

A LITERARY ANALYSIS OF YORUBA-IFÁ ORAL POETRY AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The article examines the potentials of Yoruba Ifá oral literature for entertainment and education, with an emphasis on the ways in which the desire for entertainment in narrative poetry can precede educational requirements. The study observes that Ifá narrative is an integral part of the complete Ifá divination process usually packaged in parable format. The inexhaustible nature of its source is affirmed by related studies done by Yoruba language and literature scholars. It is also observed that every attempt at translating any language to another often results in obliterating the imagery of the one being translated in the new presentation; hence, the study adopts the term transliteration. The literary stylistic devices employed in Ifá narratives are discussed; for easy reference, the study classifies the content of Ifá narratives into three principal genres; poetry, drama and music. This discourse is tailored to further appraise specific issues concerning the measurement and scoring Yoruba Ifá poetry using global parameters. The performance essence, as in dramaturgy, of the poetry is reserved for further investigation. Examples of Ese Ifá (Ifá verses) are subjected to repetition, parallelism and tonal counterpoint. The study affirms the applicability of Ifá oral literature to cartoon animation movies geared towards effective indigenization of the Yoruba child as a paradigm of the African child. The structure of the study is woven around folkism

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theory. The treatment adopts textual analysis in aesthetic evaluative style.

Keywords: Ese-Ifá, Dramaturgy, Cultural education, Entertainment, Transliteration.

Introduction

This paper will focus mainly on poetry. Dramaturgy and music are mentioned only briefly, because they deserve a separate research report. The focus here is on literary analysis of Ifá poems with a view to ascertaining their appropriateness for indigenous nursery rhymes, usually the main content of children cartoons, and a major genre in animation film. The three features of the poetry being discussed include; repetition, parallelism and tonal counterpoint. They are considered together because repetition is basic to them all. The choice of Ifá lore is conditioned by the features of Ifá tales which agree with this paper's creative adaptation approach; an aesthetic evaluative style. For this study, the researchers opine that aesthetic evaluation is about making normative judgements related to questions of beauty and taste in the arts. Cheung, Law and Yip assert that consumers' aesthetic experience has often been linked with the concept of beauty, which is regarded as subjective and may vary between individuals, cultures and places and across time (1).

Ifá poems are rendered every day, everywhere and on special occasions, especially among Yoruba people and their kinsmen in diaspora. There are Ifá poems in Awure – Ofo *Ori-Ire* - prayers for blessings; in *Mqdarwkpri; ÚfÚvcégun*; prayer for conquest or curses. Ifá poems abound generally in proverbs. Oba Adekunle Areje (cited in Adeseye 124) recounts a personal experience in the preface to his book, *Yoruba Proverbs*: some time ago, Professor Wande Abimbola, who was the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ife at the time ... said that Yoruba proverbs were derived from Ifá Oracle. It is therefore possible that the proverbs might have inherited and acquired the vocabulary of the Ifá oracle (Adeseye 125).

Ifá poems are best sourced in *ese Ifá* (Ifá verses) usually chanted during Ifá divination exercises. The rituals that accompany Ifá divinations carry with them veritable dramaturge and these we hope to explore for entertainment and education. In our scale, we place entertainment above education because one arrests the attention of the target for the other to function. We, therefore, propose to positively engage ritual poetry and drama to advance our cause. Adedotun Ogundeji supports our position in the quest for positive engagement of ritual drama. Accordingly, Ifá ritual is either a religious or secular

event that employs theatrical arts in articulating the beliefs of a people. It follows therefore, that ritual and theatre are related. They share the same functions, that is, edification, education and entertainment; they also have similar content and structure (Ogundeji 2). This segment is devoted to carrying out a comprehensive content analysis of Ifá poetry to determine its viability for general entertainment and education.

Theoretical Framework

The aim of this study is to develop a value system indigenous to Africa via Ifá lore. The study finds Sam Ukala's Folkism Theory very handy as its conceptual framework. In 1993, Sam Ukala redefined 'folkism' from African perspective as the tendency to base literary plays on indigenous history and culture and to compose and perform them in accordance with the aesthetics of African folktale composition and performance. Sam Ukala defines Folkism as: an indigenous aesthetic principle which may derive from the use of African literary theatre of folk-linguistic structural and performance style. It is an attempt to depict traditional African performances on the modern stage (par 1). The study finds the theory relevant to its projected target in the adaptation of Ifá lore for entertainment and cultural education. Ifá lore has a unique advantage for this project because its narrative is rendered in parable format. Characters in Ifá narration include animate and inanimate objects often interacting freely in stories. This, in a way, is a potential that Ifá lore has for animation films. Film animation is a veritable vehicle for children's 'edutainment'.

