

GLOBALIZING NIGERIAN MUSIC: EMERGING ISSUES

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Introduction

Historically, many Nigerians were captured and enslaved abroad alongside their music and some musical instruments; of which many of them were eventually restructured or refined and are now believed to be western musical instruments. Globalization in the Twenty-First century has been described as an emerging world (dis)order (Mohan Giles, 1996). “a process by which the world is becoming a single place” (Scholte, 1996 cited in Monge, 1998). It is a process characterized by increase in communicative speed, technological sophistication, economic integration, and ideological universalism. According to Rapport (2001), globalization is a “fact of life” because all are affected by it in terms of its benefits or loss positively or negatively. It influences and is influenced by many aspects of contemporary life of which communication is an integral part.

This study is focused on issues depriving the globalization of Nigerian music. Nigeria is a multi-ethnic nation with different kinds of music, most of which have been restructured and/or reproduced as Western music. Nigerian music like its western counterpart would have been better globalized, if agents of globalization are better harnessed and utilized for the purpose. Agents of globalization can have both positive and negative impacts on Nigerian communities and the nation at large, therefore, can be utilized for propagation and better projection of Nigerian image via culture and other related arts to the world.

During the slavery period, several Nigerian music types were taken abroad and eventually underwent some transformational processes to become Western music, as everything Nigerian/African about them was robbed off them. However,

some of them are known today as Black American music. They sometimes possess Nigerian music identity, which are peculiar patterns that are sensed in form of sound matrixes, tonality, compositional techniques, instrumentation, costumes, and performance practices.

The paper is in four sections with each section handling some salient aspect of the discourse in form of conceptual framework, Nigerian music, agents of globalization and factors militating against globalizing of Nigerian Music.

Concept of Globalization

Globalization is the interconnectivity of the activities of people irrespective of distance, race and regional boundaries. This brought about by dramatic shift in the movement of people, culture, technology, trade in goods and services facilitated by improved information and communication technology (ICT), transportation, political and socio-cultural co-operation and applied technological development, all of which turned the world into a "Global Village." Although the term was first used by Marshall Macluthan in the 1960s when he predicted that electronic revolution would reduce the world in time and space, the rapid evidence of globalization was not witnessed in the 1960s.

According to Iwara (2005);

globalization is a process by which different regions of the World are pulled together through an expanding network of exchanges of peoples and ideas and cultures as well as goods and services across (p.20)

Globalization is applied and used extensively in all aspects of human activity. Areas of use include worldwide information system, patterns of consumption, cosmopolitan lifestyle, sports, military systems, and music. As a process, it started with European discoveries which enhanced European powers to reach out to various continents. It was gathered that the trans-Atlantic slave trade gave birth to early globalization process from Africa to the Americas and agricultural products from the Americas to Europe.

Agents of Globalization

In this generation, many think globalization actually began in this century, but that is very far from the truth. Globalization has been on for centuries. The agents of globalization today are essentially almost the same as agents of globalization in past centuries. The only real differences are in speed and scale. However, agents of globalization work faster on a large scale today. Instead of **communicating** by **telegraph** between stations, we communicate by **internet** or **telephone** directly with one another. Instead of having **trade** or migration that goes by **sailing ship**, we now use **airplanes** or much larger and **faster ships** than in time past. Our mass culture is disseminated across many countries very quickly through **movies**, **television** and the **internet**.

From the above, we see that the agents of globalization have not changed over the centuries. They have simply been advanced to become faster and allowed for globalization on a much larger scale. This has changed the structure of civilizations by making them more similar. In the past, different civilizations could be structured very differently and rulers could keep their societies from interacting with the outside to a much greater degree. Today, this is much less possible, which means that rulers in any given civilization lack the ability to maintain their civilizations' separation from the rest of the world.

Music and Current Globalization Trends

The turn of 20th century witnessed the explosion of globalization arising from effective Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The most attractive, convenient, effective, fast, cheap and imposing agents of globalization are the radio and television broadcasts. The browse and search engine activities on the internet which are empowered by satellite are also effective media. The satellite could beam any television broadcast to millions of homes around the world at the same time; the same with the articles, on-line publications, sound tracks and motion pictures, which hitherto were the responsibilities of print publication. In a few minutes, information can get around the world via the internet or cable network. The enormous benefits of the satellite in global identity and national image projection encouraged Nigeria to launch her first satellite known as **Nigeria-Sat 1** in September 2003.

