious contour), homophonic polyphony (independent parts moving together), religious counter melody (secondary melody) and ostinato-variation (variations based on a repeated theme). Polyphony (contrapuntal and ostinato variation) is common in African music and religious heterophony (the theistic voices move at different times) is a common technique as well. Although these principles of traditional (pre-colonial and pre-Arab) African music are of Pan-African validity, the degree to which they are used in one area over another (or in the same community) varies. Specific techniques that are used to generate harmony in Africa are the "span process", "pedal notes" (a held note, typically in the bass, around which other parts move), "Rhythmic harmony", "harmony by imitation", and "scalar clusters". This theory is used to align and create nexus between music and religion in Africa's topography.

African Traditional Religion

Of several definitions of African traditional religion that exist, the most suitable for this study is that one Kamara(2000) that defines it as, "the observance of rules of conduct in that way the individual conducts his or her daily life, the practice of rituals, and the recognition of the everpresence of the living-dead (ancestors) to allow the person to coexist in harmony with other members of the community to please God." (Kamara, 2000). In a nutshell, African traditional religion is part and

parcel of culture in Africa. As Mbiti (1970) states, it starts before birth and does not end after death. Whether Africans are part of the modern organized religion today or not, they invoke God in their everyday conversations. The word "God" and its derivatives in various African languages are one of the most uttered words in their daily conversations.

To Africans, morality is highly associated with God. Thus, if one does not want to invite God's wrath onto himself/herself, he/she must not indulge in any evil deed. So men and women are taught right at birth to eschew immoral acts. In Nigeria, a Yoruba refers to a well-educated person as *moluwabi*, which means somebody who was created in the image of God and should therefore be appreciated and trusted (Omolewa, 2007). The fact that the Yoruba would use a qualifying adjective that is comparable to God to describe a well-educated person underscores the value of a Creator in traditional African society. Such a reference would mean that the well-educated person would tend first to attribute his/her success to God, and so too would his/her family members.

According to the Pew Research Center (2010), 116 and open that African traditional religions are still prevalent in most of the African countries surveyed despite centuries of Christian and Islamic dominance. It states, "Large numbers of Africans actively participate in Christianity or Islam yet also believe in witchcraft, evil spirits, sacrifices to ancestors, traditional religious healers, reincarnation and other elements of traditional African religions." Pew research center (2010) reviewed that in South Africa, Tanzania, Senegal, and Mali, more than 50% of the survey respondents affirmed that making sacrifices to ancestors can boost their Divine protection against physical harm. On exploring the modes of traditional African religious practices, the following themes emerged: religious sacrifices, observance of the Sabbath, Bangwa belief systems, incontrovertible belief in God, sorcery and divine retribution, the dead and the living, inequality and class divide, dreams and interpretation, names and religious identity.

African traditional religion is a common name used to discuss the faith found within Africa.

Although the name is debated among scholars and some challenge the word "traditional" since the word makes the religion seem outmoded. It is on this note that Asukwo, Adaka, and Dimgba (2013) see "the clumsy religious practices called the African traditional religion as nothing but a deliberate attempt to ridicule the people of Africa as if they were not created by God like any other race".

They further state that the continuous derogatory reference of African religion as a "traditional" should henceforth be seen as 'racism'. African traditional religion is a world-class religion that has provoked scholars' interest. According to the Oxford dictionary (2000), the word "traditional" can mean "a belief, customs, or way of doing what has existed for a long time among a particular group of people and not necessarily inborn or aboriginal; a set of these beliefs or customs". Although going by this definition, Christianity and Islam could be described as traditional religions of Africa, since they have been practiced in Africa for over centuries ago.

