

THE MUSICIAN AS A STORYTELLER: A DIDACTIC STUDY OF SELECTED SONGS OF DAUDA EPO AKARA

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Introduction

In Africa, before and even during the colonial time, music and dance have played a vital role in people's lives – spanning across their ability to communicate, and celebrate events, with an array of sounds announcing important ceremonies and even actions. In Africa, music is a social activity in which almost everyone participates. Music highlights African values, with various traditions accompanied by a melody (Mbaegbu, 2015). Many events of importance are celebrated with music, whether it is a marriage, a birth, or a ceremonial rite of passage. Even activities as mundane as digging, farming, cooking, chopping and harvesting, have songs that accompany them – hence there are work songs and relaxation songs in the traditional African societies (Adegoju, 2009). There are also songs of praise and renditions of criticism as well as songs recounting history. Thus, music is often performed outdoors, in the streets, courtyards or village squares.

Singers and musicians in Africa employ a wide variety of sounds and tones to drive home their message or emotions in their music. As Ngcobo (2020) notes, within a single performance, a singer may shift from an open, relaxed tone to a tighter and more constricted one, as he aims to stir up emotions or evoke specific feelings. Some singers will sometimes grunt, yodel, whisper, shout, hum, and even imitate animal noises. Ngcobo (2020) explains that traditional African music is often collaborative and requires coordinated cooperation, in which participants belong to communities that are not similar but complementary.

The richness of the continent's music genres has been ascribed to the vastness of the African continent. African traditional and contemporary music is diverse, with

F. Adedina & I. Adesina: *The Musician as a Storyteller: A Didactic Study of Selected ..* regions and nations having many distinct musical traditions (Ogisi, 2017). African music genres include Juju, Fuji, Highlife, Sakara, Makossa, Kizomba, Afrobeat and many others (Kibaucha, 2019). These traditional genres of African music and dance, according to the New World Encyclopedia (2021), formed to some extent some of the music of the Africans in the Diaspora. Some of these include American music like Dixieland, the blues, jazz, old-time, and bluegrass and many Caribbean genres, such as calypso and soca; Latin American music genres such as zouk, bomba, conga, rumba, son cubano, salsa music, cumbia and samba. These music genres were birthed on the music of enslaved Africans, and have in turn influenced African popular music. Ngcobo (2020) posits that the pitch level of the sound determines significance in many African languages – and by extension their music – while the melodies and rhythms of the music usually form the song texts. Rhythm and percussive sounds are highly emphasised in African music with several different patterns being played at the same time and repeated over and over.

There are common features though and much like the other forms of African art, most traditional African music is more than just aesthetic expressions. However, one germane part of traditional and contemporary African music is the storytelling ability of the singer or musician. African music is a total art form closely linked to dance, gesture and dramatization. It permeates African life and has a function, a role to play in society; songs are used for religious ceremonies and rituals, to teach and give guidance, to tell stories, to mark the stages of life and death and to provide political guidance or express discontent. According to Ibekwe (2013), stories have been passed from one generation to the other through the ages by Griots, also called Jalis, who are musicians, poets and historians.

Iantoca (2017) explains that the role of musicians as storytellers could be traced back to the 13th century, when the Griot originated in the Mande Empire of present-day Mali. She remarks that the Griots had important and versatile roles as musicians, genealogists, advisers, teachers, interpreters and historians, responsible for preserving the ancestral records of whole communities through oral storytelling. The scholar notes that musicians were highly respected members of society, and their role evolved into a hereditary social caste and that the position was passed from parent to child, like an apprenticeship;

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If you were born into a Griot family, you would begin training from a young age to learn hundreds of songs and stories, spending years of preparation memorising the records of births, deaths and marriages through the generations of your village and family (Iantosca, 2017).

She further notes that Griots told their stories through music, using accompanying instruments such as the Balafon, Ngoni or the Kora.

