

THE AESTHETICS OF ADO-EKITI PRAISE POETRY

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AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, NIGERIA

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M.A./ARTS/1326/2011-2012**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE
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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES,
FACULTY OF ARTS,
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA,
NIGERIA**

SEPTEMBER, 2015

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “**The Aesthetics of Ado-Ekiti Praise Poetry**” is written by me and it is the account of my own research in the Department of English and Literary Studies. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this thesis was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

OLUGBAYO, SUNDAY KAYODE
M.A./ARTS/1326/2011-2012

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled “THE AESTHETICS OF ADO-EKITI PRAISE POETRY” by Sunday Kayode OLUGBAYO, meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Literature of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and it is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

Prof. Sani Abba Aliyu
Chairman, Supervisory Committee

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Dean of Postgraduate School

Signature

Date

DEDICATION

This dissertation is most sincerely dedicated

To

God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost for giving me the strength...

Also to my late step-father (Chief S.B Fatoba) and all bomb blast victims on the 17th June 2012, in Zaria.

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Our ancestors say that “Iromi romi ti oun jo lori omi, onilu re wa labe odo”. When you see a water lily dancing in the middle of water, you must acknowledge that its drummers are in the beneath the water. I am that water lily and this work satisfying as it is, would not have been accomplished without the encouragement of God and humans. I have here acknowledged the favours, help and support of God in my earthly journey up to this very point in my career, and also want to place on record my deep appreciation to those who have made my life worthwhile.

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ABSTRACT

Until now, the oral art of Ado-Ekiti people in Ekiti State has not received considerable academic attention. The present research work is borne of the strong need to explore a specific art form - the traditional praise poetry among Ado-Ekiti people. The work focuses on the richness and fascinating relations between aesthetic form and content in the traditional praise poetry of Ado-Ekiti people. This enables us to appreciate the aesthetics and intellectual patterning of the art, along with its functional values in society. This thesis therefore discusses the status of Yoruba aesthetics in traditional Ado-Ekiti from a holistic perspective, with emphasis on how culture has impacted positively on their well-being, although there are benefits derived from their status in society. While caution must be exercised in the quest for the foreign culture so that African cultural values can be retained, and thus not destroyed under the guise of civilization. It is in light of this, that research deployed the functionalist criticism in doing justice to praise poetry.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0

INTRODUCTION

One of the most striking features of colonial administrations in Africa is their failure to understand the culture of the people they were privileged to govern. According to Nwosu (1980:4), “the utter failure of most of the bureaucrats concerned to grasp the realities of life of the various people they were privileged to govern”. They had confused notions about what constituted African aesthetics and failed to realize that the literature of Africa does not begin with the written. As a matter of fact, oral tradition has been in existence in African society since the beginning of the continent. However, despite all the processes that colonization took to erase African oral tradition, the form and the aesthetics is still cherished among the people. Lindfors (2002:7-9) confirms the prevalence of oral tradition in the works of African literary writers such as Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka and D. O. Fagunwa which they drew from the rich experience they acquired in their various cultures. Oral tradition emanates from the people and is communicated among the people in oral form. Oral tradition in Africa is best described as the literature of the various traditional African societies. Oral tradition has also added sample of documentary from African historians particularly for scholars from the pre-colonial era. Jackson (1977:5) opine that Africans have relied on these traditions to give shape to the past

This research focuses on poetry, particularly praise poetry. The praise poetry among the Ado-Ekiti people has not gained much attention from scholars unlike the other forms of Yoruba oral literature such as proverbs and divinatory chants. The Ekiti praise poetry which is evaluated and explored in this work using functionalism provides insight in to the status and the nature of African oral art as a literary form with structures and functions that serve aesthetic purposes. The study entails the collection of data, analysis, and documentation of praise poetry among the Ado-

Ekiti people, to reveal the richness of the Ekiti language, culture and as markers of Ekiti identity. It is in the light of this that Amos (1972) sees praise poetry as a form of oral composition that deals with invocation, adoration, or condemnation of the objects of praise. It is fundamental to note that song is a form under folklore. Other forms include traditions, proverbs, beliefs and tales. It is in this sense that this research dwells on the song particularly the praise song among the Ado-Ekiti people.

According to Ogunjimi (2005) praise poetry is common in African communities especially in Yoruba land. When a child prostrates, kneels, or bends to greet his parents in the morning, he or she is repaid with praises. The elder in the community who wants to appreciate the kindness or assistance rendered by a child, chants some praises. The traditional poet who wants patronage and material reward from members of the community chants praise poetry of those involved. Today, one would be right to say that a great percentage of what public poets sing during performances and record is praise poetry. It is in the light of this that praise poetry occupies an important place in most African communities.

However, the function of praise poetry in every community is to boost the morale of individuals who are adjudged good, patriotic, and nationalistic. At the same time, it indicts individuals that violate and contradict ethics and values. It also serves as a record for the historical experiences of the people. Praise poetry also helps to unveil and propagate the medicinal potentials and the general utilities of inanimate objects such as plants and rocks. It also affords Africans a very effective medium for praising, consulting, invoking and requesting for favours from the supernatural forces. The Ekiti praise poetry in another light affords the elderly members of the community opportunities to display their knowledge of the history and culture of the people, for the education of the younger generation. Lastly, it allows members the opportunities to exhibit

their artistic talent in oral composition and performance. It is in view of these that the study looks at Ado-Ekiti praise poetry.

Praise poetry involves a relationship between audience and performers. This important aspect of oral poetry is forgotten sometimes. It is easy to concentrate on the analysis of the verbal elements which could be on the style and content, imagery or perhaps transmission. However, all these have their place in oral literature. But one needs to remember the circumstances of the audience and performer relationship which has become a tool to reawaken culture among the people. That is, it has become a medium enlightening and reactivating the people about their culture. The more the audience interacts with performers, the more they get to know about the culture. The audience and performer relation is not a secondary or peripheral matter, but is integral to the identity of a poem as actually realised. It could be a poem for heroes, kings, great hunters, spirits and ancestors, animate and inanimate objects. This could be performed at different times or to different audiences or by different singers.

Therefore, praise poetry as a form of oral poetry is not just a survival of past ages and stages; it has become part of modern life as a result of the fundamental roles that its play continues in society.

1.1 Geographical Background

The Ekiti, a division of Yoruba province covering an area of about 5,000 Square kilometre; it is bounded to the North by Kwara State and to the West by Osun State. To the East is Kogi State and on the South is Ondo State. However, Ado-Ekiti, the capital is a centre of trade and has a population that accommodates foreign traders and craftsmen. Also, Ado-Ekiti is bounded to

North by Iyin-Ekiti and to the west by Ilawe-Ekiti. To the East is Ijan-Ekiti and the south is Ikere-Ekiti.

According to Akinkugbe (1976) Ekiti is situated entirely in the tropics. It is located between longitudes 40 51 and 50 45 East of the Greenwich Meridian and latitudes 70, 151 and 80, 151 north of the Equator. Ekiti is mainly an upland zone, raising above 250metres above the area the sea level. It lies within the area underlain by metamorphic rock of the basement complex. It has a generally undulating land surface with a characteristics landscape that consist of old plain broken step-side out-crops dome rocks that may occur singularly or in group or ridges.

The word Ekiti is coined from the word *OKITI* which means highlands/ rolling hills. These hills are visible in all part of the state. The notable ones among them are Ikere-Ekiti Hills in the southern part, Efon-Alaaye Hills in the western boundary and Ado-Ekiti Hills in the central part. Ekitis prefer to farm the high forest and live in a wild scattered settlement; the forest is seldom allowed to attain great age and consists mostly of secondary growth in varying stages of advancement. The conditions in these areas of secondary high forest are extremely favourable to the growth of cocoa, kolanut, yam, plantain, rice, and oil palms.

1.2 Historical Background

Where Ado-Ekiti is situated is a land that has been continuously inhabited and occupied by human communities from time immemorial. Olomoola (1983:10) assert that ancient inhabitants were probably the same or progenitors/ancestors of Igbon near *Ogotun*, *Erijiyan*, *Ijero*, *Ulesun* and *Asin* (near *Ikole*) who were probably autochthones because available traditions shows that they had lived in and near their abodes from time immemorial. As a matter of fact, no one knows where, if any, they came from and for how long they had lived in those ancient sites.

Ulesun appears the most well-known apparently on account of its size, the number of its subordinate communities especially *Aso*, *Ulero*, *Isinla*, *Ilamoji*, *Ukere* (near Igbemo), its well-organized traditional religion including its festivals etc and its location at the heartland of Ekitiland. After many generations, a new wave of immigrant groups penetrated this homeland; their leader as *Ewi*, second successor of Prince Biritiokun, Son of *Oduduwa*, on account of his wanderings all the way from the Benin forests, the leader was nicknamed *Awamaro*. *Ulesun* people welcomed them warmly and neighbouring committees came together to assist their settlement (built homesteads for them) at *Oke-Ibon* in *Odo Ijigbo*. Eventually, *Ewi* and his people overthrew the existing political arrangements, conquered *Ulesun* community, displaced its ruler *Elesun* and established a new town, *Awamaro* named *Ado*, meaning “here we encamp”. Many of the succeeding *Ewi* expanded the kingdom by force of arms, annexed territories and gave these territories to scions of the royal families, these assumed titles which became hereditary. The expansion and growth of *Ado-Ekiti* and the kingdom of *Ado* lasted over Four hundred years. Olomoola (1983:13) *Ado-Ekiti* is situated at the heartland of *Ekiti* and is thus less exposed to cross border attacks or non-*Ekiti* influences. Consequently, over many centuries, waves of immigrant groups seeking haven settled in *Ado-Ekiti* and several other *Ado* communities. Many of these immigrants were refugees they left their old homelands in parts of *Ekiti*, *Akoko*, *Owo* etc. where their leaders lost out in chieftaincy contests. Some were war captives these were brought in droves by *Aduloju* and his lieutenants from their slave wars of the 1870s and 1880s in parts of *Owo*, *Ose* and *Akoko*. They were settled in *Ado* communities where they increased the local population, and enriched the culture with their lineage names and festivals in similar circumstances, citizens of *Ado* communities left their fatherland and settled in a few places in the neighborhoods up to *Ijesa* land. However, *Ado* communities especially the

mother town offset part of their losses with a large number of slaves and prisoners of war from Owo, Ose and Akoko.