Repetition in Ifá Poems

Examples of Ifá poems will be drawn from the seemingly inexhaustive pool of the oral library of Ese Ifá (Ifá verses). Scholars like William Bascom, Wande Abimbola and Bolaji Idowu have attested to the extremely comprehensive nature of the content of the oral, but coded Odulfá, which contains 256 clearly codified corpuses with each corpus containing well over 800 narrative plots. Examining the prevalent content of Ifá poetry, Olatunde Olatunji observes that repetition is a prominent feature. According to him, one general feature of Yoruba oral poetry is repetition. Repetition can be lexical-structural, lexical, or semantic. Lexical-structural repetition is either full or partial. Full repetition involves the repetition of a sentence structure as well as of all the lexical items occurring in it as in *ofx* - Ifá incantations (17). The following are some examples of repetitions:

Yoruba	English transliteration
<i>Ojojumonilaanteteedaranyanpanyanrin</i>	Every day, the <i>laantetee</i> cricket gets into big trouble
<i>Ojojumonilaanteteedaranyanpanyanrin</i>	Every day, the <i>laantetee</i> cricket gets into big trouble
<i>And</i>	
<i>Ojo atababo soju niibawaoju je</i>	The day that pepper gets into the eye, it soils the beauty (behaviour) of the eye
<i>Ojo atababo soju niibawaoju je</i>	The day that pepper gets into the eye, it soils the beauty (behaviour) of the eye

These repetitions are in couplets. Olatunji observes that full repetitions need not be in couplets, that is, in consecutive lines, as above. There may be intervening lines. More than one sentence or a group of sentences may be repeated within a poem, as in the following from Ifá oral catechism;

Yoruba Language	English Transliteration
<i>Bi omoekuba dupe lowoOlodumare, Olodumare a fona aiku han omo eku.</i>	If a rodent praises Olodumare, Olodumare will preserve the life of the rodent
<i>Bi omoejaba dupe lowoOlodmare, Olodumare a fona aiku han omo eja</i>	If a fish praises Olodumare, Olodumare will preserve the life of the fish

Note that "...*ba dupe lowoOlodumare...Olodumare a fona aikuhan* (...praises Olodumare...Olodumare will preserve ...) are repeated in refrain.

The same thing is being done with "Ariraoko;opemomoje n rahun" (The *arira* leaf in the forest; Ifá, do not let me grumble in want) in the next example:

The poem in Yoruba	English Transliteration
<i>Sango e l rahunorogbo</i>	Sango does not grumble in want of bitter cola
<i>Ariraoko</i>	The <i>arira</i> leaf in the forest
<i>Ope mo mo je n rahun</i>	Ifá do not let me grumble in want
<i>Osanyinkiirahunatare</i>	Osanyin does not grumble in want of alligator pepper
<i>Ariraoko,</i>	The <i>arira</i> leaf in the forest
<i>Ope mo mo je n rahun</i>	Ifá do not let me grumble in want

The user of the incantation above repeatedly prays that he may not lack good things, just as the named divinities do not lack their favourite items of worship. When a group of sentences is repeated after some intervening ones, the idea contained in the sentences becomes a motif that draws attention to itself, and it is usually easy to score music notes on such repetitions. There are poems that occur in partial repetition. The sentence structure is repeated, but not all the lexical items are repeated. However, there is lexical repetition in identical places in the sentence structure. For example, Babalola, in *Oriki Orile*, presents:

The Poem in Yoruba	English Transliteration
<i>E toju apo ide,</i>	Get ready brass quivers
<i>E tojuofa baba</i>	Get ready copper arrows
<i>E tojuibonasibori</i>	Get ready sheathed guns
<i>E tojuotaelegee</i>	Get ready cut bullets
<i>E tojuotapafin – in</i>	Get ready bullets worked together
<i>E tojuigbaotaweerewe</i>	Get ready two hundred small bullets

It should be noted that the lexical variation can take place anywhere in the sentence structure. Examples of such variations are presented by Abimbola as follows:

Iyaa mi suna My mother took care of us
Babaa mi suna (Abimbola "What" 101) My father took care of me