However, as modernity struck, this act was gradually left in the hands of the few traditional artistes who stuck to their guns to ensure the continuity of the traditional way of life in the modern age. Such musicians refused to be swayed by the alluring popularity of the modern and imported genres into Africa – in the mould of hip hop, pop, afro fusion and many more foreign song genres. These musicians kept telling the African story in their music and have ensured the survival of the traditional genre till date. Hence, in Nigeria today, such traditional genres as Fuji, Juju, Dadakuada, Bolojo, Awurebe, Oriki, amongst others, whose certain feature includes storytelling are still enjoying some patronage despite the rabid acceptance of the foreign forms of music.

The Role of the Musician in Traditional and Modern Africa

From time immemorial, music has had a great influence on cultures and societies around the world, it has shaped the culture and tradition passed down from generation to generation (Peralta, 2021). From being a mood changer, altering perceptions, to inspiring change, music has proven that it has a personal relationship with every human being and by extension, the society (Peralta, 2021). The writer argues that the impact of music in and on the society is extensive and deep-seated in human history, adding that music has proven that it has sociological effects and it affects cultural change. Music, she notes, plays such roles as providing a platform for the underrepresented to speak out; affecting mood and inspiration; helping to cope by encouraging self-expression through movement and dancing; bridging a divide in communication; and creating a venue for education and idea-sharing (ibid, 2021).

Music could be traditional or modern. Traditional music are those kind of music that are created in a common manner and have continued to maintain their forms

F. Adedina & I. Adesina: *The Musician as a Storyteller: A Didactic Study of Selected ..* from the time of their creation and production till the present day. Traditional music are also those music forms that are popular and frequently played and recited in a particular region and by local set of people with a feature of anonymity to its creation or authorship (Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2022). In Africa, traditional music are produced by and located in settled cultures and can be classified as either religious or secular due to the functions they perform (Adesina, Obalanlege & Katib, 2016).. The instruments and lyrics used in both forms of music are sometimes similar while there are specific ones for some forms of instruments and wordings that cannot be used for other forms due to their sacred roles and importance. For instance, there are some lyrics and instruments that are exclusively in the enclave of some African cultural religious cults that can never be used in other non-religious ceremonies. Most African traditional music are passed down orally and are not written (Ogunyemi, 2022).

In contrast, modern African music has developed from the impact of foreign cultures on the continent. These are the music forms whose origins are entirely non-African and non-traditional. They have further developed into national musical genres which have emerged throughout the continent. Global musical styles such as jazz, R&B, hip hop, rock 'n' roll, country, and reggae have all made their impact on today's African musicians (New World Encyclopedia, 2021). In modern times, successful musicians are usually the ones who have successfully infused traditional music and instruments into these foreign musical styles. This has seen the creation of such genres as afro-pop, afro-beat, amongst others. According to the New World Encyclopedia (2021), hip hop started in the 1970s, amongst the black youth of New York with the lyrics and delivery style borrowing heavily from African tradition.

Since music is important to religion in traditional Africa, due to rituals and religious ceremonies being passed down from generation to generation through music and dance, the role of the musician is not one to be toyed with. Most African traditional music is a participative performance because there is a perpetual give and take between the main performer and the listening or participating public, who are fully part of the performances. Also in traditional Africa, just like in modern times, there are full time musicians, who often than not inherit the work from their family lines. Their position in the society is often to perform at ceremonies and get paid doing so, such as the Griots of the Malinke region of West Africa, who are full time

F. Adedina & I. Adesina: *The Musician as a Storyteller: A Didactic Study of Selected ..* musicians, who travelled from village to village, singing for dignitaries and rich traders or merchants (Iantosca, 2017).

Bransford (2013) sums up the role of the traditional and modern African musicians into three: ceremonial, artistic expression, and recreational. He explains that musicians help to create an expression and communication of emotions, feelings, ideas, or experiences. The recreational musicians ensure that music is created for the entertainment of listeners while ceremonial musicians create music for ritual purposes or for sacred cultural celebrations.

According to Seeger (1996), music can move people and help them achieve a lot of purposes and change in the society. He claims that this is achievable because music is a deep human expression and feeling that can move people deeply, and members of communities around the world also employ the use of music in the creation of cultural identity and to erase the cultural identity of others, to create unity and to dissolve it. The emotional attachment that listeners have for musicians is a reason that musicians have been arrested, tortured, jailed, and sometimes killed while others are invited to the seats of power; it also explains why some musical events are supported and others are banned (Stephen, 2013).

