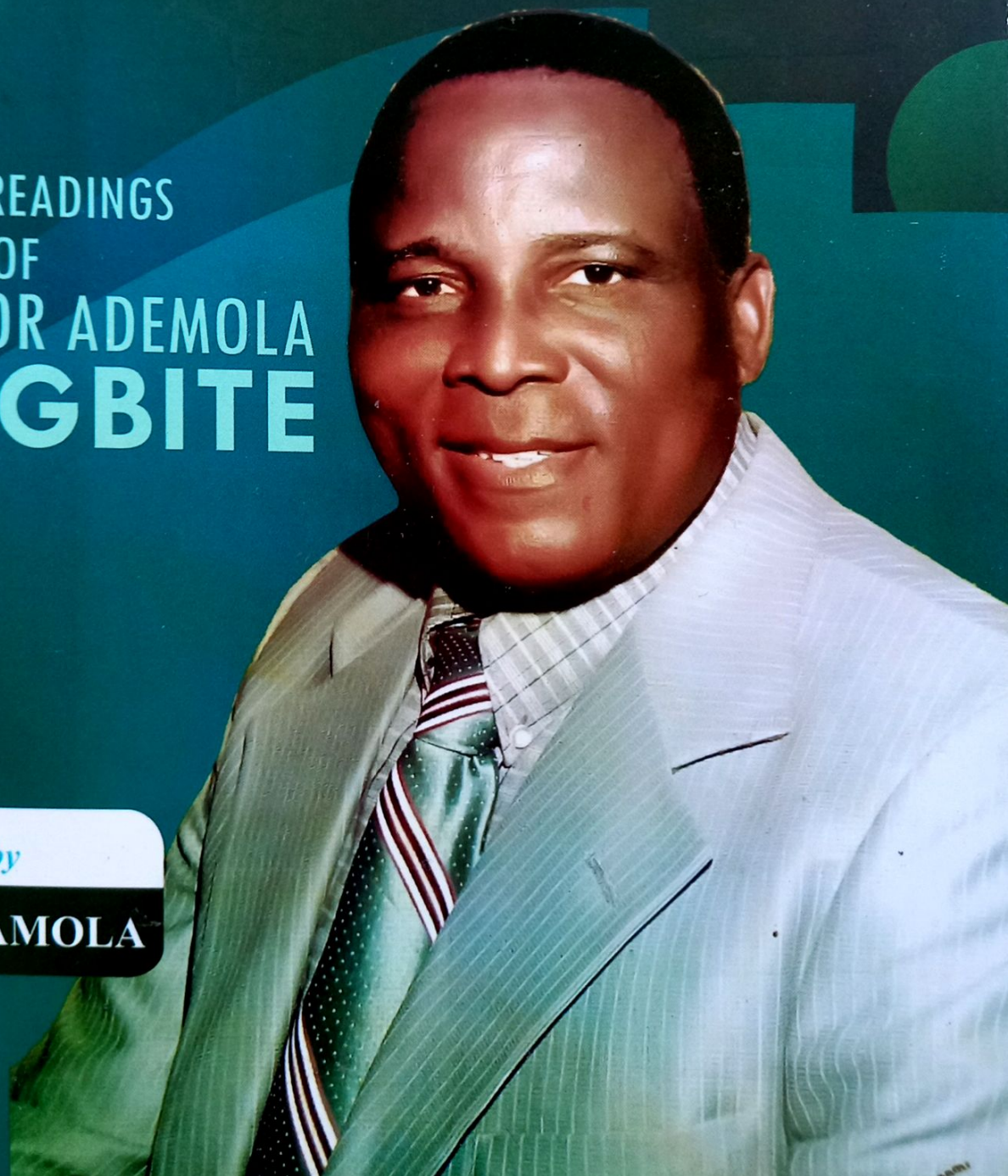


MUSIC AND THE SCIENTIFIC MEANING OF MAN

A BOOK OF READINGS
IN HONOUR OF
PROFESSOR ADEMOLA
ADEGBITE

Edited by

YOMI DARAMOLA



MUSIC AND THE SCIENTIFIC MEANING OF MAN

Dr. Taiye Adesta

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Yomi Daramola**

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© Department of Music, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife

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Chapter Seventeen

EXPOUNDING ON *GOSPELTAINMENT* THEORY

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Introduction

Gospel music is one of the religious musical genres that have developed over the years in Nigeria and the debate on its spiritual and the entertainment contents has been on since the 1980s. There is also a dearth of underpinning theories for gospel music in the Nigerian scholarship. Consequently, this chapter expounds on the *gospeltainment* theory identifying its characteristic features in the Nigerian gospel music. The work adopted the cultural-hermeneutical, textual, content analysis and discographical methods. The gospel entertainment theory within the concept of *gospeltainment* served as our theoretical framework. Cultural – hermeneutical method was used to interpret the song texts in their cultural contexts while discographical and content analysis methods relying on existing recordings were used as resources for analysis of song texts. Participant–observation and interview techniques were used as instruments of data collection. The characteristic features of *gospeltainment* are subsumed in three primary intentions of gospel musicians which are the desire to proclaim the gospel; the desire to make the music appealing and the craving for financial gain. These intentions qualify any gospel music performance as *gospeltainment*. The four basic elements of the religious or gospel, the musical, the performance styles and the extra-musical derived from these intentions in turn define the various characteristic features of *gospeltainment*.