Above, the lexical variation is *initial* and below, it is *medial*:

Omo susoko; A child defecates on a hoe
Omo to soko A child urinates on a hoe;

And the variation is final in:

Ifá lo loni Ifá owns today;
Ifá lo lola: (Abimbola "Ifa" 41) Ifá owns tomorrow;

More of such lexical variations at the end of lines are shown in this prayer:

Ifá jara o de mi n lowo Ifá, let me be comfortable to have money
Ifá jara o de mi n laya Ifá, let me be comfortable to have wives
Ifá jara o de mi n bimo Ifá, let me be comfortable to have children
Ifá jara o de mi n kole Ifá, let me be comfortable to have houses

The repeated items, *Ifá jara o de mi n ...* contain the *ofo* incantation, the recital's main wish. They are that he may be comfortable so that

he may acquire certain things. The desire for comfort and luxury is repeated. In the varied words, we have a list of the items that he wishes to possess. One can therefore say that emphasis and enumeration go hand-in-hand in partial repetition. However, when the varied items are semantically contrastive, and this includes words that have come to be so regarded, the idea of fatalism or totality is often conveyed. For example, in *ofò ma darikan*, statements like specific curses may carry repeated items, as in:

Kiku o pa kekereilee won Let death kill the youths in their house
Kiku o pa agbalagbailee won Let death kill the elders in their house.

The varied lexical items are *kekere* (youths) and *agbalagba* (elders). They form the contrastive tonality in the poem. There are those that express directional totality:

Iwaju Ologbinlju Before aged Ologbin
Igba eegun lo mbenbe Two hundred masquerades were there
Ehin Ologbinlju Behind aged Ologbin
Igba eegun lo mbenbe Two hundred masquerades were there
Apaotun Ologbiniju To the right of aged Ologbin
Igba eegun lo mbenbe Two hundred masquerades were there
Apaosi Ologbiniju To the left of aged Ologbin
Igba eegun lo mbenbe Two hundred masquerades were there

The idea is that on every side of aged Ologbin there were two hundred masquerades. Lexical items may also be repeated within the same clause:

Iya loriya Punishment upon punishment
A gbanilojuenuya One is struck on the face and one's
 mouth is broken

Here, *iya* is repeated within the same clause.

Parallelism in Ifá Poems

Parallelism has been shown to exist in the poetry of many writers, and a claim has even been made for it by the poet Gerald M. Hopkins in his *House and Storey* published in 1959. It is seen as the principal underlying all versification. Parallelism was first described for Yoruba proverbs by O.E. Vidal in 1852 (cited in Olatunji 21) and Bamigbose in 1968 discussed its formal lexical grammatical aspect in proverbs. He also did the matching of lexical items in parallelism in 1969. Olatunji observes that the feature of parallelism is, however, not restricted in its occurrence to proverbs alone. However, its incidence in them is higher than in any other poetic type. Olatunji affirms that parallelism is both formal and semantic in nature, and that it needs to be

considered at both levels before its poetic function can be fully appreciated.

Vidal distinguishes four types of parallelism, namely, gradational, antithetical, synthetic and introverted. In clauses that display gradational parallelism, the second clause rises above the first either in significance or in expression (Olatunji 21). But antithetical parallel sentences are “connected by contrast instead of similarity.” Synthetic parallelism lies in the construction of the sentences; noun answering to noun, and verb answering to verb; thus, strictly artificial. In introverted parallel sentences, “whatever the number of clauses, the first is parallel to the last, the second to the last but one and so on (Vidal 21). Bamigbose’s works in 1968 and 1969 complement each other. One stops at the strictly formal level in the discussion of the feature, while the semantic relations that obtain between parallel sentences are examined in the other. Bamigbose defines parallelism as involving:

A juxtaposition of sentences having a similar structure, a matching of at least two lexical items in each structure, a comparison between the juxtaposed sentences and a central idea expressed through complementary statements in the sentences. (Bamigbose 12)

For instance, a central idea in a parallel may be expressed through the juxtaposition of oddities thus claiming that it is unprofitable to expect the impossible to take place. See this:

Ta lo gbojuufifoladie agada? Who expects a fowl with tied legs and wings to fly?
Ta lo gbojuu yiyanyiyán lalagemo? Who expects the chameleon to saunter?