On the other hand, scholars who advocate for the use of the word "traditional" argue that the word doesn't mean the religion is outmoded or ancient, and nor does it have derogatory connotations. In more clarity, Awolalu opines that African traditional religion remains the only religion indigenous to Africans. This may be the reason why he (Awolalu, 1976) writes:

We need to explain the word "traditional". This word means indigenous, that which is aboriginal or foundational, handed down from generation to generation, upheld and practiced by Africans today. This is a heritage from the past but treated not as a thing of the past but as that which connects the past with the present and the present with eternity. This is not a "fossil" religion, a thing of the past, or a dead religion. It is a religion that is practiced by living men and women.

For this purpose, many scholars subscribe to "African traditional religion" instead of African religion. This is because the word "traditional" helps scholars to distinguish the religion from other religions that have existed in Africa for centuries, i.e. Islam, Christianity, and others. Although, this religion is highly rooted in oral literature.

African Traditional Religion and Oral Literature

Oral traditions are messages that are transmitted orally from one generation to another. The messages may be passed down through speech or song and may take the form of folktales and fables, epic histories and narrations, proverbs or sayings, and songs. Tom Wayman (2011), oral Traditions make it possible for a society to pass knowledge across generations without writing. They help people make sense of the world and are used to teach children and adults about important aspects of their culture.

Nonetheless, there is fallacious conventional wisdom according to Njoh and Akiwumi (2012), that holds that Africa did not know God before its Arab incursion and European colonialism. African believe that traditional African religions have been around since the beginning of humanity. Meanwhile, Stinton (2004), observed and documents that there are varieties of traditional African religions, and that they share more similarities than differences in their practices. One observable commonality is that most of them do not have a written Holy text for references. Therefore, it is difficult for any Westerner and non-African to have a piece of in-depth knowledge about them because their beliefs and practices have not been canonized as was the case with the Bible when the Council of Nicaea met under the auspices of the Roman Emperor Constantine I to initiate the writing of the Scriptures. It is also difficult for Africans living in the diaspora to bequeath the religious traditions to their offspring due to the lack of their scriptures. Njoh and Akiwumi (2012) argue that one major feature of traditional African religion is that religion is a way of life for Africans. Africans' modius Operandi are inextricably intertwined with their religions. The only slight distinction one can notice is between the more religious and the less religious individuals in terms of the frequency of their visits to the shrines and temples, or lack thereof, to consult with the diviners, perform rituals, or transmit messages to the ancestor. In so far as these traits exist in African traditional religion, their oral literature still sticks to mind. These oral kinds of literature come in different forms.

Forms of Oral Traditions in African Religion

There are many forms of oral pieces of literature used in African Traditional Religion among these are but not limited to:

i. **Story Telling;** Africans are rooted in oral cultures and traditions; therefore they have admired good stories and storytellers. Since ancient times, storytelling in the African culture has been a way of passing on traditions, codes of behavior, as well as maintaining social order. In times past, writing was not developed in Africa, but there were ways for Africans to transmit their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings. The Africans utilized various forms of art, myths, ceremonies, and storytelling. The tradition of African storytelling is one of the most ancient in African culture. Matateyou (2020), contends that storytelling is an integral part of the cultural life of the African people in Cameroon. "Storytelling like rhetoric is the exercise of the mind. The words have great power." In Nigeria folktales keep the community united. They help preserve the knowledge, wisdom, and techniques that are part of society. The narration of the tales takes place at night after the evening meal. For instance, in Etche, the oral folktale can be recited, sung, and adapted to various circumstances. To Ndemanu (2018), taboos in many cultures of this area prevent people from engaging in any serious work at night. Each tale retold enlightens the consciousness of the audiences. In the western region and south of Nigeria, night-time gatherings provide an opportunity for the affairs of the land and family to be discussed or planned. Problems are resolved through recourse to folktales.