Brief Biography of Epo Akara

Alhaji Dauda Akanmu Kolawole popularly called Epo-Akara was born on June 23, 1943 and he died on February 18, 2005 at the age of 62. He was one of the many notable musicians born and bred in the ancient city of Ibadan in Oyo State, Southwestern Nigeria. Epo Akara was popular for his brand of cultural music called Awurebe, which was created from the popular Islamic Yoruba cultural and musical genre *Were* (an Islamic Yoruba cultural musical genre). Since his death, Awurebe has not had any proponent as many youths of the current age have shied away from the genre, which is marked with its inflectional similarity to Fuji, which was also created from the same root of Islamic Yoruba cultural musical genre called *Were*, by the late Sikiru Ayinde Barrister. Epo Akara's death thus marked the end of musical-cultural era of Awurebe music and the era of a generation of musicians whose roots are deep in the urban social fabric and heritage of the Yoruba people of Southwestern Nigeria (Ganiyu, 2020).

According to Ganiyu (2020), Epo Akara evolved Awurebe from *Were* which was a cultural and religious means of entertaining the Muslim faithful in the holy month of Ramadan. The year and time of the formation of his band is not known but he was popular in and around Ibadan in the 1950s and 1960s. His band started with the name Dauda Epo Akara and His Ajisari Group, which points to the fact that he was playing *Were* from the beginning. He however was reported to have rebranded the group and adopted the name Alhaji Dauda Epo Akara and His Awurebe Sound for the group and his brand of music after returning from his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1974 (Ganiyu, 2020; Balogun, 2021). He started producing SP and LP records under Saliu Adetunji's Omo Aje Records label in Lagos (Balogun, 2021). Some of Epo Akara's contemporaries in the early days of his music career were Gani Kuti, Lawuyi Oke Eleta, Sakariyawu Ladoye, Isiaka Ogidan, and Tunde Ayefele. In Ibadan, he maintained his tempo and identity while the likes of Atatalo Alamu and Yekini Agboluaje were battling over supremacy in *Sekere*, another traditional genre of music in Ibadan. However, he faced rivalry from the likes of another Ibadan-based Awurebe star, Yisau Osupa Anabi, who adopted the music after Epo Akara had created the genre. Their rivalry was so fierce that Osupa Anabi had at one time in the 1970s released a song that Epo Akara had been jailed in Abidjan for drug trafficking where the exponent had gone on a tour.

The Awurebe genre of traditional music was a perfect blend of various Yoruba traditional art and philosophy. Awurebe fuses Apala, Sakara, Woro and even Dadakuada from Kwara State. It is the perfect blend of these various musical cultures that have given the genre a uniquely definitive identity. It is known for a rich display of folklore and traditional storytelling. This storytelling is the hallmark of the brand of music called Awurebe. As modernity came into the traditional musical genre, he began to infuse modern musical instrument into the music while never ignoring his traditional musical instruments.

Ganiyu (2020) notes that a very sad moment that remained permanent in Epo Akara's lifetime was the death of two of his band members Omoboade and Dauda in an auto crash at the Alapako Area of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway in 1975, when they were returning from an engagement in Lagos. He released the emotional album *Ijamba Moto* after the incident and it was a widely popular song. The album that made Epo Akara popular was his *Is Gaju* album of the 1970s. During his

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Didactic Theory (Theoretical Framework)

Didacticism started as a philosophical movement before it came into literature as a theory. It is all about teaching and educating (Nordquist, 2019). Etymologically, the word 'didactic' comes from a Greek word 'didaktikos' meaning 'to teach'. The term didacticism, when referring to writing, describes literature serving as a means to teach the reader something, which could be either morals or even how to make stew (Nordquist, 2019). Didacticism is a literary theory that encompasses that any work of literature – written or otherwise – should both instruct and entertain. Didactic literature's overarching philosophy is that literary works should contain a lesson as well as a certain amount of pleasure. In didacticism, entertainment doesn't necessarily refer to an edge-of-your-seat kind of interest; it simply means a work is readable and not solely academic in nature (SuperSummary, 2022). Didactic literature can be classified as any instructional work, which could be written or oral in the poetic, dramatic or prosaic forms. Literary forms noted for their morally instructive nature like parables, fables, and anecdotes are considered didactic and are employed by writers to do much of the teaching in these larger works (Fleming, 2020).