1.3 The Ado-Ekiti Society

Olomola (1983:10) noted that among the most conspicuous of the great changes in Ekitiland were the introduction and expansion of Christianity and Islam. Christian missions especially of the CMS, Roman Catholic, Baptist, African Church and Methodist, later the Cherubim and Seraphim and Apostolic Church took root and expanded during the 20th century. Each of these Christian communities established numerous churches such that by 1970, the CMS (Anglican) and the Roman Catholic had grown so fast that they had become dioceses with their headquarters and seats of bishops in Ado-Ekiti. The two missions had three grammar schools, the number increased to five in 1990. The growth of Christian communities was very rapid between 1970 and 2000; new missions and denominations Pentecostal, Charismatic, Evangelical and Episcopal arose, swelling up existing communions. Altogether over one hundred churches were recorded in the city in the year 2000. The Muslim community did not lag behind, the faith spread. The central mosque was built about 1930 and thereafter, a number of mosques were built in *Idemo, Umayo, Isato (Irona), Ogbon-Ado, Okesa, Oke-Ila* etc.

Clifford (1936) listed two principal annual religious ceremonies. The most important is the *Udiroko* festival, in commemoration of the ancestors. It is celebrated at the beginning of the new yam harvest usually in July to August. The Festival is held annually in Ado-Ekiti, the state capital to herald the arrival of the New Yam in the market. This is a colourful festival that usually attracts local and foreign tourists to the state. However, the ceremony consists of the sacrifice of male animals to the ancestral spirits of his

immediate predecessors, represented by their staff of office (*Opa Ase*), which are displayed for the occasion. It is worthy of note that two days later a sacrifice is made to the memory of the founder *Abaluleado*.

The first thing to note is that Ado is the name of a political entity, as a matter of fact, a kingdom, on account of its size and development, was the largest in Ekiti. In its heydays, the kingdom covered all of the present-day Ado Ekiti Local Government Area, Irepodun/Ifelodun and Aiyedire Local Government Areas, Ekiti Southwest less Ogotun and part of *Ido/Osi* Local Government Area. Traditions assert that at the height of its power in the 18th and 19th centuries, about 200 years ago, Ado kingdom consisted of One Hundred fifty (*Ewadojo*) communities. The metropolis of the kingdom was Ado-Ekiti, Ewi was the sovereign head, his palace was (and still is) situated in the Chief city. All the high Chiefs lived in the city. These Chiefs were patron Chiefs of all the subordinate towns and villages. Allison (1966:34) speaks of the systematic hierarchy of the Ado-Ekiti people considering the Oba as the supreme priest king (*Ewi*). However, the Ewi has his palace located at Ado where he normally holds meetings with his cabinet to solve problems affecting his domain. Though, *Ewi* is responsible for the peace and unity of the Ado-Ekiti people. After the Ewi as the central chief, we have the *Bafun* who work with the Ewi in order to promote peace and unity among the people and to solve some of the problems with which the *Bafun* will need the assistance of the *Ewi* (king). The other hands are like district heads. They rule the people and also form what is known as *Ewi-in-council*. The point of divergence is the fact that the Ewi the central king rule over the entire community. The Ewi and his cabinet work together to ensure peace and unity in the community and also, they are saddled with the development of the community politically, socially and economically.

1.4 Economy of Ado-Ekiti

Ayobami (1990:8) is of the opinion that agriculture is the main occupation of the people which provides income and employment for more than 75% of the population of Ekiti State. The work of clearing, hoeing, and planting is performed by the men and boys, crops are planted in sequence. Crops like maize, rice, plantain, cocoyam, yam, and cassava are grown for both domestic and commercial consumption. In relation to the above, mat weaving is also practised as part of their occupation. In the Ado-Ekiti, the great bulk of the petty trade is in the hands of the women, who take little part in agricultural production. They also produce some mat weaving in a number of some villages, pots and native soap is produced. In this sense, waist beads are made from the shell of fan palm tree. The women continue their interest in petty trade before the biggest change being that from the textile to palm oil production, in the regions where the oil palm flourishes. Ado-Ekiti men on other hand continue to pursue their traditional agricultural occupations.

Oloomola (1983:14) believes that tremendous development took place in the cultivation of economic crops, cultivation and collection of forest products such as kolanut (*cola acuminata*, *Obi* abata and *cola nitida*, *gbanja*) and oil palm produce, commerce and trade. Much of the impetus of all these came initially from Mr. Isaac Itamuboni (later *Babamboni*) and a member of early Christians from Lagos, Abeokuta and Ibadan. These men introduced the cultivation of cocoa, maize, brown cocoyam etc to Ekiti. Wage earning labourers from parts of Ekiti who went to work in Ondo, Ijebu and Ife boosted the cultivation of these economic trees.

Ewi Aladesanmi II was a crusader in this sphere; he encouraged the cultivation of cash crops and establishment of trading and commercial enterprises among Ado citizenry. The *Urhobo* came

into Ado communities in the early 1940s with their own mode of palm oil extraction. The Ebira came in large numbers in the 1940s and 1950s introducing the cultivation of their own specie of yams, cassava and beans. In the early 1950s, *Igbemo*, and Ado community started the cultivation of rice, the vogue spread to Iworoko in the 1960s and soon in the 1970s to other Ekiti communities such as *Erio* etc. These food crops boosted food production and contributed to the sustenance of the growing population of Ado communities, especially Ado-Ekiti, and by extension, other Ekiti and non-Ekiti communities.

1.5 Statement of Research Problem

The study revolves around the analysis of the aesthetics of praise poetry among the Ado-Ekiti people. The research therefore, attempts to answer the following questions. How did Ado-Ekiti praise poetry emerge? What is its relevance to the people? How does Ekiti praise poetry serve as marker of identity? Who are the composers of Ekiti praise poetry? And why do they compose? How do they compose the praise poetry? What are the changes affecting Ekiti praise poetry? There is a gap in current scholarship pertaining to Ado-Ekiti praise poetry as space rally the poetry looks oriented in term of its own attention or moral and didactic.

1.6 Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study is to examine the utilitarian values and aesthetics of praise poetry as an important artistic expressions within the Ado-Ekiti community. The study hopes to achieve the following specific objectives:

(1) To illustrate how historical factors contributes to the development of Ado-Ekiti praise poetry.

(2) To show how the functionalists approach could be explicating the richness and awareness of Ekiti praise poetry.

(3) To explore the continued relevance of praise poetry among the Ekiti people and how it is an integral part of the people's culture.

(4) To demonstrate the response of Ekiti praise poetry to changes in the society of Yoruba in particular and Nigeria as a whole.

1.7 Methodology

The study was mainly qualitative. It begins with the identification of resource persons who are professional praise chanters and those that are conversant with oral poetry and the history of Ado-Ekiti. Purposive sampling is used in identifying these respondents. The major sources of data for this research are interviews with the praise poetry exponent such as Chief Oludare Fayanmu; recorded tapes from Broadcasting Service of Ekiti State (BSES) and field trips in Ado-Ekiti to witness live performances.

Face to face interviews was used to collect information about the oral praise poetry. Data was also collected from the repertoire of different notable groups such as Elemure cultural group, Akoya group Idere group and the Oyemefun group all in different quarters of Ado-Ekiti. Participant observation was adapted so as to enable the researcher to interact freely with the oral literary materials being delivered. Five categories praise was considered and eight poems were used. The oral chants by the respondents were tape recorded during the chanting sessions. The praise poetry collected was transcribed by Sofa John and Joseph Olorundare, and then translated into English language for the researcher's use. The study dwell much on the people's culture and give detailed explanations using the collection and documentation method. The study necessarily

utilised relevant text books, articles in newspapers, magazines, information from the internet other unpublished sources in the presentation of Ado-Ekiti praise poetry.

1.8 Scope and Delimitation

Although, there are other forms of oral songs rooted in Ekiti communities such as war songs, funeral songs and religious songs, the research considers how praise poetry is used specifically in festivals and performances with special reference to the Ado-Ekiti community. The research focuses on the aesthetics of the Ado-Ekiti praise poetry, because other Ekiti communities such as Ikere-Ekiti, Ikole-Ekiti, have their own pattern of praise poetry that is uniquely rooted.

1.9 Justification of the Study

The justification of this research is to appraise the richness of Ado-Ekiti praise poetry as well as its relevance, social content and context. This work explores the aesthetics in Ado-Ekiti and shows the extent the various praise songs have been playing unifying factor for the Ekitiparapo and how their orature could be promoted as a cultural identity. This research discusses the significance of aesthetics in Yoruba, and oral sub-genre in Yoruba oral literature. It is in the light of this, that this research will employ the functionalist criticism in doing justice to the praise poetry among the Ado-Ekiti people. A completion of this work serves as a point of reference to researchers in the area of re-focusing the existing characteristics of Ado-Ekiti values. The documentation of Ado-Ekiti praise poetry and its analysis will be a contribution to the study of poetry as an aspect of African oral poetry and will help to promote the traditional culture of the Ekiti people, by focusing on the Ekiti song tradition bringing out the importance of the Ado-Ekiti praise songs, its nature and the aesthetics qualities and beauty of the songs of Ekiti people.