The Compact Disc Read-Only Memory (CD-ROM) stores music data such as audio, video, audio-visual and literary documentation on every aspect of music. Information contained in the CD-ROM, which could be on any culture, is widely distributed for global consumption and can be decoded on the screen of the computer by even people from other world cultures. The music and movie industries with recording in stripes, tapes or compact discs have registered notable advancement in contemporary times; bringing varieties of regional musical practices in quality and portable packages to the door-steps of millions of homes, distance notwithstanding. Digital recording instead of analog process is now in vogue in the new music industry. Highly refined output, low manpower need and less stress characterize this new process of recording. Through the radio, television, and the internet, these products are advertised, promoted and marketed for mass orientation and global patronage. Thus, producing, reproducing, and distributing music is rapidly becoming cheaper, making it possible for many small and independent record companies to enter the market.

Globalization of music has also thrived through publications in journals, books and magazines, newsletters and daily newspapers. Apart from movement of people and information through the electronic media, the literary world has learnt much about music through research reports, reviews, commentaries, documentaries and observations published in print media. This is in line with Akin Euba's (1969) that;

In view of the geographical dimensions of the multi-ethnic communities of modern Africa, the traditional means of acquiring musical knowledge, since they demand physical contact with the informant, are obviously no longer adequate. Musicology provides a source of knowledge which embraces musical practice over wide areas and which can be widely diffused in a manner more effective than the means that have hitherto been used in tribal culture (p.6).

Many volumes of print publications have been made on music by scholars to disseminate new found ideas to the world at large. Formal education has been accepted as reliable strategy for societal advancement: "which, when and where" well-directed, substantially contributes to the aforementioned agents of learning

globalization. It may well be added that the school curriculum and all agents of learning process expose the student to experiences beyond his immediate culture. Thus, whenever music is taught particularly outside its continent of origin, globalization is being encouraged.

Research Institutes, Centres for Cultural Studies and Centres for Music and Dance Practices are noted for their valuable contributions towards world recognition and consumption of music. These establishments embark on research projects, workshop, seminar, conferences, training programmes, and practical performance sessions to preserve and project musical practices. Cultural exchange programmes, international concerts, and world music competitions feature contingents from various nations and provide opportunities to promote music globally. Artistes' tours to foreign countries do not only earn the artistes financial gains and popularity, but also promote their music and nationality.

Nigerian Music

Nigerian music can be said to be those music genres that have their roots in Nigeria. Their lyrical contents are majorly Nigerian but sometimes foreign. In most cases, Nigerian music is generally referred to as African music in global context. This is as a result of the fact that "African Music" is used as a concept for any music that has its root in any of the African countries.

Nigerian Music or Music of Nigerian people include many kinds of folk and popular music, some of which are known worldwide. Styles of folk music are related to the multitudes of ethnic groups in the country, each with their own techniques, instruments, and songs. The largest ethnic groups are the Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. Traditional music from Nigeria and throughout Africa is usually functional; in other words, it is performed to mark a ritual such as a wedding or funeral and not for mere achievement of certain artistic goals; although some Nigerians, especially children play instruments for their own amusement. Solo performance is rare in traditional music making in Nigeria.

Work songs are a common type of traditional Nigerian music. They help to keep the rhythm of workers in fields, river canoes and other fields. Women use complex rhythms in housekeeping tasks, such as pounding yams to highly

ornamented music. In the northern regions, farmers work together on each other's farms and the host is expected to supply musicians for his neighbors. Music is closely linked to agriculture, and there are restrictions on, for example, which instruments can be played during different parts of the growing season. The issue of musical composition is also highly variable.

The most common format for music in Nigeria is the call-and-response format, in which a lead singer and a chorus interchange verses, sometimes accompanied by instruments that either shadow the lead text or repeat and ostinato vocal phrase. The southern area features complex rhythms and solo players using melody instruments, while the north more typically features polyphonic wind ensembles. The extreme north region is associated with monodic (i.e., single-line) music with emphasis on drums, and tends to be more influenced by Islamic music. Epic poetry is found in parts of Nigeria, and its performance is always viewed as musical in nature. Blind itinerant performers, sometimes accompanying themselves with a string instrument, are known for reciting long poems of unorthodox Islamic text among the Kanuri and Hausa.

Hausa Music

The people of the North are known for complex percussion instrument music, the one-stringed *goje*, and a strong praise song vocal tradition. Under Muslim influence since the Fourteenth century, Hausa music uses free-rhythmic improvisation and the Pentatonic scale, similar to other Muslim tribes throughout West Africa, such as the Bambara, Kanuri, Fulani and Songhai. Traditional Hausa music is used to celebrate births, marriages, circumcisions, and other important life events. Hausa ceremonial music is well known in the area and is dominated by families of praise singers. The Hausa play percussion instruments such as the *tambura* drum and the talking drum. The most impressive of the Hausa state instruments, however, is the elongated state trumpet called *Kakaki*; which can be more than two metres long, and can be easily broken down into three portable parts for easy transportation

Igbo Music

The Igbo people live in the south-east of Nigeria, and play a wide variety of folk instruments. They are known for their ready adoption of foreign styles, and were an important part of Nigerian highlife. Okafor (2005) wrote that:

the centrality of music in Igbo life requires that, at one time or another, an Igbo person must participate in dance or music-making either as performer, spectator, listener, subject or object. In a loose sense, then, every Igbo man is a musician. As in Igbo society all art is integrated with life and with each other. It is the degree of proficiency rather than dependence on making a living that defines the Igbo musician.