This chapter concludes that *gospeltainment* should be adopted as a relevant theory for gospel music performance in Nigeria because there are inherent entertainment and ministration elements in every gospel music performance.

Having existed for over ninety years, according to historical records, gospel music is not new in Nigeria but a formulation of relevant theories on its development seems to be quite new. The need for relevant theories was advocated by Pass when he argued extensively on the need for a theory on church music (1989:1-131). It is also observed that the act of systematizing and abstracting theories is the preoccupation of the musicologist (Vidal 19 - 34 2009). Adedeji rightly said that 'Sacred Musicology' as a new field in Africa, needs relevant theories for its development (2014: 103). The formulation of theories in the field of music is crucial to the discipline as one of the performing arts. Theory as a concept in music can be scientific or an abstraction borrowed from other fields or formulated within the confines of music as one of the humanities. It can imply a technical term in the scientific study of music as it applies to scales, harmony, intervals, forms and so on as well as the formulation and application of ideas or principles from related fields like the social sciences to the arts. It can also imply theories formulated in the musicological study of music especially in the area of performance studies. Theory forms the basis for the generation and interpretation of ideas, activities and situations in performance as well as generates grounds of scientific reasoning in musicological studies.

The need for relevant theories on Nigerian gospel music is rooted in the fact that many years of the existence of gospel music as a distinct genre in the Nigerian music scene has produced different strands of the music with different features and multiple dimensions of its performance practice. In spite of this, there are very few theories developed by scholars directly deriving from or relating to it. The concern of this chapter is therefore to expound on *gospeltainment* theory to project a new concept of gospel entertainment with a view to discussing its characteristic features, and its application to Nigerian gospel music.

The Theory Proposed

Gospeltainment theory proposed in 2016 states as follows: There are inherent ministration and entertainment elements in every gospel music performance which can be purely musical, extra-musical or both. These elements can be latent or dominant and can either be intended or unintended (Adeola 2016: 240; Adeola 2020: 81). Gospeltainment, which is a coinage from gospel and entertainment, expounds that the Nigerian gospel music is a blend of entertainment with gospel music as there are inherent or underlying entertainment elements in the performance of Nigerian gospel music. Hence, any gospel music that employs entertainment in any form as a tool for the delivery of the gospel message through music,

whether deliberately or unintentionally, qualifies as gospeltainment. This is however with a consciousness of the spirituality that gospel music demands thereby drawing the divide between the sacred and the secular. Although it can be observed that certain gospel musicians are tending towards secularism, it must be stated that gospel music being entertaining and appealing does not make it entertainment in the secular sense. Entertainment is not used in this study to mean secularity but used in the sense of appeal and causing excitement, stimulation or motivation that come from listening to or participating in the music. Arouse

Certain categories of gospel music can be classified as gospeltainment because of their compositional and performance styles. Nigerian gospel musicians that engage in cross-religious and popular culture currents in their music fall in this category. Some musical types are regarded as either having some religious influence in their origin or having come to be associated with adherents of some religious faiths. Popular musical genres like *Dadakuada*, *Senwele*, *Fuji*, *Waka*, *Apala* and *Baalu* were known to be performed by Muslims, but in recent times Christians have begun to have their own versions of the musical types such as "Senwele Jesu", "Gospel Fuji" "Gospel Waka", "Apala Gospel" and others. Evangelist Rachael Olubukola Akinade popularly called "Senwele Jesu" is known for her style of presenting gospel music using the popular Waka and Senwele styles. Another musician in this category is Dekunle Fuji who has 'fuji' as an alias to his name because he sings 'gospel fuji'. The same is true of Saint Janet, a lady who employs a mix of 'Juju' and 'Afro rock' in her gospel music performance. 'Apala Gospel' is the brand popularized by a trio that goes by the name 'Bois Olorun' meaning 'God's boys'.

The use of popular and secular styles such as Hip Hop, Blues, Funk, Rap and so on also give entertainment colours to gospel music, and the entertainment elements as we find in the popular culture, are employed in the presentation of the gospel songs. Frank Edward's "Fire go" is an example of gospel music presented in Hip Hop, Rock and Ballad styles which reflect entertainment elements both in conception and realization; even the title, rendition and instrumentation suggest entertainment.

Other gospel music that can be classified as gospeltainment qualify on account of their aesthetic impacts and influences reflected in their performance and content. Although unlike the first group, popular secular styles are not employed; in the art and acts of performance entertainment is inevitable even when unintended. The use of musical instruments in terms

of their blend, the harmony and blend of voices, the flow of the music and the production of sounds such that it appeals not only to the soul but also to the emotions to a point of enjoyment is entertainment. It must be observed however, that some gospel music that is purely contemplative in conception and realization may escape being classified as gospeltainment while others cannot.