1.10 Literature Review

People think of aesthetics when they are appreciative of, responsive to, or zealous about the beautiful. Aesthetics owes its name to Alexander Baumgarten (1714-1762), who derived it from the Greek “a isthanomai,” which means perception of the senses (Budd 1998). It is the study of what is immediately pleasing to one’s visual and auditory perception or to one’s imagination. Baumgarten in his analysis of aesthetics places importance on an element of feeling or sensation as the ultimate ground of judgement in questions pertaining to beauty. According to Mautner (as cited in Hall 2010), aesthetics is “the study of the nature of beauty, the theory of taste and criticism in the creative and performing arts.” This implies critical reflection on the nature of arts, be it painting, poems, music, etc. by means of interpretation, analysis and critique of the beautiful. Such criticism takes into account the form, content, value and purpose of the art under study, in order to judge it intelligently. Based on the two working definitions provided above, aesthetics in this research will entail appreciating the techniques and figurative devices common to Ekiti praise songs. Here, form and content are taken into consideration as intricate parts of the musical genres in eliciting aesthetic pleasure. It is on this premise that this research grounds its understanding of aesthetics.

Copious critical works exist on Yoruba orature, a few on Ekiti oral poetry and few on the relevance of ethnic oral poetry in Nigeria to national unity and development. Certainly, none bears the title and contents of this study.

The main focus of this chapter examines some of the genres and their characteristic features of poetry. Olatunji (1984:101) is of the view that:

An awareness of the sociological and cultural
background of a people is necessary for a deep

appreciation of their literature. Whoever wishes to experience the literature of other people, therefore, has to make that mental effort, and not the less is expected when *Oriki* is concerned.

Thus a person who cannot speak the language of the people he/she studies cannot understand their culture. Also in this connection, Babalola (1966:24) admits that:

the main genre of Yoruba speaking art are the *Iyere ifa* (divinatory poetry) the *Ijala* (hunter poetry) the *Ewi* or *Esa* of the masquerades, *Rara* of the itinerant minstrels, the *Oriki janiterere* of the mothers and grandmothers, the *Ofo* and *Ogede* of the medicine men. Each genre has its distinctive style of vocalization or technique of vocal performance.

Babalola (1966:24) states that:

Yoruba traditional oral poetry in general is best classified not so much by the themes as by the stylistic devices employed in recitals. There is a distinctive mode in which each genre should sound forth in performance and an experience listener to recital of the various types of Yoruba vocal art can be named almost immediately, from the sound of the recital the particular style of vocalization

being employed by a performing vocaliser of whose identity he is ignorant.

With this, we can identify the followings as forms of Yoruba oral poetry: *Oriki* (panegyric poetry), *Iyere ifa* (Ifa divinatory poetry) *Ijala* (hunters poetry) *Iwi Egungun* (poetry of masquerades) *Ofo* (incantatory poetry) and *Owe* (proverbial expressions).

According to Bichi (2013) oral praise songs are very important components of folklore of many sub-Saharan African groups. They occur in various forms. These songs are basically epithets called out in reference to an object (a person, an animal, a town and so on) in celebration of outstanding qualities and achievements. In relation to this Ajewumi (2006) is of the opinion that oral songs live despite influence of the foreign religion and westernization. Finnegan (1970:111) defines panegyric poetry as:

the court poetry and is one of the most developed and elaborate poetic genres in Africa. It seems to go with a particular ethos, I stress on royal or aristocratic power and an admiration for military achievement.

However, this definition is limited only to royal courts and the nobles. This is a Eurocentric view of the *Oriki*. Another European scholar who defines *Oriki* is Ulli Beier (1970). According to him:

Oriki is special name occurring in poetry and say such a person acquire more and more during the course of his grow in life. A collection of oriki is like a loosely structured poem, having a subject matter on a single individual (16).

According to Gbadamosi and Beier (1970) is the:

Oriki is basic form of Yoruba oral poetry. Nothing is exempt from it: Kings, gods, towns, animals, plants. *Oriki* are frequently recited on the drum. They are sung by the Akewi, the praise singer at king's court. The *oriki* of gods would be sung by his worshippers. The *oriki* of an animal and plant by the hunters.

Oriki is not private property as commonly believed by some scholars. It belongs to the community. Ulli Beier and Gbadamosi (1959:12) define *oriki* as: a poetic phrase that is used to describe or praise. Olatunji (1984:71) observes that:

It is however, worthy of note that *oriki* is not private property but a traditional material which its owners know and which others especially bards, like drummers and raconteurs learn for their own use. Various chanters, no matter to what groups they belong, perform the *oriki*.

Ime Ikiddeh, in his *Historic Essays on African Literature, Language and Culture*, enunciates the fact that “literature, particularly of the oral mould, is a social product that has its roots in a defined cultural context” (59), by which he implies that oral literature of a people is intricately tied to the social, cultural and political aspirations and goals of the people which invariably encompass national unity and national development attainable through peaceful co-existence. Ikiddeh’s submission pertinently relates, though it bears no direct accuracy, to this study.

In his contribution to the development of oral literatures, Maduka in an Inaugural Lecture entitled “Across Frontiers: Comparative Literature and National Integration” envisions the efficacy of literature as an aesthetic tool in nation-building and for national unity: Literature enhances man’s awareness of the interlocking relationship between human freedom, self-determination of people and progress in society and the necessity of erecting systems that sustain the life of social institutions. Each national literature encodes values which guide the people towards the development of effective mechanisms of response to the challenges of civilization in the modern world. Our national life is in chaos because there is no poetry in the head of our leaders (17 – 18).

Similarly, as reported by Ajuwon (1981), the Yoruba Ijala oral praise poetry frowns against amassing wealth but sees the essence of life in the attainment of personal merit and in service to the society for which a place of honour is carved for one in the community (196). This honour is attainable through the principles and practice of industry, humility, integrity and heroism which Ijala oral poetry teaches. Apart from its entertaining function therefore, Ijala oral poetry contributes to society’s stability and development. Like Yoruba Ijala oral poetry, the Ekiti praise songs among the Yorubas, as reported by Fabunmi, check misdemeanours and vices in the society and therefore promote communal/national stability and development. We shall revisit the Alamo and Ijala in this study in the segment dealing with selected forms of praise poetry in Ekiti. For now, we shall take on the views of such scholars as, Abiola Irele, Mary Kolawale on the subject of oral literature and national unity.

Similarly, oral literature inform other ethnic groups in Nigeria, underscoring the notion of unity. For her part, Kolawale puts her finger on a concourse of oral forms principally or solely practised by women in various African societies for the organization and development of such

societies. Such forms include Akan dirges, Yoruba dirges, wedding chants and *rara*; they also include obitun songs (Ondo); *olori* songs (Oyo); *Aremo* songs, *Ago* (Oka-Akoko); *gelede* songs (Egbado), *olele* (Ijesa); *Alamo* songs (Ekiti) as well as panegyrics (64). All these find their equivalents in *ebre* and *Ase* among the *Ibibio*, and *abang* among the *Efik*, etc. Soyinka (1985) posits that Man exists in Africa in a comprehensive world of myth, history and mores; in such a total context, the African world, like any other world, is unique. It possesses, in common with other cultures, the virtues of complementarity; to ignore this simple route to a common humanity and pursue the alternative route of negation, is an attempt to perpetuate the external subjugation of the black continent (xii). From the point of view of psychology, one common sense assumption that may be confidently said to underlie the concept of literature as an ideology is that individuals arrive at opinions in part through identification with groups. People want to hold views that conform or at least are not in sharp variance with those of other people to whom they look for approval. In other words group identification normally influences the opinions of individuals in society. But where the group is actual and the members seek some kind of consensus, the individual opinions begin to become collective and thus potentially “public”. And it is more so in the case of oral poetry performances (Alaba 1988: 57). This section attempts a brief discussion of how art (i.e. *Ewi Ekiti*) comprises the ideas, values and feelings by which the Yoruba people experience their society at various times.

Ekiti praise art is a genre of Yoruba oral poetry which is still being practised as a unique social entertaining and instructive poetic activity in a part of Yoruba land. Apart from the above, the poet passes comments about behaviour of the people in the society. Abimbola has this to say in Nwosu (1980) that the poet plays the role of the journalist, the press, radio and television to wit; educate, inform and entertain. The oral poets pass their critical comments, praises, and give

suggestions relating to everything about everybody in the society. Their poetic expressions are not questionable even if they affect the king. Among the subjects treated by the African oral poets in their production include passing comments about some aspects of the culture of the people such as greetings, beliefs, taboo, leadership, occupation, medication, praise, lineage, death, curse, supplication, marriage, chieftain, naming, entertainment, history, politics, religion and others Mokitimi (1997). Some of these poets help to propagate government ideas and programmes. Some of them condemn the unruly behaviour of youths. Thus, the need for Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo... girls to keep their virginity and chastity till marriage, is also sung by the poets Asobele (1982:36). The poets in the traditional African societies do not perform the above function blindly; they make use of language through figurative expressions such as repetition, hyperbole, oxymoron, simile, metaphor, parallelism and others, to reveal the aesthetics in their work. The matter of defining identity in terms of oral tradition appears to present a puzzle. A discussion of Ekiti oral tradition requires an understanding of the history and identity of the Yoruba.

To identify an oral tradition as Ekiti, there is a need to know who the Ekitis are. However, their knowledge of Yoruba history is also derived from oral tradition, and Ekiti identity is owed to the combined force of its past history and contemporary realities. To put it in another way, we may identify Ekiti oral tradition only if we are able to identify the Yoruba; but our knowledge of Yoruba identity is derived from its oral tradition. The Ekitis have a sense of Yoruba history, culture and identity, from its historical and mythical legends, folktales and verbal arts. This is how it ought to be, due to the fact that oral tradition is used to construct history, legitimize cultural values and pass judgment on contemporary political realities. The vehicle of thought common to all these usages is language and it may be the candidate for resolving our puzzle. If

our knowledge of Ekiti history and identity is derived from its oral tradition, and that oral tradition is transmitted in a language that is uniquely identifiable with the Yoruba people, it would seem that, for the purpose of identifying the Ekiti, the researcher will rely principally on their language. Of course, there is more to identity than language. However, in the particular case that interests us here, the researcher will have to grant a linguistic basis for Ekiti identity that will attend to the elements of oral tradition. The Ado-Ekiti community in this sense is not an exception. Therefore, the Ado-Ekiti community demonstrates praise poetry that has been handed over to the younger generation through the word of mouth. The Ado-Ekiti praise poetry has all the literary qualities and aesthetics that could be useful in the academic system.