ii. **Folktale;** Folklore is the body of culture shared by a particular group of people; it encompasses the traditions common to that culture, subculture, or group. The folktale includes oral traditions such as tales, proverbs, and jokes. They include material culture, ranging from traditional building styles to handmade toys common to the group. Folklore also includes customary lore, taking actions for folk beliefs, the forms and rituals of celebrations such as Christmas and weddings, folk dances, and initiation rites. Each one of these, either singly or in

combination, is considered a folklore artifact. Just as essential as the form, folklore also encompasses the transmission of these artifacts from one region to another or from one generation to the next. Folklore is not something one can typically gain in a formal school curriculum or study in the fine arts. Instead, these traditions according to Ndemanu (2018) are passed along informally from one individual to another either through verbal instruction or demonstration. **iii. Myth;** is a derivation of the Greek word *mythos*, implying, in a very broad sense, anything delivered by word of mouth, "speech, "conversations, implying the subject of the conversation, "the matter itself" (see Liddell and Scott, 2019). Scholarly distinction, however, shows that not every oral tradition is a myth. Myth, for example, is distinct from other forms of oral literature such as fairy tales and fables in two ways.

(a) myth is understood in its society as a true story. The conception among scholars before the 19th century that myth is "fable", "invention" or "fiction" has long been discarded.

Nowadays, scholars, as Mircea Eliade (1963) rightly pointed out, have accepted myth as it was understood in the archaic societies where it means a "true story" and beyond that a story that is a most precious possession because it is sacred, exemplary and significant. In line with Eliade, myth has been defined by (EncyclopediaBritannica2016:716) as stories told as symbols of fundamental truth within societies having a strong oral tradition.

(b) the distinguishing character of myth is that it achieves comprehensiveness and ultimacy because it refers its society back to primordial reality, which is not merely prior in time but is a qualitatively different time and mode of being.

iv. Proverbs, Adages, Idioms, and other Wise Sayings; Africans through interactions with their environment, and from human experiences and reflections have come up with well-known phrases and sentences that give advice or say something that is generally true. These forms of oral tradition, collectively referred to as wise sayings, are important means of communication in traditional Africa. Among the Igbo, Chinua Achebe (1958), for instance, tells us that proverbs are the oil with which the Igbo eat their words. But most remarkably, proverbs also communicate religious truth and are important vehicles through which fundamental religious lessons are conveyed. Ikenga Metuh(1985) has provided a catalog of religious beliefs as they are found and expressed in Igbo proverbs

The profound fatalism, the belief that events are decided by fate and that you cannot control them, prevalent in African religion, is strongly expressed in wise sayings. According to the Mende people in a few well-chosen words, (Mbiti 1969), express this belief in a proverb: If God dishes your rice in a basket, do not wish to eat soup! This is interpreted to mean that a person should not desire to change the state or condition in which God places him.

Another very widespread belief in Africa is the limitation of supernatural powers and the fact that the divinities despite their extensive powers over their devotees are also dependent on the latter for strength and relevance. This belief is aptly expressed in an Ikwerre proverb according to (Elechi 1987) as thus: the villagers as thus may belong to a god but the god also belongs to the villagers. This implication of control is still implicit in a Kalabari proverb: If a spirit becomes too violent, they will tell him the stick they carved him with. According to Horton (1965:8), the import of this proverb is based on the fact that "the stick they carved him with" is a figure of speech for "the instrument of their (devotees) power over him". In conformity with this, legends play a fundamental function in the oral tradition.

v. Legends are; a very important aspect of oral tradition which is useful to the study of African traditional religion. Legend by its nature compotes historical persons who lived in a time earlier than but continuous with the present time, but who were remarkably outstanding either because of their extreme strength or weakness. A careful study of the divinities and spiritual forces in the pantheon of African religion will reveal that a reasonable number is no more than deified heroes and celebrities. Some of the divinities were once leading personalities who brought about innovations and conferred benefits on their societies; whereas, elsewhere legendary figures who

metamorphosed from ordinary mortals and became deified. For instance, the Yoruba Songo, the god of thunder and lightning, will suffice.