Wimmer (2015) posits that the school of thought could be traced to the beginning of the written word. He explains that early cultures dispersed knowledge and entertainment through oral storytelling and these contained messages and morals. These came in the form of spoken fables, parables, and myths that aided the education and amusement of the populace. And from one generation to the next, they were passed with the stories, fables and myths being altered slightly to reflect cultural changes and evolutions in attitude in the concerned generation. Wimmer (2015) notes that fairy tales are an early example of didacticism because they started as oral traditions and were eventually passed from culture to another culture, with each society putting their own spin on the tales to ensure that they captured their community's beliefs and norms. The first written fairy tale was believed to be *The Smith and the Devil*, which dates back to 1300 BCE.

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Furthermore, as some of the earliest forms of literature, didactic works could also be said to have originated from many of the religious texts of the world and these texts go back a long time in history (Wimmer, 2015). These books are also full of important mythology, parables, anecdotes, metaphor, and outright commandments. Such books as the Jewish Torah or the Greek Theogony by the poet Hesiod are meant to inform people of their places in the world and to show them how to live accordingly. These books and their likes, such as Hesiod's Works and Days, also teach people how to do other things in their lives apart from teaching and showing them how to live righteously. Hesiod's Works and Days teaches farmers how to go about their planting. The Roman poet Ovid also produced several didactic pieces on everything from seduction to women's facial and hair treatments (Wimmer, 2015).

Since didacticism is a theory that is applicable to various forms of art works and written or spoken literature, it is then appropriate for application to the analysis of music, hence, the choice of this theory for this study.

Methodology

For this study, six stories from six albums of Dauda Akanmu Epo Akara are selected. The interests in the stories are because it has been observed that modern music tend to lack the storytelling ability of the traditional musical genres. Wherever they are present, they are mostly truncated and not completed. However, such traditional music as the Awurebe, exponented by Epo Akara, makes use of rich folklore and tales from the Yoruba culture, hence preserving these stories for the ages to come.

The selected stories from the selected songs are subjected to didactic analysis and the lessons or morals inherent in the stories will be identified and related to the contemporary times. The selected stories and albums are: the Tirimisiyu story from the *Iya Alakara* album, the Earth and Sky god story from the popular *Is Gaju* album, the Alalise story from the *New Awurebe* album, where he featured the Danfo Drivers, the story of the bad wife from the *Mo se iba awon Asiwaju Olorin* album, the Elephant and the Lion's story from the *My Mother* album, Opalaba and Koru Logun story from the *Abidjan Special* album.

Didactic Analysis of the Stories in Epo Akara's Songs

Lyrics and Summaries of the Stories

THE TIRIMISIYU STORY

Chorus: *Tirimisiyu la o si fi joba (2ce)*

Ti o to'ju ilu o, ti o gba'lu la

Tirimisiyu la o si fi joba

Story: *Mo gbe're mi de, mo fe so'ro lori anobi Tirimisiyu omo're*

Ilu kan n be, nibi ti iyan ti n mu wan

Won o lounje niibe

Tirimisiyu nikan lo je baba agbe o

Nnkan ogbin repete, agbado repete, ege repete

Gbogbo ilu d'orikodo

Won le ni to le gbe ounje leke, e wi fun p'oba n wa a l'aafin

Eyi ni wipe agbe ni yoo joba

Won wa Tirimisiyu lo, won wa ree baa l'oko

Gbogbo araalu lo dide

Won ni Tirimisiyu jowo ta'nje fun wa

Idi leyii Tirimisiyu o

O fun gbogbo won lounje

Gbogbo ilu dorikodo ni won ba so pe Tirimisiyu ni o joba...