Gospeltainment theory and Gospel entertainment as a concept can be applied to other forms of religious music like the Islamic religious music which is also intended to proclaim the tenets of Islam through music. Although the term gospel music has registered generally in people's mind as referring to the Christian branch of religious music, recent developments in the Nigerian music scene have shown that the Islamic religious musicians also claim to propagate the message of Islam through their music. If the word 'evangelism' by definition simply means to proclaim, declare or share one's faith with others and this is intended in Islamic religious music, then Islamic religious music can also be regarded as of Islamic gospel music. Evidently whether accepted and regarded as gospel music or not, it stands out as a branch of religious music on its own, with its peculiar features that accommodate and demonstrate many of the features of entertainment that gospel entertainment theory presents as evident in the Nigerian gospel music. Recent trends in Islamic religious music show a drift in the direction of popular culture which promotes entertainment especially in the area of dance, music composition, use of instruments and costumes. The theory can therefore be applied to Islamic religious music. Our focus in this work is however on the Christian religious music only.

Characteristics Features of Gospeltainment

The performance of the Nigerian gospel music demonstrates the characteristic features of gospeltainment which are evident in the content and themes of the songs, the contexts and styles of performance, compositional styles and devices, costumes, dance, dialogue and other acts during their performances. The manifestation of the characteristic features of gospeltainment in a gospel music performance varies from one musician to another and from one performance to another. The manifestation of the features of gospeltainment in a single performance ranges from one to all of the features. It is possible for a single performance to manifest several of the features of gospeltainment while in others you find only one or two features. The question may then be how many of the characteristic features of gospeltainment should be present in a musical performance to qualify it as gospeltainment?

Our submission in this work is that any gospel music performance that presents at least two of the features qualifies as gospeltainment. The characteristic features of gospeltainment are subsumed in three primary intentions of gospel musicians and these intentions form the three basic characteristic features that qualify any gospel music performance as gospeltainment. These are:

1. A demonstration of the desire to proclaim the gospel through musical performance, which the gospel musicians refer to as 'ministration', manifesting in the spiritual or religious contents of the music;
2. The desire to make the music appeal to the audience either in live performance or recorded music which is pursued through the use of musical and extra-musical activities displayed in various forms of artistry; and
3. The craving for financial benefits through live performances or recordings pushed through technology and social media.

The characteristic features of gospeltainment deriving from these three primary intentions produce four basic elements namely the religious or gospel, the musical, the performance styles and the extra-musical elements. Two of these elements are hereby discussed in more details as they manifest in the Nigerian gospel music performances.

1. Religious/Gospel Elements

The claim of gospel musicians is that their primary focus and mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ using music as the vehicle of the proclamation. Hence, the religious and specifically Christian content of the music is a primary feature of gospeltainment. The gospel element is demonstrated essentially in the themes, text and morals of the songs which reflect biblical injunctions presented in the words of the musician or quoted directly from the Bible. In their presentations it is common to hear the musicians insert the phrase *Bíbèlì wí pé* "the Bible says" when direct quotations from the Bible are presented or paraphrased in their songs. Even when the phrase is not inserted, direct biblical quotations are used in the compositions which register in the mind of any Christian audience and appeal to their Christian conscience. For example an excerpt from this song by Bola Are:

Ah, ará, dí dé Olúwa sún m'étílẹ̀ oo	People, the coming of the Lord is near
Ọkọ̀ Ìyàwó á bọ̀ bí olẹ̀ lóru	The bride groom is coming like a thief in the night
Èyin àyànfẹ̀, ejẹ̀ á múra	Beloved let us get prepared
Àsìkò bù lọ́ tán o	Time is running out

Yòò dé bí olè lóru

He will come like a thief in the night

Gégé bí bíbélì ti wí

As it is recorded in the bible

(See Bola Are, "Jesus is coming back, be ready", Ibadan: Okiki Jesu Records OJLP 71, 2014)

The above song by Bola Are represents an example of the ministration dimension as a characteristic feature of gospeltainment. The focus of the song is to re-echo the second coming of Jesus Christ as recorded in 1 Thessalonians 5:2 and 2 Peter 3:10 in the scriptures. The message of the song is to tell the believers referred to as àyànfé to get ready for the coming of the Lord which will be like the coming of a thief in the night. The spiritual element of this song is rooted in its content which is directly lifted from the Bible, while the entertainment element is evident in the musical aesthetics presented through the use of musical instruments.

The gospel content is clearly reflected in the theme of the songs which cuts across many areas of the human experiences approached from the Christian perspective. Adedeji submitted that the Nigerian gospel music revolves around four major themes which are theological, socio-cultural, political and economic (2004: 62-80). It must be observed that even when gospel music addresses socio-cultural, political and economic issues, it is always approached from a Christian religious perspective.

Songs in this category are expressions and reflections of the faith and belief of the musicians in the context of the Christian religion to which the gospel musicians belong. These are songs that are directed toward God in form of prayers, supplications, praises, adoration, prophecies, encouragement to believers, challenge to the unbelievers, assurance, hope etc. Songs in this category leave the listeners not in any doubt of the fact that they are listening to Christian songs. Names of God and His attributes, Jesus Christ, His ability to save and change situations, Bible quotations and other forms of Christian expressions feature in these songs. The songs are God-focused, Bible-based and intended to call the listeners to worship God, serve Him or praise Him and to call the unsaved to accept the grace of God in salvation.