The most widespread instrument is the 13-stringed zither, called an *ubo*. The Igbo also play slit drums, xylophones, flutes, lyres, pot-drum (*udu*) and lutes, and more recently, imported European brass instruments.

Court music is played among the traditional Igbo to maintain their royal traditions. The *ufie* (slit drum) is used to wake the chief and communicate meal times and other important information to him. Bell and drum ensembles are used to announce when the chief departs and returns to his village.

In contemporary times, many Nigerian hip-hop artistes are beginning to explore core Igbo traditional music and using them for their songs. This has attained some reasonable level of success in recent times. Flavour, Zoro and Phino are in forefront of this new development.

Yoruba Music

The Yoruba have a drumming tradition, with a characteristic use of the *dundun* hourglass tension drums. Ensembles using the *dundun* play a type of music that is also called *dundun*. These ensembles consist of various sizes of tension drums, along with kettledrums (*gudugudu*). The leader of a *dundun* ensemble is the *iyalu*, who uses the drum to "talk" by imitating the tonality of Yoruba. Much of Yoruba music is spiritual in nature, and is devoted to their God.

Yoruba music has become an important component of some modern Nigerian popular music, as a result of its early influence from European, Islamic and Brazilian forms. These influences stemmed from the importation of brass instruments, sheet music, Islamic percussion and styles brought by Brazilian merchants. In both the Nigeria's most populous city, Lagos, and the largest city of Ibadan, these multicultural traditions were brought together and became the root of Nigerian popular music. Modern styles such as Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde Barrister's fuji, Salawa Abeni's waka and Yusuf Olatunji's sakara are derived primarily from Yoruba traditional music. Yoruba music has come of age and the new generation Nigerian musicians now sing in their native language. 9ice is one of many that broke into the industry with Gongo Aso and many more artistes followed suit. Listening to Timi Korus Babe mi Jowo shows that artistes both home and abroad based, now rap and sing in Yoruba as a mark of upholding their musical heritage.

Globalizing Nigerian Music

Globalization is a fast growing phenomenon engulfing the universe. It is highly imposing and irresistible as many countries are into international communication and other technological networks. Certainly the profitable approach to this development is to harness its positive potentials for the advancement of Nigerian music identity through deliberate action to orientate the society on the threats of globalization.

For any music that has its root in Nigeria to attain global recognition, the following are inevitable:

1. **Application of information and communication technology (ICT):** Effort should be made to publish more and more Nigerian music on the internet. CDs of such songs should as well be made readily available for offices, schools, homes, and public places at any given time.
2. **Provision of free and compulsory basic music education:** Education is an instrument of social change and progress in every society, particularly in a well-managed condition. Primary and secondary schools should be provided with good theoretical and practical musical experience. At the tertiary level, music curriculum should be better balanced to incorporate a reasonable level of African musical content, with inclusion of music contents of other cultures of the world. In Nzewi's (2004) view on African life and world view, he noted that

the musical arts were intended to transact relationships monitor and manage the ethos of all societal systems and institutions, inculcate humane sensibilities, and conduct spiritual disposition.

3. **Establishment of music research institutes in Nigeria.** Music and research institutes should be established in various parts of Nigeria.
4. **Regular organization of sponsored music festivals and competitions:** Regular organization of these festivals and competitions help to integrate people from diverse races and walks of life. These should be encouraged and sponsored as they promote Nigeria's unity and identity.

Conclusion

Globalizing Nigerian music should not be left for the government or any particular individual. It is a unanimous task which desires all hands on deck for its achievement. Every governmental and non-governmental arm, organization, school, office and even individual must contribute in one way or the other to actualize this feat. It may seem that foreign countries desire to rule the world economically, culturally and politically from their position as stakeholders in the development and financing of information and communication Technology (ICT). Be that as it may, it is therefore pertinent for Nigerians, especially the youth to get acquainted with the values in Nigerian music, as well as channel same towards moral and National development. ICT and media infrastructure education and training is therefore inevitable in the effort to resist the repression of Nigerian music at the global level. Otherwise, globalization which should be explored for the development of our musical heritage could efface it.

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