Chorus: *Tirimisiyu la o si fi joba (2ce)*

Ti o to'ju ilu o, ti o gba'lu la

Tirimisiyu la o si fi joba...

Story cont'd: *Tirimisiyu ba te'le won wa'le*

O ni gbogbo oko t'oun dao, oun gbe f'ara ilu o

Ni won ba mu Tirimisiyu, ni won ba gbe si'po Oba...

The Tirimisiyu story (*Iya Alakara* album) told the story of a village where there is richness and prosperity. The village is headed by a king. Also, in the outskirts of the village lived a prosperous farmer named Tirimisiyu, whose farm is large and rich. He has farm produce all year round ranging from different kinds of crops to livestock. He is also benevolent as he ensures that any of the villagers who passed by his farm always has something to take home. When their king died, this village began the search for a new king but because their leader was dead and there was no substantive one, they suffered a misfortune of loss of crops and livestock. The rains

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THE EARTH AND SKY GOD STORY

Chorus: *Aja n rete ja...*

Refrain: *Olu n rete...*

Chorus: *Aja n rete ja...*

Refrain: *Olu n rete...*

Story: *Ile pelu Olorun*

(Repeat Chorus after each line)

Story cont'd: *Won jo d'egbe lo s'oko*

Won ba p'eku emo kan (3ce)

Ile ba gbe'ku naa mi

Olorun l'oun l'agba

Ile ni oun l'egbon

Olorun ba binu lo s'orun

Oorun ko ni o yo mo

Ojo ko ni o ro mo

Isu ko won o ta

Agbado ko won o gbo o

Olomoge gun'mu omu gbe

Boys yo'pon won so'pa

Olu n rete...

Won ba pe gbogbo eye jo

Ta lo le gb'ebo lo s'orun

Asa yo'ju,

Won yo'ju won o lee gbe e

Awodi yo'ju

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Won yo'ju won o lee gbe e
Igun lo gb'ebo lo s'orun
K'olorun o fi'ye de'nu
N'igun ba fi pa l'ori...

The Earth and Sky god story from the popular *Is Gaju* album told the story of the battle for supremacy between the Earth and the Sky god in primordial times. In this time, humans, animals and gods lived together on earth in peace. The Sky god was living on earth as he is a bosom friend of Earth's. However, problem came one day when both Earth and the Sky god went hunting and both killed one bush rat. The two needed to share the rat but Earth refused to allow it to be shared between them claiming that he is the elder of the two. This angered the Sky god who returned to his abode in the sky. On getting to his abode, he decided to punish the Earth to show his supremacy and by extension punishing all those living on earth. The Sky god withheld the sun and the rain, without which there was no food on earth and the earth also became vulnerable to different diseases. They pleaded with him and he refused to heed their plea until the wise ones amongst them consulted the oracle and it was revealed that one of the birds on earth has to carry an offering of appeasement to the sky to appease the Sky god. The hawk, the eagle and some other birds came up but couldn't lift the offering off the ground until the vulture came and attempted it. He lifted it successfully and carried it to the sky abode of the Sky god, who in return lifted his anger and released the rain and the sun to make the earth flourish again. In the aftermath of the offering he carried, the vulture and his generations since then became bald.

THE ALATISE STORY

Story: *Atoto arere, e gbo nasiya mi*
Oro lori baba alatise ni mo f eke gbo
Oro lori alatise tii m'atise funra re
Alatise ti mo wi yen o n'iyawo meta
Se e r'awon meji, awon ni won gb'omo dani
Eyi to siketa abe lohun l'omo wa o
Won n be'lohun k'ori fun'yawo l'omo
O ti le l'ogun odun t'oju alatise ti fo
O ti le ni ogbon osu t'abe alatise ti ku