The musicians claim that their songs bring down the power of God into the lives and situations of the listeners; by this they mean the reality of the power of God is experienced as the listeners connect to God by faith through their songs. Emphasis is on the spiritual

impact of the songs on the listeners relying on the power of the text and not on the melody. Even when presented in contexts of entertainment such as wedding, house warming and child naming ceremonies etc., the musicians insist on the spiritual impact of their music on the audience. This is implied when Adedeji stated that:

To an average Nigerian gospel musician, the message is more important than the music or put the other way round, 'what is important is not the music but the message'. It is common in many local gospel music ministrations to hear statements such as, 'Please don't listen to the beauty of the music but the message. (2007:6)

The religious elements in gospel music exhibiting this first characteristic feature of gospeltainment can generally be classified based on the themes of the songs and the following subjects feature prominently in religious themes:

(a) Praise/Adoration

It is a common feature in Nigerian gospel music to exalt God, to describe His attributes and to call Him by the names that reflect His greatness, His deeds, His abilities, and His glory. Many gospel artistes devote their recordings solely to the praise and adoration of God while others combine various subjects in their recordings. It is believed that God is central to the gospel and His praise is a very vital aspect of the calling which gospel musicians have a mandate to fulfil in their ministries. There are usually one or more praise/adoration songs in virtually every gospel recording while collections of praise songs performed as a chain of songs or medley also feature prominently in the Nigerian gospel music recordings. Examples of praise/adoration songs include *Oba ni Jesu* by Dupe Solana;

Oba ni Jésu

Chorus

Call: *Oba ni Jésum*

All: *Oba ni x2*

Oníṣé àrà l'Olórún Elédùmarè

tó n ṣohun gbogbo nínú ohun gbogbo

(See Dúpe Sólàná "Oba ni Jésum" in *Oba ni Jésum*. Lagos: Hosanna Records HR 002 1988)

Translation

Jesus is king

He is king

God who is fearful in praises works wonders

who does all things

The above song by Dupe Solana (now Olulana) is focused on the kingship of Jesus Christ. The refrain sets the central theme of the song "Jesus is king" while all the other stanzas give a list of the names by which Jesus is known in the Scriptures and at the same time, states the attributes of Jesus and the things that he does. With the use of call and response and the Solo/Chorus techniques peculiar to African music, the song writer presents Jesus as a King who has all powers and ability to do all things. His attributes of perfection, holiness, love and deeds of kindness, provision, and as defender and protector are emphasized in this song. The song, according to the writer, is an expression of her perception of who Jesus is based on her Christian experience especially in the context of the great things the Lord has done in her life. According to her, if Jesus is real to you, you cannot but sing and talk about him. "That song is how I see Jesus. He is my King; that is my testimony."

Gbemi Olaleye's album titled "*Oore òfè* (Grace) is a fusion of different styles of performance namely high life, hip hop, rap, reggae and contemporary secular popular styles like macosa. In the eight-track album, a blend of musical styles and languages is employed in some songs. Praise and adoration are employed as introduction to the title track "*Oore òfè*". Although the content or central theme of the song is about the grace of God; the praise of God featured prominently in this work. The phrase *Gbé lárugé* "lift Him up or praise Him" by implication is repeated a number of times and used as a call to people to join in the praise of God. The song essentially eulogizes God, calling Him by various names with descriptive attributes reflecting God's mighty acts and what He has capacity to do. A general feature of the album is the praise of God which cuts across all the tracks. In all of the tracks there are interjections of the praise of God either as main verses or as commentaries overlapping with main ideas. Another peculiar feature of the album is a repetition of some of the tracks done in other styles tagged remix. Excerpts from the title track of the recording are given below:

Oore Òfè

Solo: *Jah Jéhová, Oba Aládé Wúrà,*

A-ji-pojó-ikú-dà

Jéhóva nìsì, Jéhóva Samà,

Oba lóri ayé gbogbo

Àkìkítán, Àkìkítán Olódùmarè,

Gbanigbani lójó gbogbo, Àrìrò-àlá.

Translation

Jah, Jehovah, King with a golden crown
who keeps alive

Jehovah Nisi, Jehova Shama,
King over all things

The Owner of the universe
Whose praise is endless

One Who delivers at all times,
unfathomable dream

A-tẹ-rẹrẹ-kári-ayé, Òyigiyigì, Òyigiyigì

Apá-ń-lá-tó-solé-ayé-ró,

timùtimù-léyìn-asòdodo

Òkè-pààrà-sòlórò-di-dìndìn

Mo ẹ kábiyèsí fún Ọ Aláàfin ọrun ...

(See Gbemi Olaleye in her album titled "Ore Ofe", Motiv 8 Music records, 2007)

One Who spread all over the world
The great hand that holds the universe
Supports for the righteous
One Whose voice brings fear
I pay homage to you king of heaven...

(b) Prayers

Prayer is another content of the spiritual/religious themes which features prominently in Nigerian gospel songs. Prayer is said both on personal level by the musician as well as on behalf of other people. He or she prays for the nation, other groups of people like the sick, the jobless and little children. The contents of prayers rendered in songs also include personal, communal or societal healing, deliverance, breakthrough, turnaround of the nation's economy and the political situation in the country, especially for peace to reign, and for wisdom for the leaders and good governance.