These two sentences are structurally similar, while the items “fifó” (flying), adie agada (fowl with tied legs and wings), in the first sentence are matched with “yiyanyiyán” (suntering) and *alagemo* (chameleon) in the second. The relation between the lexical items in the sentences is equated in order to bring out the implication of comparison with the central idea that none should expect the impossible to happen. Some measure of character analysis was done on the fowl and the chameleon in the parable. We will find the analysis useful in Ifá and dramaturgy.

Similarly, the relationship between *teni* (spread a mat) and *onda* (Ifá client) in the next quote is equated with that between *pajuba* (clear a field) and *onko* (tiller) in the parallel sentences below:

A tenibeere o sonda The mat is spread wide (for divination), there is no client
A pajubabeere o sonko The field is cleared extensively, there is no tiller.

The implied comparison is that just as no client turns up after the Ifá priest has spread his mat and got ready the paraphernalia of his art, no tiller turns up to make use of a cleared field. Thus, scarcity or lack of response is the theme of the parallel sentences because people fail to make use of the arrangements made for them.

In parallel sentences, the significant lexical items occur in identical places in the structure of sentences as in sentences that display partial lexica–structural repetition and tonal counterpoint. However, the direction to which the relationship between the words is traced is different in parallel sentences. Let us examine this poem from Ifá verse in *Esekan Ola*.

Mo ji mowewoo mi nu iteni-iteni I wake, I wash my hands scrupulously clean
Mo ji mowesee mi nu iteni-iteni I wake, I wash my feet scrupulously clean

There is partial lexico–structure repetition with “owo,” “ese” and *iteni-iteni*; constituting areas of lexical variation and also contrasting in tone counterpoint. In parallel sentences, however, it is the lexical items that co-occur in each sentence correlated and then equated with those that co-occur in other sentences. We may wish to move on to “tonal counterpoint” as a feature of Yoruba / Ifá poetry.

In-text Analyses of Selected Ifá Proverbs

An examination of the following *ese* Ifá in its total rendition will enable an elucidation of its poetic essence. The Ifá verse is taken from the corpus of Ogunda Ogbe also called Ogundabede or Ogunda Soriire:

Ese Ifá	Lines	English Transliteration (Ifá Verse)
Ohunt'owo mi o to;	1.	That which stands beyond my reach;
Ma fi gogofaa.	2.	I'll draw it with a crossed-bar.
Bo ko ti o wa;	3.	If it refuses to yield;
Ma fi abebe bee.	4.	I'll fan it towards myself (appeal).
'Difá fun Orunmila;	5.	The divine message for Orunmila.
Nígbat'owo re k? to ire.	6.	When good things elude him.
Ifáni ki Baba rubo.	7.	Ifá Oracle asked him to perform sacrifice.
Baba si rubo, ire ba de.	8.	He did; his life began to yield good fruits.
Ijo ni njo, Ayo ni nyo	9.	He began to dance; he expressed joy.
O ni bee lawonAwonwi:	10.	He recalled that his diviners were right:
Enu to la koto; Orin lo bosi	11.	He opens his mouth; he began to sing:
Orin		Song
Ohunt'owo mi o to;	12.	That which stands beyond my reach;
<i>Ma fi gogofaa.</i>	<i>13.</i>	<i>I'll draw it with a crossed-bar</i>
<i>Bo ko ti o wa;</i>	<i>14.</i>	<i>If it refuses to yield</i>
<i>Ma fi abebe bee.</i>	<i>15.</i>	<i>I'll fan it towards myself (appeal).</i>
Owolowo mi o to;	16.	If money stands beyond my reach;
<i>Ma fi gogofaa.</i>	<i>17.</i>	<i>I'll draw it with a crossed-bar</i>
<i>Bo ko ti o wa;</i>	<i>18.</i>	<i>If it refuses to yield</i>
<i>Ma fi abebe bee.</i>	<i>19.</i>	<i>I'll fan it towards myself (appeal).</i>
Aya lowo mi o to	20.	If a wife (marriage) stands beyond my reach
<i>Ma fi gogofaa.</i>	<i>21.</i>	<i>I'll draw it with a crossed-bar</i>
<i>Bo ko ti o wa;</i>	<i>22.</i>	<i>If it refuses to yield</i>
<i>Ma fi abebe bee.</i>	<i>23.</i>	<i>I'll fan it towards myself (appeal).</i>
Ile lowo mi o to	24	If a house stands beyond my reach
<i>Ma fi gogofaa.</i>	<i>25.</i>	<i>I'll draw it with a crossed-bar</i>
<i>Bo ko ti o wa;</i>	<i>26.</i>	<i>If it refuses to yield</i>
<i>Ma fi abebe bee.</i>	<i>27.</i>	<i>I'll fan it towards myself (appeal).</i>
Esin lowo mi o to	28.	If a horse (vehicle) stands beyond my reach
<i>Ma fi gogofaa.</i>	<i>29.</i>	<i>I'll draw it with a crossed-bar</i>
<i>Bo ko ti o wa;</i>	<i>30.</i>	<i>If it refuses to yield</i>
<i>Ma fi abebe bee.</i>	<i>31.</i>	<i>I'll fan it towards myself (appeal).</i>