Abe alatise ku, ko le gbon'mi si ketenfe
N'igba to di'jo kan, e wa gbo'hun to sele
Asa no fo bo lodo baba afoju
Adaba n fo bo lodo baba afoju
Adaba n k'igbe ma ma je asa o ri'hun pa
Asa n k'igbe pe'wo baba afoju
O ba f'adaba s'ile ki ohun o ri'hun je
Adaba n k'igbe pe'wo baba afoju
T'ori Olohun ma ma je asa o ri'hun pa
O ni iwo baba alatise, abe e to ti ku lojo t'ope
B'asa o ba pa'hun, iseju meji ni o si dide
Asa n k'igbe pe'wo baba afoju
Bo ba f'adaba sile to oun ri'hun je
Oju e to ti fo l'ogun odun, iseju meji ni o si ri'ran
Oro yii wa d'alatise tii m'atise funra re
Alatise d'ori kodo o ba bere sii ro'nu
Ibi to ti gbe n ronun o ke s'aya meteeta
O leyin meteeta ewo le fee ki n se
Se r'awon mejeeji ti won t gb'omo da ni
Won ni f'adaba si'le o ki asa o ri'hun je
Oju e to ti fo logun odun iseju meji ni o si reran
Ko pe ko jina n'iyawo eleeketa
Eteti e gbo se e r'aya to siketa
Iyen n fun won l'esi wipe ko ri bahun
O ni'wo baba alatise ma se f'adaba si'le o, je asa o lo
Abe e to ti ku l'ojo to pe iseju meji ni o si dide
Boo ba de sun'mo oun, oun naa a bi'mo
Baba alatise ba ke s'omo re, lo ba f'owo le lowo
O ni ko lo s'oja o ko ree lo r'eyele wa
Se r'eyele pel'adaba walai se won jo'ra won
Omo r'eyele de baba fi s'abe Agbada
Baba so eyele s'ile n l'asa se b'adaba ni
Rira ti asa ra mu kia l'asa ba gbe e lu'ra
Asa jeun o yo tan, o f'iye na baba l'oju, ni baba yen ba si ri'ran
Baba ri'ran tan asa ni oun n lo

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Asa lo tan n l'adaba bere si nii lo'gbe

Adaba fiye na baba l'abe ni kinii baba ba so'ra

Adaba fiye na baba l'abe, ko pe ko jina ni kini i baba gbe'ra so

Eni egungun n le ko maa roju

Bo ti n se ara aye bee naa nii se ero orun

Eni t'aju ba n pon ore mi ko ma banuje

Bi emi ba ti wa, sebi ireti n be...

The Alatise story (*New Awurebe* album) told the story of an elderly man named Alatise who has three wives. He is blind and also got impotent after he had had children with his first two wives. The third wife is childless and desperate to have one of her own. One day, while sitting outside in his courtyard, a dove and a hawk flew towards him. The hawk wants to eat the dove and the dove sought refuge with the blind impotent Alatise. Both birds stated their cases – seeking to win. The hawk pleaded with Alatise to release the dove so he could have a good meal. He promised that if that was done, he would ensure that the man regains his sight. But in the opposite end, the dove wanted to be set free from the claws of the hawk – pleading that if he survives the moment, he would ensure that Alatise regains the use of his manhood. The man got confused and called his wives. He sought their advice and the first two with children admonished him to release the dove and let the hawk eat so he could regain his sight but the third wife disagreed and advised her husband to keep the dove and send the hawk away so he would regain his use of his manhood, which will ensure in return that she gets pregnant and have her own child. Alatise dispersed the wives and after a while he called one of his grownup children and gave him some money while telling him to go to the market and get a pigeon, which has the same colour as the dove. The child returned and Alatise kept the pigeon under his Agbada. Since the pigeon and dove are alike in appearance, the hawk didn't know the difference and he ate it and thereafter he swiped Alatise on the face with his wings and the previously blind man regained his sight truly. He left and the dove too was then released by Alatise. The dove struck him between his legs with his wings and immediately Alatise regained the use of his manhood after which he left in peace.