Praise poetry according to Akporobaro (2001) is a form of oral composition which deals with invocation, adoration, or condemnation of the subjects of praise. These objects of praise cover all gamut of African reality from the metaphysical, socio-cultural, and political to natural elements. Also, animate and inanimate objects are praised. It is in the light of this that we have praise poetry for supernatural forces which include Supreme Being, lesser gods and goddesses, spirits and ancestors. Praise poetry for individuals, towns, lineages and at times groups and communities. Praise poetry for animate and inanimate things such as animals, plants, and rocks. And finally, praise poetry for philosophical concepts such as death, and the world.

Admin (2009) argues that African praise poetry is rooted in cosmology which extols humans and non-humans. Professional praise singers praise chiefs, kings, or noble men. Individuals compose their praise poetry to promote self-feat greatness and special attributes linked. The aim of praise poetry is not to prove negative traits of self-ego, hatred, vengeance, and selfhood. It is therefore a form that encourages individualism that is rooted in communality; the values promoted through the poetic medium must be rooted in communal mind. It is also noted that it influences the lives

of the people, their uses is so relevant that praise singers compose praise songs about them. Considering this, palm wine in Ado Ekiti is praised as a good drink which nourishes people and offers them better life. A lion could also be praised as king of the forest and may be juxtaposed with a man.

However, the praise poetry composer draws from the reservoir using the ones relevant to him to compose a song. It is the praise singer that decides who and what to praise. Praise poetry rarely mixes abuse and praise. There are other facts to be noted about African oral poetry. This concerns its multifarious forms. For instance, from the viewpoints of Yoruba cosmology, African oral poetry can be classified into the following: religious poetry, praise poetry, incantatory poetry, and funeral poetry, occupational poetry, heroic poetry, topical poetry, and dialectical poetry among others (Ogunjimi and Na'allah 1994). Another important fact to be noted is that it is not easy to master each of these poetic forms; one has to learn as an apprentice any type that he/she desires to know for a period of time after which he/she can become a professional chanter.

There are also an attempt to classify oral poetry based on situation, content and vehicle. Situational typology, according to Nwoga (1982:1), *is an attempt to group poems according to the content within which they are performed*. Context includes situation like births, title taking, divination, death etc. This approach has its own flaws. For instance, in funeral one is likely to hear some songs and chants, some of which may not have thematic relevance to the death.

Content suggest the themes that the poems contain. In this kind of typology, according to Ajewumi in *Ijala performance and its generic mutation in the Electronic Age (2006)* identifies praise songs, lamentation and satirical poems. However, the implication of this typology is that the content has nothing to do with the structure format of the poem.

The third type is vehicle of performance. By this we mean the medium in two ways: whether it is merely voice, voice accompanied with minimal instrumental like clapping gong, voice accompanied by full complement of drum and dancing, drum poetry. However, there is no distinctive classification or typology where mutation does not exist.

The second meaning of vehicle can be referred to the specific musical or dance group performance, which the poetic performance belongs such that a dance distinction can be made between *Ijala* performance *Esa* or *Ewi Egungun*

Bodeyan, (2011) relates that in his field work based dealing with the *Forms Aesthetics of Udje songs of the Urhobo people* in the riverine area of Nigeria, "One chapter is devoted to songs and fragments of poems which give more clues to the traditional aesthetic outlook..." (35, n 46.) As an example, he refers to the Udje songs which he does not translate, but of which he says: "This song has two connotations: one is direct, and simply refers to ornament as something that cannot give beauty to the human form if the human form is in itself not beautiful; the other is indirect, and asserts that ornament could not be of help to the ugly" (63).

All these scholars agree that Yoruba orature is the yardstick for assessing the competence of an artist. Thus every Yoruba oral artist strives to know more about important praise poetry of highly placed personality in their various communities. There are also reference to historical events, and mythological incidents. There is also flow in structure and content.

From the foregoing, it seems clear that this aspect of the oral tradition of the Yoruba is important for enriching the social and moral life of the people and ensuring the continuity of their culture. This is highly effective means of expressing the ideals and values of the communities, teaching

young generations the history of their ancestors and helping them improve their self-awareness by giving them the information they need for understanding their identity.

1.11 Theoretical Framework

The study relies on the Functionalist theory as proposed by Bronislaw Malinowski and Radcliffe Brown. This theory expounds the view that any cultural activity must have a utilitarian value for its people. For the purpose of this research, this theory was considered ideal since the researcher's interest lay in the utilitarian function of the oral narratives as reconstructions of a community's culture and history and as media through which the community's philosophy of life is expressed.

Miruka, (1994) is of the assertion that functionalists see the society as a stable entity perpetuated by various cultural activities. Folklores are then seen as embodiments of the beliefs, customs, rituals and structures that need to be maintained. They are also charged with the role of censuring deviants. The theory in effect proposes an absolutist way of looking at life as a construct maintained by selected immutable principles and processes that must be perpetuated. However, it is worth noting that societies change and accommodate contemporary thought. For the purpose of this research the functionalist theory is used to investigate how the people around Ado-Ekiti reconstruct the cultural artistic experience of poetry through their Orature. In particular, the study was interested in the people's philosophical world view as projected in praise songs.

Functionalist portrayed cultures as functionalists imagined them: island-like, space-time isolates of interlocking, reinforcing systems of relationships. When this preconception is duly acknowledged, there is nothing wrong with it; and structural functionalists and structuralists alike moved beyond atomistic views of societies and cultures as agglomerations of evolved traits, sometimes accelerating, sometimes lagging in the process.

According to Miruka (1994) the functionalist theory contends that literature is and ought to be the society that has given birth to it as well as nurtures it. The theory is psychological in nature, and examines mental processes and how they relate to human behavior. By so doing, literature plays a major role in effecting and affecting social and intellectual changes within the community. In the way, literature becomes a potential weapon used to bring about enduring positives changes in the community that engenders it. Finnegan (1977) says that role of literature can either reflect the society or uphold its status quo.

The functionalists also believe that any cultural phenomenon that does not exist in the society will not endure. Ikeokwu (2007) notes Udeh (1994) as saying the functional literature or functionalism is an approach of literary study. Its principles are based on those of “Social Commitment” (Udeh 1994). Social commitment is an aspect of social criticism that has received a considerable attention in the pens of modern literary critics. The functionalist approach is used such as praise poetry, proverbs and religious songs to press the point that literature is and ought to be relevant to the society that has given birth to it and as well as it nurtures. Lostraco and Wilkerson (1978:8) buttress this point when they note that “Literature distills life and condenses human experiences. It presents us with a concentrated imaginative vision of ourselves and the world in which we live”.

Functional literature to us in this study is that literature, which uses advocacy devices to sensitize individuals or groups in fighting or struggling for a common cause in order to achieve social justice. In Yoruba traditional communities, oral poetry or song is accorded a position because it is a party of everyday living. This accounts for why oral art has persisted over generations while new ones in terms of composition, performance and entertainment are evolving and are enjoyed by the people.

Beier (1956:23) had already pointed out his universal poetic tendency in Yoruba culture, thus: There is no occasion in Yoruba life that is not accompanied by songs. Births, marriages, and funerals are all occasions for lyrical of beauty. Everyday life is also accompanied by great impromptu singing, a tune which happens to pass through head. Beier's views cut across culture and genders in both composition and performance. For example in the study of Oyebade and Mbah (2008), there is an illustration of similarities among cultures when they draw attention to Igbo and Yoruba equivalents in poetries performed in the Igbo and Yoruba cultures, thus: *Abu alumdi* "Igbo marriage songs" translate in Yoruba to "*Ekun iyawo*" Yoruba marriage songs, *Abu nhimura nwa* "Igbo lullabies" equates to Yoruba *Ewi Iremolekun*, Igbo *Abu egwun onwa* "moonlight songs" has Yoruba *Ewi eresupa Omode* as its equivalent, and so on.

Literary criticism has been defined by Northrop Frye as comprising "the structure of literature and the cultural phenomena that form the social environment of literature", (25) the implication here being that literary criticism involves judgments in terms of aesthetic qualities and social relevance of works of art, both of which must be apprehended in the contexts of language, culture and extra-linguistic factors. This element is apt for the study in view of the oral character of the texts in issue. As is well-known, at the functionalist affective level, content is discussed at the subunits of symbols, icons, proverbs, songs, folklore, imagery, myths, and all forms of figures of speech. These forms embellish and sustain oral poetry during and after performance. Generally, the functionalist model suits the study of oral Nigerian poetry because most of the other (Western) models would lead to absurdity in their application to Nigerian oral poetry; for, as Ikiddeh (2005) has cautioned: "it would be wrong to imagine that every genre of oral literature in Africa has a ready equivalent in Europe and that literary terms are automatically transferable" (2005: 100). Certainly, models such as Formalism, Structuralism, Evolutionist and Marxism are

not suitable for the study of African (Nigerian) oral poetry because these critics ended up neglecting some other important function and aspects of orature in our society. Oral literature like this produce not only studies specific performance tradition as opposed to the approach of many ealier scholars but situated such studies in the contextual of the aesthetic and functional values of the culture studied.