Songs of prayer come in form of petitions or positive confessions. Every gospel musician believes in the power of prayer and these musicians are of the opinion that whatever they confess in form of prayers in their songs will come to pass and any of their listeners who believes in such prayers sung in songs and applies them by faith would also be blessed. The hope of the oppressed people is raised through these prayer songs and the people are led to look up to God, trusting that someday they would be released from the power of oppression. As Christians and ministers in their own right, the musicians believe they are anointed and their songs are not ordinary. The gospel musicians emphasize this so much because of the general tendency for people to look at them as "mere performers" and not "ministers". The belief is rooted in the fact that music ministers are called just like those who preach the gospel in words are called and that God backs up every one that He has called with the anointing to demonstrate the power of God. An example of such songs is presented below:

Ọdún ń lọ sópin ọ

Ọdún ń lọ sópin ọ bàbá rere

Bàbá maa sọ mi o tọmọ tọmọ

Ohun tí yó pami lẹkún ọ lódún titun

Má jẹ kó ẹlẹ sí mi o baba rere

(See Good Women Choir, Ibadan, led by Mrs D.A Fasoyin "Odun nlo sopin o" in *Odun nlo sopin*. Lagos: Ibukun Orisun Iye Records. MOLPS 66, 1979).

Translation

The year is drawing to a close, good father
Father watch over me and my children
What will make us cry in the New Year
Good father, let it not happen to me

The above song by the Good Women Choir of the Christ Apostolic Church Ibadan led by Mrs D.A. Fasoyin is a prayer for protection. The time of the year referred to in the chorus of the song is the last four months of the year, especially the last two during which people believe that so much evil do happen. When such bad things happen, people cannot rejoice during the festive periods, but enter the New Year sorrowful. The song therefore, prays that God would watch over His people and prevent any bad occurrence in the year ending and in the New Year. The content of the song also indicates several other prayer requests like provision of money, good health, fruit of the womb, and breakthrough.

Since the release of the album in 1979, radio stations, record stores and individuals play and sing this song as from the month of November every year, as everyone is in constant prayers to God for divine protection as the year draws to an end. The song awakens in Nigerian citizens a consciousness that the year is gradually drawing to an end as soon as they begin to hear the song on radio and record stores along the streets. The prayer raised in the song is a common desire of every one; as such it is very popular and generally accepted by the people and sung by them. Even, people of other faiths outside Christianity sing the song.

(c) Testimonies

Testifying to the goodness of God is a common feature in Christianity. It is believed that testimonies bring victory. A verse of the scripture that is usually used by gospel musicians, and indeed Christians in general, to support this view is Revelations 12:11 which says "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death". Testimonies in Nigerian gospel songs are fused into praise, adoration and thanksgiving. There are times that testimonies are shared even in songs of prayer as a reference to what God did in the past. It also shows that God has the ability to do even greater things in the present.

Dupe Olulana's "Ará ẹ dide, ẹ bá mi jó" is a song of testimony about what God has done and a call to people to join in dancing and rejoicing for God's goodness. The song states in clear terms what God has done, such as protection from danger, blessing with the good things of life, fruit of the womb and the great love that He has for humanity that made Him to offer His life. All of these call for rejoicing, thanksgiving and dancing to the Lord which the song writer is calling people to do. The song is done in simple chorus and verse style in which the soloist sings the verses and there is a response with the same chorus to all the verses by the chorus group.

Ará E Dìdè E Bámi Jó
Ará ẹ dídè ẹ bá mi jó
Èniyàn mi ẹ bá mi yò
Olúwa mi ló gbé mi ga

Translation

People rise up and dance with me
My brethren rejoice with me
It is my God that has promoted me

(d) Thanksgiving and Appreciation

Thanksgiving comes as an expression of appreciation for what God has done either in the life of the musician, community or the nation. It is very common to hear musicians sing about what God has done in their lives, homes, and ministries. They sing about God's blessings of children, cars, houses, good health, deliverance from accidents, and successful events in the nation. People are encouraged to give thanks to God and not to be ingrates, for in doing so one sets the stage for receiving more of God's blessings. Thanksgiving songs are also used as grounds for supplication to ask that the Lord would give the same types of blessings that have generated thanksgiving to people who desire them. So finding some lines of prayers in thanksgiving songs is a common feature.

Jésù O seun tó O fòmọ rere dé wa ládé
Jésù o ẹ e tó o fòmọ rere dé wa ládé

Translation

Thank you Jesus for blessing us with a good child

Ekín, òsé padà léyìn wa
ẹ bá wa dúpẹ

Crying and hissing is no longer ours

Join us to give thanks

Àwọn àgàn tó n wọmọ o, bàbá dá wọn lóhùn
Jẹ kí wọn ríre gbà bàbá, dákún dá won lólá
them

answer the barren that want children

let them receive favour, father please bless

(See Dupe Olulana in her album "Jesu mbo" Lagos, Hosannah Records. HR 001. 1986)