Lines 1, 2,3 & 4 are repeated in the song in lines 12, 13, 14, & 15. They give us full lexical-structural repetitions, which were complemented by series of partial lexical structures in "Ma fi ... I will" that are repeated preludes in the refrains of the song in lines 12 to 31. The call-lines (solo lyrics) of the song are lines 12, 16, 20, 24 and 28 respectively. The refrains for the song are those lines in italics, between the call-lines.

<i>Igi gbun nigbo a ri so</i>	L	When a tree in the wood is crooked, we grumble
<i>Ototo eniyan ko gbun laarin ilu?</i>	H	Aren't there many men who are bent on our street?
<i>O supa la, a ni o leere</i>	M	When the new moon appears, we complain about its appearance
<i>Won lenitoworebato o</i>	M	People say that he whose hands can reach it
<i>Ko yara mura ko lo tun un se</i>	M	Should hasten to straighten it.

The theme of the poem here is reflected in the line-end tonal arrangement.

One significant point that we must observe is that scholars have agreed that Yoruba poetic types have no significant line-end tonal arrangement which is comparable to regular line-end sound patterns (rhyme) in English poetry. Yoruba tonal arrangement at line-ends is largely unpredictable and irregular. This view accords with that expressed by Beier and Gbadamosi (8) that "in most Yoruba poems, there is no regularity in tonal pattern. The tonal structure therefore does not really fall in the place of European metric. In other words, Eurocentric ideals may not be adequate measure for Yoruba tonal counterpoint.

However, there are other devices employed by Yoruba poets for effects. Bamigbose indicates such tonal configuration to include tonal word-play. Bamigbose affirms that the use of contrastive tones is through a deliberate choice or distortion of lexical items. It is done in such a way that some tones, or the tone on the final syllable, in one lexical item, will contrast with the tone(s) in another item. Below are some examples of tonal counterpoints.

<i>Adie babaa mi kanlaelae</i>	HHHH	My father's very ancient cock
<i>Adie babaa mi kanlaelae</i>	LLLL	My father's very ancient cock
... the high tone "Laelae" contrasts with the low tone, "Laelae". And in:		
<i>(Ki obi) Di meji</i>	H	(Let the kolanut lobes) have two facing downwards
<i>(Ki obi) Yan meji</i>	L	(Let the kolanut lobes) have two facing upwards

The content exists between the 'High' *Dí* and the low *Yàn*.

Social and Cultural Implications

The crux of the matter here is – "how relevant is Ifá poetry to the social and cultural advancement of the Nigerian society as a paradigm of the African continent?" Amateshe, A. D (1979, accessed on internet July 18, 2019) exemplifies the communal attraction of oral poetry;

When one considers the position of oral poetry in Africa, an obvious element that emerges is that this medium of expression takes the form of a collective activity from time immemorial, it has been expressed at funerals, marriages, child-naming and other ceremonies. An instant, collective response is achieved because generally, oral poetry is expressed through a language and an idiom, which the entire community understands. There is much of this collective activity which has been lost through written form. Written poetry is a recent innovation in Africa and one which requires the participants to have acquired reading skills through the existing educational system. In other words, written poetry has assumed a class form in that it is written for the elite. Consequently, a majority of this people are cut off (partly through the use of English language or any other foreign language and partly through characteristics of obscurity associated with formal education. It is the above artistic development which inspires one into the evaluation of written poetry in its modern context in the communication line between the poet and the public. (Amateche, 1979, accessed online July 18, 2019)

We agree with Amateche on the assertion that; “There is now an urgent need for African poets to face the existing social and economic reality as genuinely as possible. The voice of the poet should also be the voice of the masses. The argument here is that poets need to re-examine their social situations much more consistently”. Alice Osborn says this in answering the question “why is poetry important to our world?” Poetry is so important because it helps us understand and appreciate the world around us. Poetry strength lies in its ability to shed ‘sideways’ light around the world, so the truth sneaks up on you. No question about it. Poetry teaches us how to live. (<https://alisosborn.com> accessed July 18, 2019).