Yet this approach to criticism, differ from the contextually bereft approaches of nineteenth-century critics. In the functionalist view, art is the first and foremost to conceived of as aesthetically valid within its cultural frame of reference and only then is scholarly appraisal attempted. However, many literary scholars have made significant strides in this new approach as formidable aspect of discourse is only beginning to emerge.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE NATURE OF EKITI PRAISE POETRY

2.0 Introduction

Although poetry is often verbalized as "song-singing" (*orin kiko*) or drum-playing (*ilu-lilu*), the all-embracing phrase for a musical performance is (*Ere sise*) entertaining, a generic term which encompasses singing, instrumental playing, dancing, poetry and so on. One of the most

important symbols of the association of music with non-musical elements is the musico-dramatic genre of Yoruba story-telling - the (*Alo*). The aim of this chapter is to examine the various ways through which praise poetry takes place in Yoruba land particularly in Ekiti, focusing on both vocal and significance aesthetics. As a prelude to this, we shall briefly examine relevant issues.

2.1 The Venue for Ado-Ekiti praise poetry

The time and venue for Ekiti praise poetry differs depending context. Apparently the researcher was one of the researchers that benefited from *Etado's* flexibility, since I arrived there on October 1st, 2013 to observe the *Alamo*, not knowing that the *Ado* society had performed the ritual festival three months prior to that time. However, it is difficult for the researcher to know the other researchers who were favoured by the divinity, since none of them have published anything on praise songs of Ado Ekiti. Nonetheless, I was assured that if I could pay for all the ceremonial or ritualistic items needed for the *Oro* (ritual festival for the songs) and following an approval from the *Epa* divinity, the *Ado* society members would perform the festival for me.

One interesting thing about this development is that irrespective of how many times the *Alamo* has been performed over the years, the ritual procedures and phases remain the same. This is as a result of the sanctions imposed by the *Ado* society, forbidding any individual or group of individuals who belong to the *Alamo* lineage to perform the *Oro* as a play (without the accompanied ritual sacrifices) or for the sake of money from researchers or scholars. Besides, the society members strongly adhere to the pact and the accompanying warning that was supposedly given them by *Orisa-Alamo* that stipulated that whenever the ritual festival is held all the required sacrifices must be offered to *Orisa-Alamo*.

On October 16, 2013, at around 10:00 p.m. the *Ado-Ekiti* chief priest (*Obaigbo*), in the person of Olusegun Iggunnu, who is seventy-five years old left for the *Orisa-Alamo* grove for the whole night, where he approached and propitiated the divinity with the ritual sacrifices of mud-fish (*Eja-Aro*), a large bushsnail (*Igbin*), and palm oil (*Epo-Pupa*). The sacrificial items are believed to contain certain spiritual forces that soothe not only the *Alamo* divinity (*Orisa-Alamo*), but all of the Yoruba spirit beings. Thus, in ritual circles or gatherings, the items are often referred to as *Nnkan Ero* (items of pacifier or propitiation), as they are used for bridging the gap between the divine (in the realm of the spirits) and the earthly (in the realm of the living). The purpose is to seek permission from *Orisa-Alamo* to hold the *Alamo* (ritual festival for *Alamo* divinity) that has been tentatively slated for July this year. I say tentative because the performance of the festival is not confirmed until it is formally approved by the *Alamo* divinity. Usually, a four-lobed kola nut (*Obi-Alawemerin*) is used for this kind of divination activity that is called *Ibo* ('to draw' or 'to cast lots').

Whenever the four lobes of kola nut are cast, a positive or 'yes' answer to the request(s) from the respective divinity is determined when two of the four lobes have their faces turned up and the remaining two have theirs turned upside down, facing the ground. Any combination(s) outside of the above combination is taken as a negative or 'no' answer from the spirit being(s). I was told that if *Orisa-Alamo* declined the request, the *Alamo* would be postponed indefinitely. Therefore, I was all the night on my knees, praying that the divinity would give a favorable reply to the request.

On 17th October, the *Obaigbo* chief priest of *Alamo* returned from grove with the good news that the *Orisa-Alamo* had accepted that they perform the *Alamo* praise song. At the end of the invocations, *Iye-Mole* (the only female among them) engaged in a ritual dance and was at once

joined by the group members (*Onimole*), who danced in an anti- clockwise direction, signifying that the ritual dance was for the realm of spiritual forces. At a certain time, the dancers shifted the venue of the dance to the outside, in front of the god's house, where his grave was located. As the ritual dance continued, so also the participants sang repeatedly one particular song of praise that acknowledged the Supreme Being, whom they addressed as *Orisaloke* ('God in heaven'), as the Creator of *Imole* and all human beings was rendered by one of the chanters. The song goes:

<i>Oludarin: E e semi ko daa</i>	I am not the one
<i>Egbe: Orisaloke oun ko da 'Mole</i>	God in heaven is the Creator of Imole
<i>Oludarin: E e sawa ko daa</i>	We are not the one
<i>Egbe: Orisaloke oun ko da 'Mole</i>	God in heaven is the Creator of Imole
<i>Oludarin: Ee seyin ko daa</i>	You people are not the one
<i>Egbe: Orisaloke oun ko da 'Mole</i>	God in heaven is the Creator of Imole
<i>Oludarin: Ee sewo ko daa</i>	He/she is not the one
<i>Egbe: Orisaloke oun ko da 'Mole</i>	God in heaven is the Creator of Imole
<i>Oludarin: Ee sawon ko daa</i>	They are not the one
<i>Egbe: Orisaloke oun ko da 'Mole</i>	God in heaven is the Creator of Imole

Fig.I

The Ado-Ekiti praise poetry which is the focus of this work has its categories and the method of performance differs. For instance, we have praise poetry for animals according to oral sources conducted poetry could be performed at the farm. The excerpt below was a song raised by one versatile songster in the Akoya group in praise of animals in Ago Aduloju farm collected and conducted on 4th November 2013.

<i>Ekun, Ogini omo Iyayo</i>	Tiger, Ogini offspring of Iyayo
<i>Ekun Abijawara</i>	Tiger who fights fiercely
<i>Eranko atorimeranje</i>	The animal that eats flesh from the head
<i>Alabelowo.</i>	The one who has knife in its palm.

Fig.III

All attributes in the above *oriki* of tiger praise its powers and heroic character. There are many animal lineages among the Yoruba who are praised in a similar manner. In the same light, praise poetry for plant could also be performed at the farm as well at home. They beat their special drum called *Agere*. There will be shootings of guns into the air. They chant the dirge as they take paraphernalia one after the other referring to them in the chanting.

Another example is that of the funeral dirge, *raraoku*, among the *Ibollo* Yoruba dialect. Before they begin to chant the dirge they must perform some rituals like the pouring of libation of palm-oil for soothing and appeasing. The chanters are women who tie sash to their belly. These are part of the genre, which cannot be separated from it.

According to Pa. Alakinyede, an Eighty-Three year old who was interviewed on October 23rd 2013, he argues that such praise poetry is performed when there is a bumper harvest or when a tree is tall and giant. He went further to posit that when a farmer chants such praise poetry, he expresses his joy over the bountiful harvest.

Also, Chief Olusegun Igunnu (chief priest) is of the opinion that praise poetry for chiefs is performed at the chief's palace popularly known as (*Akodi*) and at the venue where cultural activities take place in the presence of chiefs. i.e palace. Praise poetry performed for the chiefs whenever they are triggered by anger. The aim of such poetry is to control the chief's anger. Also, there is praise poetry that is performed when a chief is paying a visit to a community. Such

praise poetry is a sign of an appreciation for his coming and it is performed in an open place in the community.

In an interview granted by Chief Elemure Ogunyemi a Sixty year old popular Ekiti musician also he noted that there is praise poetry offered to chiefs in the community when evil befall the community. The aim of such poetry is to arouse the bravery of the chief in fighting against such evil. He also believes that when a community lives in unity and harmony a praise poetry is rendered for such a community. The aim of such poetry is to enhance more peace and unity among the people, the wider community.

2.2 How Ekiti praise poetry is performed

According to Chief Ogundare Fayanmu a professional praise singer in Ado Ekiti he posits that songs are like light showers of rain, without them, they induce heavy down-pour. They are like the creepers that carpet the forest of praise poetry without which individuals could run very fast in-between the trees. They make listeners more thoughtful than they would have been. These encomiums are like architectural polish of praise poetry. *Alamo* means the ritual performance of songs. As the *Imole* group members were winding up their ritual activities (*Oro-Imole*), two *Ajibele* called *Onigabon* and *Ina-Okò* emerged from their shrine in the forests of *Alamo* (*Igbo-Amo*), walking directly toward the grave site of the deity. As they reached the top of the shrine, both *Alamo* (*Onigabon* and *Ina-Okò*) fell to their knees and bowed down so that their heads actually touched the decorated shrine, a gesture of honor and homage (*Iba, Ijuba*) to the spirit of the dead (Ancestor). The masquerade did not come alone from the *Igbo-Eegun*, as evidenced by a sea of heads that flocked down with them to the front of the ancestor. Among the multitude were the drummers' group (*Onilu*) composed of four men-*Onifere* (flute player), *Oni'bembe Iya-Ilu*

(lead drummer), *Oni'bembe Omele-Ako* (high tone drummer), and *Oni'bembe Omele-Abo* (treble tone drummer). This drum set is totally different from the two types, *Dundun* (hourglass tension drums) and *Bata* (talking drums played with both the palm of the hand and animal skin concurrently) that are commonly played for *Egungun* among the Yoruba who inhabit Southwestern Nigeria. It can be argued that the *Ibembe* (large membrane drums set commonly played for *Egungun* and other rituals and festivals all over the Ado-Ekiti and other Ekiti Yoruba communities). Soon after the *Egungun* paid the ritual homage to the spirit of the dead, both (*Onigabon* and *Ina-Oko*) figuratively fell into a long lasting ritual dance performance in front of the shrine. As the *Egungun* danced so also did the spectators. The crowd cheerfully rewarded them (the masquerade) with the gifts of money.