(e) Salvation Experience

Songs in this category essentially are about the salvation experience of the musicians which they testify to in songs and an invitation to the listeners to be saved if they have not experienced conversion. Gospel musicians, as with the gospel message that their music preaches, promise salvation now and in the future. Salvation now often refers to the ability of God to save those who accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour from the evil of the present time such as sickness, infirmities, accidents, sudden death and other forms of calamities that the world is exposed to. Salvation in the future refers to the power of God to deliver from eternal

damnation of hell fire. Jesus Christ is presented in salvation songs as the only way to be saved and this means deliverance from everything that the devil does. Salvation songs also emphasize God's love for the world and particularly the unsaved as such people are encouraged to embrace this love which is being extended through the song ministration. An excerpt of a salvation song by Shola Rotimi is given below:

Ìdàríjì kò sí lórùn

Ìdàríjì kò sí lórùn o ará

Jòwọ gba Jèsù kí ó tó fayé sílẹ̀

Bikú bá mú ọ lọ o, àtúnse kò ní sí mó

dákun dákun o, kò mà sí lórùn

Ó pé tí a tí n fígàlẹ̀ yí hàn ọ o

Wí pé kí o gba Jèsù kí o má ba sẹ̀gbé

Àmọ̀ bí o bá kọ̀ tí o kò ronú pìwàdà

Bikú bá mú ọ lọ o, àtúnse kò ní sí mó

dákun dákun o, kò mà sí lórùn...

(See Rotimi, Shola and the Tripple 'S' *Idariji ko si Lorun*, Lagos: Ibukun Orisun Iye Records NRLP 021. 1985)

Translation

There is no forgiveness in heaven

Please accept Jesus before departing this world

When death takes you there will be no remedy

There will be no pleading in heaven

we have been presenting salvation to you for long

that you accept Jesus so you do not perish

But if you refuse to repent

and death takes you there will be no remedy

There will be no pleading in heaven...

(e) Moral Regeneration

It is the belief of every gospel musician that they have been called to preach the gospel through songs. Therefore, warning against sin and calling sinners to repentance feature prominently in Nigerian gospel music. This comes in form of admonition to those already saved to be careful and run away from sin and warning to those who live in sin about the impending doom and damnation that await sinners who refuse to give their lives to Jesus. Warning against sin always goes along with songs of repentance from such sins. An example is given below:

Be watchful

Solo- Be watchful; don't be tempted to leave Jesus

For devil is around X2

(Rotimi, Shola. (1985). *Idariji ko si Lorun*, Lagos: Ibukun Orisun Iye, Records NRLP 021)

An excerpt from another song by Dupe Olulana reflects this subject of salvation.

Òrẹ gba Jèsù gbọ

Òrẹ gba Jèsù gbọ

Ronú pìwàdà kùrò lònà ègbé rẹ

Bọ sinú oore-òfẹ Jèsù titi ayé

Translation

Friend believe in Jesus

Repent from your destructive ways

Enter into Jesus' eternal grace

2. Musical Elements

Musical elements constitute another feature in the performance of gospel music that qualifies it as gospeltainment. Although the focus of gospel music is to proclaim the gospel, it employs performance as a means and this requires the use of music that often exhibits artistry and virtuosity on the part of the singers and instrumentalists. Musical forms and styles can be identified in the performance of the Nigerian gospel music. Adedeji, in his discourse on the classification of the Nigerian gospel music styles, defined style as the aggregate result of peculiar manner of composition, form, melody, harmony, vocal style and instrumentation inherent in a particular musical expression. The manners in which these musical elements appear, or are organized give the music an overall outlook, which is called style (2004: 67). He therefore categorized the Nigerian gospel music in terms of style into three namely, indigenous, foreign and popular music-based. These three are in turn sub-divided into twelve distinct styles namely: 'native', 'traditional classical', 'spiritual', 'a-cappella', 'instrumental', 'gos-pop', 'gospel-highlife', 'gospel-reggae', 'gospel-fuji', 'gospel-waka', 'juju-gospel', and 'assorted'. Adedeji observed, and I agree with him, that these styles derive their nomenclatures from the practitioners, the audience and in some instances, scholars (2004: 68).

The musical elements in Nigerian gospel music are evident in three distinct aspects and can therefore be broadly categorized into three namely elaborate use of musical instruments, the use of popular and secular styles and the compositional and performance devices employed.

(a) Elaborate Use of Musical Instruments

One of the main features of the Nigerian gospel music is the elaborate use of musical instruments. A blend of the western with the Nigerian musical instruments especially the percussions is also a feature. Christian churches across Yoruba land now commonly feature *dundun* drummers, both during worship services and at Christian social gatherings outside the church (Omojola 2014: 35). This submission is quite true and evident in Nigerian gospel music. The choice and use of musical instruments is always determined by the style of

performance peculiar to the individual musician. However, some musical instruments such as the western keyboard, guitar, drum set, saxophone, trumpet, conga and the traditional talking drums – *Gangan*, *Bata*, *Sekere*, *Agogo*, seem to be generally employed by the gospel musicians. The number of each of the musical instruments also vary from one musician to another depending on how large the band is and the style of performance, but the basic combination of the instruments in the small band is at least one each of the keyboard, bass guitar, drum set and talking drum. Some gospel musicians use multiples of each of the musical instruments and the dominant instrument whether western or traditional is also a function of the style of the musician. For example whereas Bukola Akinade and Tope Alabi regularly employs heavy use of percussion comprising the drum set and multiples of *gangan* talking drums with only a keyboard and occasional use of the bass guitar, musicians like Shola Allison, Toun Soetan and Dupe Olulana emphasize the drum set and melodic instruments. They regularly make use of the drum set, keyboard, bass guitar, rhythm guitar and the saxophone with or without the talking drum which often is just one. There are also musicians like Pastor Sunday Adelakun, Pastor (Mrs) Gbemi Olaleye and Funmi Aragbaye who tend to use both the western and traditional musical instruments in almost equal proportion.