In practice, Ifá poetry is usually drawn from divination, which is a regular practice among the people. Its oracular attachment draws its content closer to those who subscribe to its system. Areje’s observation that every Yoruba proverb has its roots in Ifá literature shows that Yoruba language and literature cannot be divorced from Ifá poetry (Adeseye, 125). It is a fact that language is the vehicle of the communication of verbal, as well as, written arts and culture. Arguably, it is in the expression of culture that the identity of a people resides.

Further Remarks and Conclusion

Much of what the study has done is geared towards deriving social and cultural relevance to development from Ifá lore. We have been able to establish the relationship between basic repetition and the three features of Yoruba/Ifá poetry. These features come handy in

dramaturgy and music; the core entertainment proposed as a relevant target of the study. It was also inferred that Ifá poetry may be employed in mass education, beginning from kindergarten, because it is more effective when the training at that level employs play-at-work method. And the poems for our nursery rhymes are best chosen from our indigenous folklore.

This is the reality, the quality of being true to life, the life suffused by the culture of the people. For our claims that our education should be our indigenous cultural product to make sense, it is only logical that we bridge the gap and fill the aesthetic vacuum that has been created by the postulate that our education and orientation must be such that will continue the aesthetic conceptualization of the art that was begun in ancient Greece, regarded as the cradle of Western civilization. Reality is a state which comes to maturation through a process of self-realization. We align with Soyinka that the essence of new beginnings demanded that we designed a new model with its own appurtenant structure: a new form and its own identity. From Rousseau to Fafunwa, educational psychologists and writers on child development advocate education according to nature and admit that play is 'natural'. Child entertainment is therefore a formidable platform for the educator to function. The three essences that clearly emanate from the concept of play include:

- i. The first sense, spontaneity – the child bubbles into play activity, it does not have to be prompted in him, and this spontaneous activity is regarded as being naturally good, at least until the child is corrupted by adults or by his environment.
- ii. The second sense is that of being opposed to the artificialities of social (city life) convention and stems from the view that the simple life of the countryside is the best life for man,
- iii. The third sense is that of the essence of something. The notion implies a perfection of form towards which something is developing. Living things, including children, are seen as having in themselves, the seed, as it were, of a potential unfolding and perfect flowering. Here lies the hub of Froebel's kindergarten, R.S. Dearden in R.S. Peters (73-75).

Experience has shown us some salient things which include: An insight into the philosophy of the performing arts, its design, its practice and significance for the African society. It has given us the confidence to believe that theatre is a universal phenomenon which subsumes a cultural base and succeeds only when it reflects the reality of the people whom it directly communicates. The reality of the African world is made more significant in the belief in synergism. This underlines a

generalization as “unity in diversity. There is no way that we can avoid relating to the historical process that had shaped our existence. This recognition, according to Soyinka requires that “appearance” and “reality” must be in constant dialogue.

It is the process of dialogue that we are advancing such that African culture and other world cultures remain in a dialectical engagement. Our watchword is modernization, not westernization. The new process is expected to purify and bring forth the new man, the new African. One who must operate under a new sense of realism. Our desire is to relate with the past in order to construct a present that will guarantee a prosperous future. The study has been structured to follow the trend that we are living in a timeless universe when we discuss the world of the *Orisa* (as in *Ifá*). The creative process is on. It is perhaps evident in the following song; projecting the limitless ambition of children and explicating that performance is integral to Yoruba oral literature:

<i>Omode meta nsere o</i>	three children are playing
<i>Ere o, ere reeayo</i>	play, the play of happiness
<i>Okán loun o tarun</i>	one wishes to shoot the heavens
<i>Ere o, ere reeayo</i>	play, the play of happiness
<i>Okán loun o gagbon</i>	One wishes to climb the coconut tree
<i>Ere o, ere reeayo</i>	play, the play of happiness
<i>Okán loun o wekun</i>	One wishes to swim across ocean
<i>Ere o, ere reeayo</i>	play, the play of happiness.

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