The performance wound up at around 2:00 p.m. when both masquerades climbed on top of the shrine a second time and went down on their knees and again bowed before the shrine. Soon after, both beckoned to the drummers and spectators and at once headed back to their abode (*Igbo-Eegun*). The concluding part of the ritual exercise was varieties of praise songs to families in which the *Egungun* paid the second homage on top of the shrine further confirmed that the ritual was entirely in honor of the dead (*Alamo*). Arguably, therefore, the main significance of the *Oro-Alamo* was to awaken people in praise songs of the spirit inside the shrine and pave the way for other spirits to journey safely into the realm of spiritual forces. They must draw from the deep well of cosmology of Yoruba or else they will be irrelevant without the codes which we know, the icons that make us interpret our world view.

The *Alamo* chanters know the heroes of their communities, the histories, the values, cosmology and patterns of praise poetry. The chanters compose their songs with facts to validate the beliefs and practices of peoples. The songs consolidate the ideas in group mind and ensure that

individuals learn from past heroes. Songs about individuals form a data bank which discloses attitudes, values, past personalities from the lineages, their contributions to their families and lineages. These are the realistic items that are woven into the fabric of songs. The epithets are the building blocks of aesthetics which make songs poetic.

The voices of the chanters are the means of verbalisation, the rhythms stabilize the elements of poetry enrich them. The songs about communities form the data that are a means to decipher the nature of the communities, their traditions of war, love, manhood, naming, practices and values. The chanters draw from previous experiences of heroes, definitions of greatness: titles and how they are awarded, kingship systems, tests and examinations of individuals for titles and the values of the peoples which are expressed through various methods.

In conclusion, all good composers of praise poetry such as Chief Ogundare Fayanmu, *Idere* cultural group, *Elemure* cultural troupe, *Oyemefun* Traditional group, *Akoya* group are aware of their environment, not in the superficial sense of being uprooted Africans, or those who have moved to metropolitan centers, who regard their lore as barbaric or unnecessary and are non-active participants in the realisation of their praise songs.

2.3 Composers of Ado-Ekiti praise poetry

An *Alamo* chanter needs to be very versed in the knowledge of praise songs of individuals as that of their lineage. Chief Ogundare Fayanmu a sixty year old on the work noted that the praise song is the first thing that an apprentice chanter learns. Afterwards, he/she can further engage himself in the real presentation. This is because praise song plays a very important role in chant, no matter the type of occasion they have to attend. It is required that before every outing, the chanters must have got every necessary information pertaining to the lineage of the celebrant. This will help him to further display his competence of the art. However, if the occasion is taking

place outside the town, information concerning the tribe, town and lineage of the celebrant is also required. In order to learn these arts, there are some important things that the learner has to take into consideration. The first instance, he has to ‘belong’ to the family of the chanter – either by blood or by adoption. This sense of belongingness is observed in that these poetic forms are professions that people practice as hobbies. The learner has to be very close to the chanters to be informed about the time of production. Apart from that it requires some special interest of the said learner. According to Madam Oyemefun Abeke: a fifty-seven year old female musician who granted this at her homestead on 29th November, 2013

Se won kowa ni Alamo yii. Se bi e rii pe mo juba awon baba wa. Won ko wa nitori pe won ko fe ki imo re parun laarin ebi. O je ere ibile gbogbo Ekitilapapo. O soro pupo lati da lai je pe eniyan kekoo lorii re.

We were taught the art of Alamo. You can see that I acknowledged our fathers. We were taught because they do not want its knowledge lost within the family. It is the traditional chant of the Ekiti people generally. It is difficult to chant it except one is trained to do so.

A sustaining power of Alamo is the compulsion by tradition that some members of the family should devote their time to the knowledge of *Alamo* chant. Knowledge of *Oriki* (praise/panegyric poetry) is important in the process of learning praise poetry, since it forms the major part of the whole work. Chief Elemure Ogunyemi, says:

Iriri Alamo se pataki ninu Adamo dida. Alamo kosi le jagaara lai jepe Adelamo tini imoti o dunjului oriki, itanIse da le orisirisi orirun ibi ti eniyan n gbe.

The experience of the artist in the art of performance itself cannot be over emphasized. He cannot do much without having the knowledge of panegyric poetry; as well as the historical background of different lineage in the society of the chanter.

The fact that the chanter will not need to learn many things fresh in the preparation for a performance made it necessary that he has some knowledge of praise poetry as well as creativity. The artist must also be thoughtful. Alamo, as mentioned above, is better chanted when there are many professional chanters to sing the chorus. Like the *Ijala* (the hunters chant), By making these references, they provide their audience with oral information bringing their cultural heritage once more into the limelight, as exemplified by Chief Ogundare Fayanmu on 22nd October 2013 at his resident at Okeyinmi in Ado-Ekiti the following extract from dirge:

<i>Nijo Ewi r'Oyoo 'le,</i>	When <i>Ewi</i> (king of Ado) was going to old Oyo,
<i>Alukoso Ewi egbeje,</i>	His koso drummers numbered one thousand four hundred.
<i>Aludundun Ewi egbefa,</i>	His dundun drummers numbered one thousand two hundred.
<i>Ki irinjingbin Ewi egberindinlogiin,</i>	His kiinrinjingbin(cymbal) players,one thousand six hundred
<i>Ado maa fa mi</i>	Let Ado pull me,
<i>Kemi naa o fa o</i>	So that I pull him back in return.
<i>E je a jo bo abee 'e1 kolofin,</i>	Let us go to the dark corner of a house
<i>je a jo fa 'run abe araaw a.</i>	To pull our pubic hair.
<i>A-jii-mo-fan i 'run Ado,</i>	Since Ado hair is usually pulled together,
<i>Eeyan ti o ba fa 'run ohun o daa.</i>	Whoever fails to pull such hair is a bad person.

This dirge is a humorous chant for which the Ewi lineage is very famous. The chant also reflects the artist's creative power in using to produce varying levels of meanings. The extract deserves attention, however, because it allows us a deeper insight into the past social life of a one-time ruler of Ado. There is a chorus song which followed a period of continuous Alamo chant. Another important fact to be noted is that it is compulsory for the current chanters to acknowledge the lineage whenever they want to chant. The acknowledgement makes them to have the full backing and approval of the lineage whenever they go to perform. An Alamo chanter usually has his listeners or audience face-to-face. The excerpt below was a chant clip raised by Elemure Ogunyemi on 3rd July 2000 at Ewi's palace to severely castigated and ridiculed the Egba and Ijebu in their chants, while eulogizing the king for his action.

Oludari: Kín le - foba pe? What were you taking the king to be?

Egbe: Alujan-jan-ki-jan

Alujan-jan-ki-jan

Oludari: Af airo, o jare Egba

Effortlessly, you defeated the Egba people,

Orí inú Egba kin le - foba pe?

Egba people, what were you taking the king to be?

Egbe: Alujan-jan-ki-jan

Alujan-jan-ki-jan

Oludari: Ijebu sori boro

The Ijebu with their usual bald heads

Kín le - foba pe?

What were you taking the king to be?

Egbe: Àlujan-jan-ki-jan

Alujan-jan-ki-jan

Oludari: Nje nigba ti eyin - gbesin elesin When you were stealing other people's horses.

Ti alaya kò gbodo wí

And the owner of the horse dared not talk

Egbe: Alujan-jan-ki-jan

Alujan-jan-ki-jan

<i>Oludari:</i> Nigba ti eyin - gbaya alaya	When you raided and kidnapped other people's wives
Ti alaya ko gbodo wi	And their husbands dared not talk
<i>Oludari:</i> Alujan-jan-ki-jan	Alujan-jan-ki-jan
<i>Gbogbo:</i> Ori inu Egba kín le - f' Oba pe?	All you Egba people, what did you take the king for?
Alujan-jan-ki-jan	Alujan-jan-ki-jan

Fig.IV

It is clear from the preceding examples that *Alamo* chanters are entertainers and chroniclers of the king's genealogy. For the king, the chants were meant to evoke feelings of well-being and great pride in his ancestry. The demands made on him by his audience determine and condition his production. For the *Alamo* chanter, the moment of composition and the making of the poem are simultaneous with the performance Olatunji (1979:179). It is therefore expected of a poet in the oral tradition to use his poem to comment about the happening in the society. He is expected to cover every facet of life in the society. This is because his poem must go in line with the prevailing circumstances in the society. During the period of joy, his poem must reflect the happiness that people express. On the other hand, when there is sadness or a serious happening, the poet must come out to depict the suggested mood.

2.4 Audience and performer relationship

In the performance of Yoruba orature communion has an important social function, fellowship and participatory essence which are also applicable to Ekiti praise poetry. It serves as a communicative function of breaking uncomfortable silence as well as laying the foundation for proper and further interaction between the poet and the audience. No wonder Lyons sees it as expression that emphasizes the notion of fellowship and participation in common social rituals that should be regarded as communion and not just communication (Lyons, 1981:143). This

observation of Lyons suits Yoruba orature because many of them are ritualistic and rituals among them demand experiential participation through the phatic communion. The addressee of the Yoruba orature refers to the recipient of the message that the addresser relays. Whenever more emphasis is laid on the addressee in the genre it performs cognitive function. In Yoruba orature, the addressee could either be seen or unseen audience. It could be either audience because the sensory world of Yoruba has both spiritual and physical dimensions and there is no clear-cut line of demarcation between their celestial and terrestrial cosmos. The most important thing is that the speaker bears it in mind that there is the audience for what he speaks. Among the Yoruba, the lineage praise poetry performs soothing function just as he does for the person who praises himself as the speaker or addresser. Besides, the role of *oriki* among the Yoruba is great and it has a lot of effects on the recipient whenever it is chanted. Babalola (1966:24) notes that:

It is traditionally believed that the correct performance of *oríkì* in honor of progenitor gladdens the progenitor in the world of spirits and induces him to show blessings on his offspring on earth. The reciting or chanting of the *oriki* in honor of the ancestors of a particular family causes members of that family who hear the performance to feel very proud of their pedigree, and if they are then away from home, they also feel exceedingly homesick.