The story of the bad wife from the *Mo se iba awon Asiwaju Olorin* album tells the story of two wives in a polygamous marriage. One was a good wife with good

F. Adedina & I. Adesina: *The Musician as a Storyteller: A Didactic Study of Selected ..* intentions towards the second wife while the second wife was intolerant and wicked. The first wife already had a child while the second one has yet to have one. One day, the first wife went to the market called Ojeje and left her child in the care of her co-wife. The child being a special child has some foods that he doesn't eat. The mother left eggs with the co-wife for the child to eat but due to her wickedness, the second wife gave the child yams to eat. Known to her, the child does not eat yams because of the disastrous consequences it has. After eating the yams, the child started singing to call the attention of the neighbours to alert his mother in the market. But sadly before his mother could return from the market to find a solution, the child had been swallowed by the earth, where he was gotten from.

The Elephant and the Lion's story came from the My Mother album and it tells the story of how the elephant was cheated to being the animal kingdom's ruler by the lion. In the ancient times, the animals in the forests contested for their own kingship. So on one of the occasions of such contest, the animals gathered to decide who would be their king. The elephant came forward that he would be the best fit to rule the animals. The lion also stated his case while the fox, the wolf and the tiger also laid claims to being the best options to rule the animal kingdom. While they were arguing and working on who the best option would be, the lion got up and urinated around the entire animals – encasing them in a circle of his urine. This means he had marked his boundary with the action and the animals are now under him. This action got the elephant angry and he left to live in a different part of the forest away from the rulership of the lion.

The Opalaba and Koru Logun story (*Abidjan Special*) told the tale of rivalry between two contemporary speakers in the ancient times. Koru Logun and Opalaba believe that each one of them is superior to the other. They wouldn't bow to each other thus they set a seven-day ultimatum for both to prepare and engage in a battle of wits to decide who is the superior. On the appointed day, Opalaba headed to Koru's house to ensure that the battle began. Unfortunately, Koru was not at home when Opalaba arrived but he met Koru's youngest son. On enquiring about his father's whereabouts, the son replied that his father went to repair the rope which held the earth together. Opalaba was confused. He enquired about his mother and the boy replied that she has one leg on earth and one leg in heaven. The man was further amazed. He then asked about the older sibling, to which the boy replied that

F. Adedina & I. Adesina: *The Musician as a Storyteller: A Didactic Study of Selected ..* his older sibling was on a journey to the land of sleep. Opalaba was confused again. He had had enough and he demanded that the boy should explain the meanings of the three parables he used as responses. The boy demanded that Opalaba pay him before telling him the meaning of the riddles. After he had been paid, the boy explained that his father went to settle a quarrel between a couple who lived close by, hence the rope he went to repair. His mother was inside the house and was in labour pains, meaning she has a leg in heaven and a leg on earth. For his elder sibling, the boy said he was sleeping indoors instead of heading out of the house to his workplace. At this, Opalaba knew that he had lost since he had been defeated and left confused by Koru's youngest child, what then would he receive from his father. He succumbed and agreed that Koru was superior in intelligence and speech mannerism than him.

Morals/Lessons from the Stories Relevant to Contemporary Times

An analysis of the above stories led to the discovery of the following lessons and morals, which are timeless and still relevant to the modern times:

- a. Pride comes before a fall. This was seen in the Opalaba and Koru Logun story. Opalaba's pride made him to challenge Koru not knowing that he was superior in intelligence and craftiness. If he had swallowed his pride and made some diligent findings, he would not have been embarrassed by Koru's son.
- b. Wisdom is profitable in all human dealings. The lion displayed his wisdom and craftiness to beat the elephant to the kingship of the jungle. The elephant felt cheated and was angry. He could have got the kingship if he was wiser than he already was. This is a great lesson that wisdom should be applied in all our dealings.
- c. Betrayal has bad consequences. The Earth betrayed the Sky god and the consequences were borne by all and sundry – not only the betrayer alone. The same was witnessed in the story of the bad co-wife. She was wicked to her step child and the consequence was the death of the child.
- d. Not all help should be rendered. The vulture's kind heart in carrying the sacred offering to the Sky god resulted in him losing his hair and becoming bald forever. He should have been careful or ask questions.
- e. In the same story, we could learn that it is a great virtue to be helpful irrespective of the inconvenience we may encounter. The vulture readily helped the humans

F. Adedina & I. Adesina: *The Musician as a Storyteller: A Didactic Study of Selected ..* despite the inconvenience it caused him and the humans are forever grateful to the bird.