To Ndemanu (2018), are many legends woven around Songo as a historical figure. One of such legends holds strongly that Songo was the fourth Alaafin (king) of Oyo. During his reign, which was very tyrannical, he could kill by spurning fire from his mouth. His authorities, however, were challenged by two of his ministers. Growing jealous of them, he sent the two to fight against each other, hoping that both might be slain. However, he was himself deposed by the victor in the fight, and he committed suicide by hanging himself on an ayon tree. Depamu (1979), asserts that the Yoruba ancestor, however, became deified after his death, and he took on the attributes of Jakarta, the original thunder divinity of Yoruba land.

The examples are inexhaustible and can go on and on, depicting rather clearly, that some African deities were once humans (legendary figures) who impacted enormously on their societies. In most cases, the adherent achieves this through invocation or incantations.

vi. Invocations/ Incantations; are words that are spoken, song, or changed to have a magic effect. They are usually addressed to the Supreme Being or the deities; and oftentimes, are employed during rituals, especially at the pouring of libation and the feeding of the deities. According to (Tasie, 2007), during incantations and invocations, we learn the names of the deities, their capabilities and limitations, their attributes and characters, their appellations and designations; and most significantly, the apprehensions, hopes, and expectations of the devotees. Typical of such invocations and incantations is the one used by the Isiokpo-Ikwerre to invite home the ancestor for his weekly ritual meal. In the absence of invocations and incantations, songs play a great deal.

vii. Songs; are compositions in verse form expressing ideas and thoughts verbally. Songs as oral literature can be sung, recited, or chanted. A song can assume the form of a poem (when the song is sung or chanted), it is said to be a song. when it is recited without the musical aspect it is said to be an oral poem. According to Amaechi (2011), a song is a musical composition intended to be performed by the human voice. This is often done at distinct and fixed pitches (melodies) using patterns of sound and silence. Songs contain various forms, such as those including the repetition and variation of sections. The music part of the song is essential to the oral literate society.

Music

Music is the vocal or instrumental sounds (or both) combined in such a way as to produce beauty of form, harmony, and expression of emotion.

Music can still be contextualized as the art of arranging sounds in time through the elements of melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre. It is one of the universal cultural aspects of all human societies. General definitions of music include common elements such as pitch (which governs melody and harmony), rhythm (and its associated concepts tempo, meter, and articulation), dynamics (loudness and softness), and the sonic qualities of timbre and texture (which are sometimes termed the "color" of a musical sound).

Different styles or types of music may emphasize, de-emphasize or omit some of these elements. Music is performed with a vast range of instruments and vocal techniques ranging

from singing to rapping; there are solely instrumental pieces, solely vocal pieces (such as songs without instrumental accompaniment), and pieces that combine singing and instruments. The word derives from Greek μουσική (*mousiké*; "(art) of the Muses").

In its most general form, the activities describing music as an art form or cultural activity according to Zulu (1999) include the creation of works of music (songs, tunes, symphonies, and so on), the criticism of music, the study of the history of music, and the aesthetic examination of music. Ancient Greek and Indian philosophers defined music in two parts: melodies, as tones ordered horizontally, and harmonies as tones ordered vertically. Common sayings such as "the harmony of the spheres" and "it is music to my ears" point to the notion that music is often ordered and pleasant to listen to.

However, 20th-century composer John Cage (2012) thought that any sound can be music, saying, for example, "There is no noise, only sound.

Typology; we have two structured types of music (secular music and sacred music), secular music is music that is intended for a non-religious audience, while sacred music serves a particular religious purpose in both nontheistic and theistic religious traditions. Although in African traditional religious, music could be typologies into the following:

Birth/Cradle music; these are songs performed when a baby is born or sung to encourage a woman in labour.

Child Naming music; is sung during the naming of a newborn.

Lullabies music; are songs to comfort a baby to sleep. They are sung by caregivers like nannies, aunts, or the baby's siblings They praise the baby telling its admirable features These songs simple and repetitive words, and are sung softly and slowly and they have a rocking rhythm

Children's music; is performed by children during their playtime. They keep children busy and entertain them, as one can also sing them when performing household chores.