Oríkì makes the addressee to feel proud of his/lineage and gives a sense of security in that he/she hopes that the ancestors who are connected with him/her in the *oríkì* are sordidly behind him/her. Such a person feels happy to be connected to the route and can then respond to the message by giving money, cloth or other type of gifts to the chanter.

During a performance of any Yoruba orature there is room for the listeners to participate in the performance as passive performers or poets. The poet bears in mind as he is relaying the message

not only for himself but also mainly for the audience who are the prime recipients of the message. The speaker recognizes that in some sense the listener is in a closer psychological relationship with the immediate territory than he is, and that in a way the listener can be regarded as the owner of the territory' (Laver, 1975:226). This point about contact is better illustrated with following examples.

In Yoruba *Ijala*, the hunter poetry, the chanter sometimes commences by asking questions from the audience as seen the example from Akoya group lead singer excerpt performed 4th November 2013 at Ago Aduloju (A remote village).

<i>Se n maa bare lo?</i>	Do I continue with the performance?	
<i>Seko níí sewu lonaenu ìlo?</i>	I hope there won't be any problem with the	
	performance?	<i>Fig.VI</i>

The audience can therefore respond to the chanter's question with:

<i>Maa bare lo</i>	Continue with the performance
<i>Ko ni sewu</i>	There won't be any problem
<i>ola nile o mo</i>	You can take the whole day.

In many cases, the chanter faces the audience and addresses them thus:

<i>E kojusí mi kee gbohun enu mi</i>	Face me and listen to my voice
<i>Eni à n kewi fun lojuloju nii woni</i>	The listeners to one's poem gaze into one's eyes.

Chief Ogundare Fayanmu believes that when the audience focuses their attention on the chanter they would not miss the message; hence it will enhance better comprehension, appreciation,

application and appraisal of poetic performance. The crucial motivation behind initiation in the performance of praise poetry is that the poet wants to declare that his/her intentions are appeasing and are properly passed across to the listeners. Ogunjimi and Na'allah (1994) posit that chanter expects the audience to pay some serious attention to his performance especially by gazing ardently into the eye/face of the chanter. Intermittently, the chanter uses either rhetorical questions or ordinary questions to bridge all forms of gap between him and the audience. At times the chanter can digress to focus attention on the person who is just joining the audience or any of the audience by chanting his/her personal praise poetry (*oriki borokini*) or his/her lineage praise poetry (*Oriki -Orile*). He starts this by asking the person the title of his/her lineage praise poetry.

In a nutshell, contact serves various functions in the performance of Yoruba orature. It keeps the audience mentally awake during the performance. It gives room for experiential participation and thus, fosters the spirit of communal togetherness in the performance. It enhances better comprehension of the message, which forms a better track or path for its applicability. It aids the performance in that the audience might remind the poet some salient points that he does not remember. Hence, Ado-Ekiti praise poetry should be seen as vital quality in their communication system. The next associate of message is context.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE SCOPE AND THEMATIC DIMENSIONS

3.0 Introduction

One interesting feature of an oral tradition is that most of the words are packaged in the form of poetry and that is why oral tradition is replete with aesthetics. As we discuss the thematic scope in the Praise poem, let us in the same breathe, discuss the in Ekiti aesthetics, which for the purpose of this research, is an aspect of poetry, an essential component in the study of oral literature. We do not need to understand the language before we appreciate it: the literary

quality does the communication. The research will therefore concentrate on figurative qualities such as imagery, especially the use of figures simile, personification, irony and other literary devices.

Categorization of Praise poetry

3.1 Praise poetry for supernatural forces

One of the most widely used poetic forms in Ado Ekiti; a series of laudatory epithets applied to gods, men, animals, plants, and towns that capture the essence of the object being praised. Professional bards, who may be both praise singers to a chief and court historians of their tribe, chant praise songs such as these of the great Ogbogbonioran chieftain in Ado: An excerpt from Chief Elemure Ogunyemi on 27th October 2013.

<i>Oni Ogbogbonioran tiko se se</i>	He is Ogbogbonioran the unshakeable,
<i>Alara joko si orun</i>	Thunderer-while-sitting, son of Orun.
<i>Eeye tin je eye keye</i>	He is the bird that preys on other birds,
<i>Ake tin sa akeke yio ku</i>	The battle-axe that excels over other battle-axes.
<i>Eni tin le omo Oba le re</i>	He is the long-strided pursuer, son of Oba,
<i>Eni tin le oorun ati osupa</i>	Who pursued the sun and the moon.
<i>Eni ti dun bi oke nla</i>	He is the great echo like the rocks of Oke nla
<i>Nibo erin gbe eluju</i>	Where elephants take shelter
<i>Ni gba ti orun du</i>	When the heavens frown. . .

Fig. I

Although, this particular praise song is for the supernatural being (*Ogbogbonioron*) but the chanter is expected to know all of the traditional phrases handed down by word of mouth in his

tribe, the bard is also free to make additions to existing lines of the poems. Thus the praise songs of *Sango*, the Yoruba god of thunder and lightning, might contain a modern comparison of the god, to the power and noise of a railway. Here, the poet personifies facial expression of the deity as “heavens frown” which symbolizes dark cloud that is about to rain.

The praise song below reveals the power and prowess of supernatural forces and that anyone that refuses to regard them could suffer punishment and have no peace. A good example rendition of Chief Elemure Ogunyemi on 29th October 2013.

<i>Iba ere o</i>	I pay homage to <i>Ere</i>	
<i>Ere, mo juba o</i>	<i>Ere</i> , I pay homage to you.	
<i>Bomode n kòrin</i>	When a child is singing.	
<i>Aa juba ere o</i>	He/she must pay homage to <i>ere</i> .	
<i>Ere, mo juba</i>	<i>Ere</i> , I pay homage to you.	
<i>Araagbo adamọyọyọ</i>	Fellow in the bush who is accompanied by plenty children.	
<i>Mo pale</i>	I've beautified the house.	
<i>Mo sose</i>	I've performed weekly ritual.	
<i>Ma da mi loro</i>	Don't harm me.	
<i>Fomo mi fun mi</i>	Give me my children.	<i>Fig.I</i>

Rituals accompanied by these praises are of great importance in the worship of the *Abiku* children. This is because of the people's belief that the Leader of these mysterious children is at present with them at the scene of performance. They will dance to her, and make to reverence her so that she can grant them their requests. It is a form of performance that could be regarded

as cult drama and each phase in the ritual is symbolic. This is a ritual process of appealing to their society to the spirit world for their favour and mercy.

3.2 Praise poetry for kings and princes

The sociological and cultural significance of *oriki* among the Yoruba is best captured by Karin Barber (1991:1), who writes, “*Oriki* is a master discourse. In the enormous wealth and ferment of Yoruba oral literature, they are probably the best known of all forms”

The close relationship between *Alamo* and *oriki* occurs not only because they both perform praise functions, but because of their intertextual nature. Therefore, even though *alamo* and *oriki* are separate genres of Yoruba oral poetic discourse, one can be incorporated into the other. In other words, *alamo* may be performed with *oriki* as its nucleus. When this happens, *oriki* (which may be spoken, chanted or sung) can be intoned in *alamo* chanting mode. *Alamo* court song functioned strictly as entertainment and praise singing. The following recorded tape repertoire demonstrates the absolute authority of the late Oba George Adelabu (1984 - 1988) The Ewi of Ado-Ekiti over his subjects:

<i>Alayeluwa Oba . . .</i>	Your royal highness, the King . . .
<i>Oba Alayeluwa,</i>	The King, your royal highness, death-that-kills
<i>iku- baba- yeye</i>	The-father-and-the-mother
<i>Alase, ekeji Òrisa</i>	The great authority, second in command to the deity.

Fig .IV

This greeting was often employed to salute the *Ewi*, to acknowledge his powers, and to show the extent to which he was respected and revered by his subjects. This expression still constitutes an essential part of the praise song of any *Ewi*, even though unlike during the pre-colonial era when

the Ewi had unquestionable control over the life and death of his subjects, the Ewi today does not enjoy such absolute authority and power. Nevertheless, he is no less respected. Like his forebears, he is still esteemed as highly as a first-class Yoruba king. The king's best characteristics his royalty, courage, diplomacy, and ancestry were usually emphasized in *Alamo* over his less flattering attributes. The example below eulogizes the royal qualities of the Ewi Adelabu Aroloye 1

<i>Omo Adelabu, omo Ajiloru-ke-riri</i>	Who-already-like-a-king-had-an-abundance-of-everything,
<i>Omo oberiri-lookun</i>	Adelabu, also known as,
<i>Omo Osupa- le- a- ni- o- gun</i>	Child of Aroloye, offspring of he who rises
<i>Eni owi e ba to o ko lo tun un se</i>	in the middle of the night and radiates a great light
(through his costly and shining apparel)	
<i>Omo Aroloye</i>	Offspring of one who shines forth gloriously in the dark,
<i>Oba Ogun-eranko-ni-wo</i>	The King who rides the animal on the horn
<i>Oba Ogun-efön-ni pataka idi</i>	The King who rides leisurely on the buffalo's back <i>Fig.IV</i>

Here, references are made to Ewi Adelabu's majesty, flamboyance, and affluence as a royal father. His royal genealogy is also traced to two previous kings: Adelabu Adejugbe and the famous Aroloye. Praises are meant by the artistes to cheer the addressee(s) and win substantial reward for the former on the spot. Therefore, praises are common in a formal stage performance of art as a representative of certain types of Yoruba oral poetry.