- f. Help can come from anywhere. Alatisé got the solutions to his problems from unthinkable sources so it is good to keep hope alive in whatever challenges we face. The humans too got help from the birds when the Earth caused problems for them with the Sky god.
- g. Patience is a virtue and it pays to be patient. Tirimisiyu was patient and he never rushed to take advantage of the villagers. Alatisé and his last wife were also patient as they looked for a child.
- h. Good deeds birth good rewards. This was exhibited in the Tirimisiyu story and the Alatisé story. The good deeds rendered towards people and animals by the two protagonists returned to benefit them in the end.
- i. Alatisé is a very wise human being. He exhibited wisdom when he sent his son to buy a pigeon instead of sacrificing the dove to the hawk. Wisdom is a great human virtue.
- j. Greed is a vice. Tirimisiyu could have lost his kingship if he had been greedy when people came to him to sell food to them rather he gave them food for free due to the famine in the land. The wives were not united in their advice to their husband because each of them was selfish and greedy to ensure that their own ends were taken care of. The Earth was greedy and he lost his friendship with the Sky god.
- k. Wickedness is inherent in humans. The second co-wife is a wicked woman and the display of her wickedness led to the death of her stepchild. She should be punished for her wickedness.
- l. Not all humans can be trusted. While trust paid off for Alatisé as he trusted that the birds would keep their promises to him, the first co-wife in their story placed her trust in the wrong person. Her co-wife would have been displaying signs of wickedness before that day but the first wife did not pay attention to it and still trusted her with her lone child.

Conclusion

Given its vastness as a continent of different but similar cultures and traditions, African music is varied, with regions and various nations having many diverse musical traditions. African traditional music such as Jùjú, Fuji, Highlife, Makossa, Kizomba, Afrobeat and numerous others. In many cultures and nations in Africa,

F. Adedina & I. Adesina: *The Musician as a Storyteller: A Didactic Study of Selected ..* traditional music is passed down orally and it took a long time to have them written. In the earliest times, the differences between African music and the Western one was glaring however with modernity, there still exist fine differences in pitch and intonation that helps create new genres or trace the origin of the acclaimed modern western-influenced African variety. Music is important to religion in modern and traditional Africa, because rites, rituals and religious ceremonies use music to pass down stories from generation to generation as well as to sing, dance and praise the supernatural.

Music in Africa is a shared communal event where folks gather to listen and participate in varying communal and personal accounts of stories of past deeds, heroism, beliefs, wisdom, counsel, morals, taboos, and myths. African tribal storytellers and musicians are mostly called Griots. Their role was to preserve the genealogies and oral traditions of the tribe. They were usually among the oldest men in a tribe. They help people make sense of the world and are used to teach children and adults about important aspects of their culture. There is a rich tradition throughout Africa of oral storytelling. Storytelling provides entertainment, develops the imagination, and teaches important lessons about everyday life. Conclusively, this study has established that the African traditional musician is a storyteller and that his stories are filled with morals and lessons. This has been achieved through the didactic analysis of six stories in the music of Dauda Akanmu Epo Akara.

Recommendations

Having examined the lessons that could be deciphered from the stories examined in this study and their relevance to the modern times, the following are recommended:

1. Due to the didactic nature of African traditional music, they should be inculcated into the Nigerian music curriculum from the primary level of education to ensure that the morals in them are not lost on the younger generations
2. Literature and language classes should inculcate the traditional Nigerian music into their teaching. Learners have been proven to learn language and literature better through the use of music so this should be used by teachers at the higher levels of Nigerian education.

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3. The lessons in traditional Nigerian music genres should be preserved by the younger generations and they should be encouraged to continue them.
4. It has been observed in recent times that the traditional music genres have been left for the older generations, which puts it at the risk of going into extinction. Thus, cultural enthusiasts should organise competitions for younger generations in traditional music practice to preserve these genres.
5. Storytelling is a key part of the African traditional music practice. This aspect should not be neglected by modern practitioners of these genres of African traditional music. They should ensure that didactic stories and folktales find their way into their songs.

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