There are categories of gospel musicians who use either only the western musical instruments or strictly the traditional Nigerian musical instruments because of their style of performance. Musicians like Frank Edward and 'Bois Olorun' fall into this category. While Frank Edward uses western and computer simulated musical instruments like the Keyboard, Synthesizers, electric drums and western guitars because of his Hip Hop style, 'Bois Olorun' use only the Nigerian traditional musical instruments such as *sekere* (Gourd Rattle), set of *gangan* (Yoruba hour glass) drums and *agogo* (gong) because they sing apala.



Plate 1: Picture showing Shola Allison using a blend of Western Keyboard, Guitar and traditional drums. Source: Field Work in a live performance at the Stella Obasanjo Hall in Ilorin on Sunday 27th December, 2015.



Plate 2: Picture showing the percussion section of Bois Olorun using multiple talking drums in a musical concert. Source: Field Work on Sunday 27th December, 2015 at the Stella Obasanjo Hall, Ilorin.

The elaborate use of musical instruments by gospel musicians is displayed in the employment of the instruments and the activities of the players during performance. Apart from the musical and aesthetic functions, the instruments perform extra musical roles. For

example, the Nigerian talking drums like the *dundun* and *gangan* are used to make speeches and communicate at performances. The skilfulness of the instrumentalists are also showcased at performances as musical instruments are used to introduce the songs, prompt the singers, play interludes and dictate the pace and mood of performance. One of the strong appeals to the audience is usually the effective use of the musical instruments in terms of blend, balance and effective accompaniment of the songs. Dance moments created at gospel music performances are responses to the use of musical instruments.

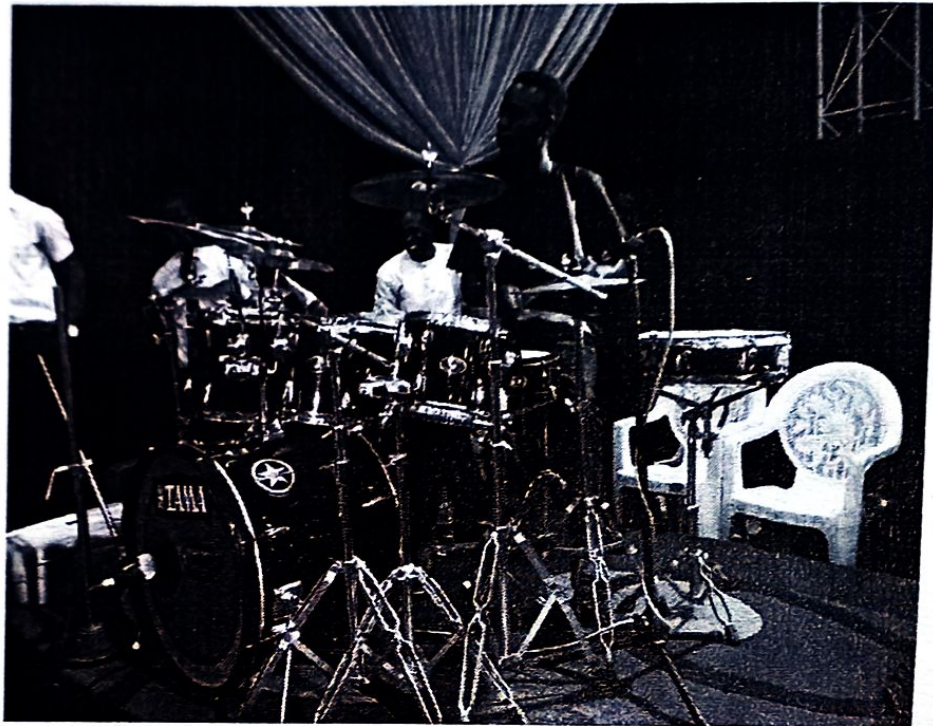


Plate 3: Picture showing the western drum set, a basic instrument employed by most gospel musicians being played by the drummer of Bois Olorun. Source: Field Work December, 2015 at Stella Obasanjo hall, Ilorin.

(b) The Use of Popular and Secular Styles

The Nigerian gospel musicians use various musical styles in their performance that generate entertainment. The use of traditional and contemporary popular styles like Waka, Senwele, Apala, Ijala, Fuji, Hip Hop, Rock, Afro beat and so on generates entertainment. The use of traditional musical instruments and the performance of such styles exactly the way it is done in the secular usually generate dance steps, movements, and interactions that are entertaining. There are times that unless attention is paid to the text of the songs which reflects the Christian faith, it can be mistaken for a secular song. For example Frank Edward's "Fire Go" can be mistaken for a secular hip hop song because of the hip hop style and some phrases used in the song such as 'fire go' 'don't mind them'.