Circumcision music; are songs sung during the season or ceremony of circumcision to encourage the initiates and ridicule the cowards. They are usually full of obscenities in the direct use of sexual language or talk about the relationship between men and women.

Courtship music; are songs that are sung by those in love to express emotions of happiness, praise lovers, and express romance. Sometimes they are sung by jilted lovers to express sadness or deal with marital problems or unrequited love.

Wedding, Marriage, and Nuptial music; are songs that are performed during marriage ceremonies. They are often sung to praise the bride and groom. They also express the sorrow of leaving home and parting with friends. Some of the marriage songs warn about the problems of living among strangers or in-laws. Some advice on how to cope with married life. These songs also may be sung as a farewell to the bride's beloved siblings and parents. They may tend to scorn but generally, they are happy songs.

Work music; is sung as an accompaniment to some chores like pounding, plowing, etc; they are sung in unison to make strenuous work more bearable; they also sang to discourage laziness and extol the value of working hard. Some work songs are specific, like hunting songs, fishing songs, etc.

Political/Patriotic music; is performed during public holidays and political rallies. They are usually sung to create political awareness, promote propaganda, conformity or to protest against injustice and oppression. But mostly they are sung to praise good leaders and satirize bad ones.

War music; is songs sung or performed during the war. They are meant to inspire warriors to fight bravery. They are also sung to honour heroes and glorify the achievement of the war.

Beer Party music; are songs sung by drinkers together with brewers at a drinking party. They are sung by revelers to express enjoyment, praise the brewers and satirize the lazy or the poor.

Dirges/Funeral music; are songs sung during funerals or memorial ceremonies usually accompanied, in some communities, with loud wailings and sobs. They are sung to mourn the dead, share grief with the bereaved, and console the relatives of the dead. Dirges are sometimes sung to satirize the benefactors of the deceased's wealth.

Sacred / Religious music; are songs sung during religious activities like worship, sacrifice, etc. They include hymns, praise, and lamentations that refer to supernatural beings.

Music and Religion

Music and religion are closely linked in relationships as complex, diverse, and difficult to define as either term in itself. Religious believers according to John (2012) have heard music as the voices of gods and the cacophony of devils, praised it as the purest form of spirituality, and condemned it as the ultimate in sensual depravity; with equal enthusiasm, they have promoted its use in worship and sought to eradicate it from both religious and secular life. Seldom a neutral phenomenon, music has a high positive or negative value that reflects its near-universal importance in the religious sphere. This importance perhaps is difficult to appreciate for post-industrialrevolution(westerners)

who are now accustomed to reducing music to the secondary realms of "art," "entertainment," and occasional "religious" music isolated behind sanctuary walls—has nonetheless been pervasive.

Classical African devotional music is both sounds, forms, and instruments combined from their respective cultures and has contributed greatly to the overall musical life of their regions. Yet music, like religion, can transcend cultural limits; the religious musical systems of Ethiopia and Tibet, for instance, differ almost as greatly from the secular kinds of music of their own respective cultures as the pieces of music of foreign countries.

Religious musical systems may also extend across cultural boundaries. Islam, for example, has forged musical links across vast regions of Asia and Africa; and North American traditions such as the Ghost Dance and the peyote cult have created musical bridges between very diverse ethnic groups. To this end, Onwuekwe (2006), opines that other well-known intercultural religious musical traditions include Jewish, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and West African/Latin American possess music. Additionally, he pointed out that the cases may include: (1) the drumming and singing of Asian shamans, perhaps constituting a related tradition stretching from Scandinavia to the Himalayas, and possibly even extending into the Americas; (2) the epic songs, based on improvisatory recombinations of traditional song segments, of Central Asia and Eastern Europe; (3) the bronze gong ensembles, associated with cosmological and calendrical symbolism and functions, of Southeast Asia; (4) perhaps the ancient sacrificial chants, linked to modal systems built on tetrachords, of Indo-European peoples extending from India to Greece; and (5) conceivably an even wider connection between Chinese, Indian, and Greek conceptions of music as an embodiment of universal cosmological and mathematical laws.