Popular and secular styles have become an identity in Nigerian gospel music performance. It has been observed that the 1980s mark the emergence of the use of popular styles in the Nigeria gospel music because of the influence of popular cultures on the one hand and the desire to commercialize gospel music on the other hand. Ajirire and Alabi (1992:21), in agreement with Adedeji (2004:66), suggest that the 'gos-pop' style was formed in this period and Carol Bridi, a soloist was probably the first to 'funkify' Nigerian gospel music with the release of her debut titled 'One Family' in 1984. This, in Emielu's opinion is a product of the steady cross-current of musical ideas and cultural exchanges between Africa and the Diaspora which is very evident in popular and gospel music (2006:105).

Popular music is that brand of music that generally enjoys the favour of being acceptable to the people among which it is made. The acceptability can be within a given cultural or geographical location or can transcend cultural boundaries, thereby extending beyond its immediate locality. Since the invention of the electronic media, and in more recent times the internet, different genres of music have at various times been made popular because production and dissemination of sound is made possible and easy. Christian Onyeji described popular music as a genre of music encompassing several styles and is readily comprehensible to a large proportion of the population; its appreciation requires little or no knowledge of musical theory or technique (2002:24). Contemporary popular music is the modern commercially successful music available to the public through major commercial record companies (Adegbite 1994: 83-94). Commenting generally on popular arts, Barber states as follows:

Popular arts are seen as a hybrid, distinguishable from traditional arts by their syncretism. They are located in the cities, the centres, both of technological change and rapidly growing 20th century transport network; they are endowed with an unprecedented mobility; they can be transmitted by radio, television, and record or cassette tape. The audiences to which they are addressed in the first instance are drawn from the city; they are often heterogeneous crowds (1987: 715).

A common feature of the various submissions on popular music above is the acceptability by the populace enhanced by the electronic media as a result of advancement in technology. These popular musical genres have impacts and effects on the Nigerian gospel music, and they are evident in the adaption of most of the popular and secular musical styles in gospel

music performances. The various forms employed by the gospel musicians range from popular traditional to contemporary and they even exhibit cross religious currents.

An examination of the current trends in the performance of the Nigerian gospel music reveals that while some of the gospel musicians are known for using specific popular styles as occasional spices for their performances, others have come to be known and identified with the use of specific popular styles while some employ a blend of several styles in their performances. For example, Frank Edward is one of the Nigerian gospel musicians that are known for their hip hop style, Adekunle Oloyede Michael Olalekan, popularly known as Dekunle Fuji, performs using Fuji, and 'Bois Olorun' are known for the gospel Apala Style. Bois Olorun comprises of three men Feranmi, Kayode and Kolade formed the Apala music group in 2007 using the method of 'scripturising' everyday language, slangs, and indigenous comedy blended into their music to communicate the gospel. Other musicians like Bukola Akinade, Tope Alabi, and Kenny Kore are known for the use of multiple styles in their performances. Evangelist Rachael Bukola Akinade popularly called 'Senwele Jesu' carved an identity for herself in the Nigerian gospel music scene through her use of Waka and Senwele musical styles. An examination of her music recordings reveals that she mainly employs the popular highlife, Waka and Senwele genres in her performance. Tope Alabi is another household name in the Nigerian gospel music scene that spices up her performances with Macosa and Kenny Kore uses multiple styles like hip hop, Fuji, Funk and Reggae.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have expounded on the gospeltainment theory setting out the characteristic features which are subsumed under three basic intentions of gospel musicians to propagate the gospel through music, make their music appeal to their audience through various forms of artistry and desire to make financial gains. From these three basic intentions, various elements spelling out the characteristic features of gospeltainment are derived. Two of such elements were discussed in this chapter namely, the gospel and musical elements. The gospel element manifests in the themes and contents of the songs such as praise and adoration, prayers, testimonies, thanksgiving, salvation experience and moral regeneration. The musical element is evident in the elaborate use of musical instruments and use of popular secular styles.

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Interviews

1. Evangelist Dupe Olulana, one of Nigeria's female gospel musicians. She is 62 years (08/01/60), and has been in the music scene for about thirty four years now. Interviewed in Ilorin on Monday, 30th September, 2013.
2. Evangelist Bola Are, one of the foremost and older generation of female gospel musicians in Nigeria who has been performing for more than forty seven years. She is 68 years (01/10/54) based in Ibadan and has released 70 albums. Interviewed in Ibadan on Friday 13th December, 2013.
3. Evangelist Bukola Akinade, popularly known as Senwele Jesu. She is one of the leading female gospel musicians in Nigeria based in Ibadan. She is 47 years old (14/07/1975) with several recordings in the market. Interviewed in Ilorin on Saturday 24th May, 2014.
4. Evangelist Florence Babalola, a female gospel musician based in Ilorin. She has seven albums to her credit. Interviewed in Ilorin on Saturday 4th January, 2020.
5. Pastor Emmanuel Bamidele, a male gospel musician and clergy based in Ilorin, popular for his use of accordion. He is 47 years of age. Interviewed on Saturday, 27th February, 2021.

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