Music in African Traditional Religion: Music is a very important aspect of the African Traditional Religion. This is because almost all aspects/ forms of liturgical proceeding in the religion are voice-oriented. So this may be the reason why foreign scholars accused Africans of many barbaric deeds. To this end, Alan (1981) warned that in dichotomizing music and religion, we may be imposing our prejudices on African music by discussing it in terms of a "musical time" for which African languages have no corresponding terms. Nevertheless, we find areas in Africa with both musical coincidence of different-length beat cycles and calendrical coincidence of different-length week cycles, and the parallel seems too exact and complex to be unrelated. Perhaps one solution would be, in studying religion and culture, to adopt a comparative perspective that takes musical time as one of the fundamental modes of human time perception and organization, whether or not the religion and culture call it by a term that also applies to calendrical or experiential time, just as we continue to identify and study "music" and "African traditional religion" in cultures that have no equivalent terms. Since African traditional religion has its concept of time, some such artificially neutral viewpoint may be necessary to think clearly about questions of musical and ritual durations and structures, questions that transcend both cultural and religious boundaries of Africa. Music performs a very large and important function in the African traditional religious belief system and as such, its function and features can not be under-ranked and overemphasized.

Functions of Music in African Traditional Religion

Music is important to religion in Africa, where rituals and religious ceremonies use music to pass down stories from generation to generation as well as to sing and dance to. Because music can be arranged to have a seemingly endless array of qualities - from being soothing and soulful to sounding sorrowful and shrill - its effects are plentiful. Music can help people get through bad days, set the mood for romance, liven up social gatherings, and much more. Already, it's clear to see how inextricably linked music is to the existence of humans.

Merriam's four remaining proposed functions of music are clearly and explicitly social, namely enforcing conformity to social norms, validating social institutions and religious rituals, the continuity and stability of culture, and the integration of society. It is in this light that music performs but is not limited to the following functions in African Tradition Religion:

Adjudicative Function

Whether it's to speak out against injustices or to bring an issue to light, music has, over the years, provided an outlet for the masses. This has been manifested in several ways, either through one or several artists creating music to represent the views of a segment of people or a group creating lyrics, or borrowing from popular songs, to use in a movement, such as in a protest. During uproarious periods, there have been several songs that served as a voice for many people.

Ecclesiastical Celebration Function

This is probably the most popular use of music. From parties and get-togethers to holiday observations and competitive sports events, music is used as a way to drum up a celebratory mood. Many cultures also use music to celebrate things like the arrival of a newborn baby or the memory of a loved one during a funeral. This use of music for Ecclesiastical celebration, in human culture, goes back to ancient times. For example, when deities would have musical celebrations after conquests.

Here's a cool fun fact when it comes on to Ecclesiastical celebratory music: the song "Happy Birthday" was entered in the Guinness Book of World Records as the most recognizable song in the Ibo language.

Exhusticism

Although an art form in itself, dancing is often accompanied by music, which often helps to communicate the meaning of the movements and vice versa. Skillful dancers are usually able to not only move in syncopation with the rhythm but also use their moves to portray the essence of the piece of music being played.

Ritualistic Acrobaticism

For many people, music is often a way to cope with some type of challenge they might be facing, including relationship drama, tragedies, and even insomnia. People draw on both the message in lyrics, as well as qualities such as melody and loudness of music to help them get through spells of depression, emotional hurt, tedious tasks, and many other day-to-day struggles. While no one is quite sure why music is so effective in helping people cope, research shows that it does help. One study, in particular, found that listening to music appeared to have similar effects on brain functions as taking medication designed to do the same.

Religious Solidarity

Similar to the previous point, people use music as motivation when trying to get something done. People who exercise are one common example; they either use music as a way to pass the time while they work out or they listen to songs that have inspiring lyrics or which give them a feeling of empowerment (or all of the above). Like many of the other roles listed in this article, there are tons of playlists dedicated to music being used for motivational purposes.

To Communicate the Transcendental beings

At its most basic nature, music is a communication tool. It is a way to share information, ideas, and feelings. With that said, many people find it difficult to communicate with others, especially if they are shy or introverted. Music provides an avenue for these people to communicate, whether by writing down their thoughts in the form of song lyrics or by using songs from other artists to make a point. This is actually how many musicians started, by putting their thoughts to paper or drawing inspiration from other artists because their song was able to put into words something they struggled to utter or explain. As they say, there's a song for everything.

Relaxation and Reflective purposes

For many people, relaxing music is the perfect way to unwind after a long day at work or after a study session. Some people also find it hard to sleep because they aren't relaxed, and music is helpful in these cases as well. One study involving 94 students who had problems sleeping, found that music significantly improved sleep quality among those exposed to music at bedtime compared to those who were not.

Insight and Intellectual Idealism

The power of music is not lost on those trying to illuminate others or pass on ideas. Politicians, for one, have been using music in their campaigns as a way to convey their ideas to the electorate, even as they provide rational and illuminative entertainment. Many instructors, who aren't music teachers, also include music in their lessons, to make some difficult subjects more palatable and easier to understand. As for advertising campaigns, one only has to look at many social media campaigns to see how extensively music is being used. The reach of music will continue to be intertwined into the fabric of world cultures, which is why it will keep on being one of the most important parts of everyday life. As is commonly said, music is life

CONCLUSION

This study satisfactorily was able to do justice to the concept of music and its repository nature in the oral literature of African traditional religion. This was achieved through a careful contextualization, recontextualization, interrogation, examination, and re-examination of thematic frames that helped the researcher to bring to fore the centrality of music in African religion and the different function cum roles it plays in the lives of her adherents. The inter-dependence of religion and music, especially in African religion and its essentiality in the socio-religious topography, serves as a social catalyst to peaceful cohesion within the sub-Sahara religion of the earth.

REFERENCES

- Adetoyese, J. O. (n,d).The present state of African religion. Retrieved from:
<http://biblicalthology.com/research/AdetoyeseJo01.pdf>
- Asante, M. K. (1987). The Afrocentric idea. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Asante, M. K. (1988). Afrocentricity.Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Asante, M. K. (1990). Kemet, Afrocentricity, and knowledge.Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press
- Asante, M. (2003). African American studies: The future of the discipline. In A. Mazama, The Afrocentric Paradigm. Trenton: Africa World Press, pp. 97-108.
- Asante, M. (2006). A discourse on Black studies: Liberating the study of African people in the western academy. Journal of black studies, 36:646.
- Asante, M. K. and Ama M., eds. (2008).Encyclopedia of African religion. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2008.
- Asante, M. K. (2014). Afrocentricity: Toward a new understanding of African thought in the world. In M. K. Asante, Y. Miike, & J. Yin (Eds.), The global intercultural communication reader. 2nded. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 101-110.

- Asukwo, O. O., Adaka, S. S. & Dimgba, E. D. (2013), "The need to re-conceptualize African 'traditional' religion". *An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, Vol. 7 no.3, pp. 232-246. and the Afrocentric method. In J. Hamlet, *Afrocentric Visions: Studies in Culture and Communication*. California: Sage, pp. 27-44.
- Lateju, F., Inyang, E. E., Adewale, O. A & Owolabi, J. A. (2008). *Introduction to African traditional religion*. Lagos: National Open University Retrieved from: www.nou.edu.ng
- Mazama, A. (Ed.). (2003). *The Afrocentric paradigm*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Mbiti, J.S. (1969). *African religions and philosophy*. London: Heinemann. Mbiti, J. S. (1970). *Concepts of God in Africa*. London: S.P.C.K.
- Mhlongo, T. (2013). *Afrocentricity: Reassessment of African agency*. Retrieved from: www.academia.edu
- Microsoft Encarta Premium (2007). Microsoft Corporation.
- Ntreh, B. A. (2008). *Anthropology of religion*. Cape Coast: Hampton press.
- Omoregbe, J. I. (1999). *Comparative religion*. Lagos: Joja Ltd.
- Oxford University Press (2000), *Oxford advance learners dictionary*, 6th edn, UK: oxford university press.
- Parrinder, E. G. (1954). *African traditional religion*. London: SPCK.
- Rodney, W. (1972). *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*. Dar-Es-Salaam: Tanzanian Publishing House.
- Shohat, E & Stam, R. (1994). *Multiculturalism and the media*. London: Routledge.
- Talbot, P. A. (1926). *The peoples of southern Nigeria*. Enugu: OUP.
- Tylor, E.B. (1871). *Primitive culture*. London: John Murray.
- Worldmark Encyclopedia of Religious Practices (n,d). *African traditional religion*. Retrieved from: <http://encyclopedia.com/article-1G2-3437900016/african-traditional-religions.html>
- Zulu, I. M. (1999). *Exploring the African-centered paradigm: Discourse and innovation in African world community studies*. Los Angeles, California: Amen-Ra Theological Seminary Press.
- Allport, G. W. (1958). *The nature of prejudice*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley Publishing.
- Asamoah-Gyadu, J. K. (2007). *Broken calabashes and covenants of fruitfulness: Cursing barrenness in contemporary African Christianity*. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 37, 437-460.
- Betoto, J. E. (2012). *Missionary activity in Bakunduland, Cameroon, 1873-1960: An historical appraisal*. *Global Advanced Research Journal of history, political science, and International Relations*, 1(2), 48-55.

- Ethnologue (2016). Cameroon languages. Retrieved from <https://www.ethnologue.com/language/nwe/map>
- Href, M. & Libraw, O. (2012). Exorcism thriving in the U.S., say Experts. ABC News, Retrieved from: <http://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=92541>
- Kamara, M. G. (2000). Regaining our African aesthetics and essence through our African traditional religion. *Journal of Black Studies*, 30(4), 502-514.
- Mbiti, J. S. (1970). *African religions and philosophy*. Garden City, NY: Anchor.
- Njoh, A. J. & Akiwumi, F. A. (2012). The impact of religion on women empowerment as a millennium development goal in Africa. *Social Indicators Research*, 107(1), 1-18.
- Olupona, J. (2007). *Beyond primitivism*. New York: Routledge.
- Omolewa, M. (2007). Traditional African modes of education: their relevance in the modern world. *International Review of Education*, 53(5/6), 593-612.
- Pew Research Center (2010). Tolerance and tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/2021/04/15/executive-summary-islamand-christianity-in-sub-saharan-africa/>
- Solis, S. & Bacon, J. (Nov 29, 2016). Brazil, soccer world rocked by team plane crash; 71 dead. USA Today. Retrieved from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2021/11/29/colombianplanecrash-on-way-to-medellin/94585124/>
- Stachowski, L. L. (1999). Student teachers' efforts to promote self-esteem in Navajo pupils. Reprinted in F. Schultz (Ed.), *Annual editions multicultural education 99/00* (pp. 42-47). Guilford, CT: Dushkin/McGraw-Hill.
- Stinton, D. (2004). Africa, east, and west. In J. Parrot (Ed.). *An introduction to third world theologies* (pp.105-136). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tattersall, I. (1997). Out of Africa again... and again? *Scientific American*, 276(4), 60-67.
- Ukpong, S. J. (1983). The problem of God and sacrifice in African traditional religion. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 14(3), 187-203.
- Wayman, E. (2011). How Africa became the cradle of humankind. *Smithsonian*. Retrieved from <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/how-Pafrica-became-the-cradleof-humankind108875040/>