The excerpt below was a song raised by one versatile songster in the Idere Agbe group in praise of the Oba on the 5th November 2013 in Agoo Aduloju.

Oludari: Oba deeee!

Hail the Oba!

Oba Afelegb'owo-olowo

The Oba He-who-gently-collects-other-persons'-money

Elegbe: Oba deee!

Hail the Oba! Etc

Fig. IV

In this excerpt, the poet sings in support of the authority in the society in which they live. The Oba, who is the President of the local Customary Court, collects money in the form of traditional gifts from his subjects who want either favour or justice in respect of the cases they bring before the court. The artists humorously present the Oba as a diplomatic exploiter of his subjects. This is an example of subtle criticism. A reference to means of exploitation of the for bearers of Ewi before the colonial era.

In the body of this praise poem of Ado Ekiti art consists of entertaining and didactic utterances, Ekiti artists chant the *oríkì* (verbal salutes) both of individuals and of lineages, in order to enumerate the outstanding attributes of members of the immediate audience. These members of the audience are entertained and edified by these *oríkì* chants. They are often so excited and inspired that they respond to the artists' communication by showing their appreciation in cash and kind.

Oríkì chants also help the artists to hold the attention of their audience. Therefore, the rendering of *Oríkì* is a prominent communicative function of Praise poetry art. This is the case because the traditional society in which this art is practised is capitalist nature, money is power.

3.3 Praise poetry for socialite

In terms of creation, conception and development, juju, fuji and afrobeat originated out of Yoruba popular music practise which later become genres by which Nigerian music is identified

on the global level. *Juju* emerged out of core traditional Yoruba music practices where the use of *oriki* Yoruba a genealogy praise-singing is vital, and this can be seen as an essential aspect of Yoruba traditional life which survived the impact of modern society (Euba 1989: 2). In today's ever changing music scene with all the modernisation and hybridization both genres have gone through *oriki* praise singing and still remains a constant and permanent feature like a stamp of identity on *jùjú* and *fújì* music styles. Below is a song samples from a veteran of musician, Chief Ebenezer Obey, where the use of *oriki* is evident: Lanrewaju Badmus', Chief Ebenezer Obey: *In The Sixties* Vol 2 (Decca WAPS 436, 1979)

<i>Lanrewaju ọmọ Badmus, eniyan</i>	Lanrewaju the son of Badmus, a good man
<i>Lanrewaju ọmọ Badmus, eniyan rere</i>	Lanrewaju the son of Badmus, a very good man

(Repeated after each line)

<i>Lánrewaju oko ọmọlara, eniyan</i>	Lanrewaju, the husband of ọmọlara
<i>Baba ọmọbola, eniyan</i>	The father of ọmọbola
<i>Ọmọ Alhaja Mabolaje, eniyan</i>	The son of Alhaja Mobolaje
<i>Larry publicity ọmọ ni, ènìyàn</i>	Larry publicity such a nice man
<i>Lánrewájú ọmọ Badmus, ènìyàn rere</i>	Lanrewaju the son of Badmus a very goodman <i>Fig VII</i>

The above is a typical appropriation of *oriki* in juju which to a large extent is now a trademark of the genre. Here Chief Ebenezer Obey praises a socialite as a good person linking this to his genealogy in Ibadan, his place of birth, by mentioning his father and mother while also citing his immediate family, wives and children. This is a typical use of personal *oriki* citation, a means by which a big man's reputation is established access to the dynamic process of self-aggrandisement and the values it generates... [and showing] that big men are a central and long established

feature of Yoruba social processes’ (Barber 1991: 5). Fuji music also engages in this discourse of *oriki* citation in a similar manner where this form of Yoruba orature has now been appropriated in music to transcend ethnic and regional boundaries.

3.4 Praise poetry for animate and inanimate objects

The Yoruba attach great importance to *oriki*, the descriptive poetry of the Yoruba. So they have personal *oriki* addressed to individuals and they also have lineage or clan *oriki* *panegyric*. A close observation of the Yoruba people reveals that they also create *oriki* for their animals. There are numerous examples of animal panegyric in the tradition, and some are illustrated below. The first one is about antelope, which they call *Etu*. (An excerpt from Madam Abeke Oyemefun on 29th November 2013). The praise poem goes thus:

<i>Etu Obeje</i>	Antelope Obeje
<i>Elese osun</i>	The one who has legs painted red with camwood
<i>Aritete- gbon-on-ni</i>	The one who has thighs with which to touch the dew
<i>Eranko tii le tiroo</i>	The animal that put on eyelashes
<i>Eranko tii wa gonbo.</i>	The animal that wears <i>gonbo</i> tribal marks

Fig.III

Here, the poet used antelope praise poem to describe its appearance and manner. This is not in any way different from how the Yoruba people formulate and chant the *oriki*s about humans. It is a tradition of the Yoruba people to wear tribal marks on their faces. This is what the poet now ascribed to the antelope because it has some natural marks on its face that look like tribal marks. In Yoruba cosmography stands for the equal importance of animals as well as humans.

Another animal that has been attributed *oriki* is bush fowl, *Aparo*.

The praise poem of the bird goes as follows:

<i>Aparo</i>	Bush fowl
<i>Eni ti a o femo lowo re</i>	The one that we do not marry his daughter
<i>Tó n gbana lowo eni</i>	And he is receiving dowry from us
<i>Abi-tete-npologun eru</i>	The one with thighs that are inviting the owner of twenty slaves
<i>Abi-janja-pologbon iwofa.</i>	The meat that are inviting the owner of thirty servants.

Fig III

This oriki about bush fowl also describes the attitude of the bird in the farm and the taste of its meat. Bush fowl have the habit of going irresponsibly to any farm and freely plucking millet, corn, or any other edible farm product. This is why the bird is described as ‘the one that we do not marry our daughter to but it is receiving dowry’. The dowry here is used metaphorically to symbolize whatever the bush fowl eats in the farm. The thighs and the pieces that are inviting the owners of twenty slaves and owners of thirty servants are also metaphorically used to mean important people in the society. This is just indicating the extent of the sweetness of its meat which everybody would like to eat. Linguistically, the etymological meaning of *Aparo* is the one that you kill and tell the news to others. The taste of its meat, after you have tasted it, will make you spread the news to other people.

Monkey (*Obo*) is another animal which is considered by the poet worthy of dedicating praise to, mainly because of its character and appearance, which closely resembles that of humans. The oriki of this animal expresses the idea that it possesses many attributes that are similar to those of humans:

<i>Obo akaja lode</i>	The Monkey that teaches the dog how to hunt
<i>A-gbori-iti-pete-ika</i>	The-one-who-schemes-evil-while on- tendrils

<i>A-gbori-iti-pète-èké</i>	The-one-who-schemes-lies-while on- tendrils
<i>Ogboju Akítì tii gbàbon lowo ode</i>	The brave <i>Akiti</i> who seizes the gun from the hunter
<i>Eranko tii tan ode wogbe suasua.</i>	The animal who lures the hunter into the thick forest.

Fig.III

The poet used the above panegyric to characterise the relationship between the hunter and the monkey and the shared attributes between humans and animals. It shows that animals like humans are able to think and plan their activities in advance so that they would not fail. Another important issue discussed in this oriki is that the monkey is so wise and powerful that it may seize the gun from the hunter in the bush. It is the duty of the hunter who owns a dog to teach the dog how to hunt in the bush but we see from the oriki that even a monkey can teach the dog how to hunt in the bush. This has to do with the skills and schemes of monkeys in the bush.

The Yoruba even compose songs which they sing to some domestic animals to portray their activities that are like those of human beings. Here is an excerpt of Madam Abeke Oyemefun of a folk song that she sang to her brave dog:

<i>Aja mi o!</i>	My dog!	
<i>Ajá ode</i>	The hunter's dog	
<i>Ògemo- gerere</i>	The one that tears a child into pieces	
<i>Aja ode</i>	The hunter's dog	
<i>Òsopaka-gbemì</i>	The one that picks it and swallows	
<i>Ògbale-gbarawe</i>	The one who sweeps the floor with leaves	
<i>Aja ode.</i>	The hunter's dog.	<i>Fig III</i>

The relationship between the Yoruba hunters and animals is very deep, complex and mysterious. Hunters believe that some animals are spirits, and that they transform into humans at nights when the hunters go to their hunting expeditions. Furthermore, they teach the hunters traditional Yoruba folk medicine, which is, in turn, very useful to them and their society. Yoruba hunters believe that not every animal that they encounter must be killed, because some of them are powerful and show their real colour during the night to the hunters.

3.5 Praise poetry for individuals

Oral poets more often than not use their creative imagination to mesmerize scenes and images in their pieces that are not factually true artiste life in the praise songs. A good example below from repertoire of Chief Fayanmu on the 21-23rd October 2013 at his Homestead:

<i>Awa fun niyekan oniyekan ye kan</i>	We also belong to a lineage, another lineage
<i>Iyekan oguro tun niwa elefon aye</i>	The lineage of <i>Ogburo</i> that is gentle like Elephant
<i>Ologburo onio ayawe so loiuko iyekan mi</i>	<i>Ogburo</i> that names different leaves
<i>Ekuro lalabaku okete.</i>	My lineage
<i>Omo pangala pongolo</i>	Palm kernel is the eternal friend of the rat

Fig.V

The song praises the lineage of *Ogburo* for their steadfastness, gentility and conscientiousness. This is demonstrated through the use of simile thus

“The lineage of Ogburo that is gentle like Elephant”

Fig.V

This is a comparison between the *Ogburos* and elephants. It is a panegyric that strongly asserts the distinctiveness and humility of the *Ogburos*. At times, when important people arrives instead

of welcoming them with shout or normal greetings, it is praise songs that is used to welcome them.

This praise song also uses metaphor in the presentation of the *Ogburos*. It is a direct comparison between two dissimilar things. This praise poem refers the *Ogburos* as the son of a lion and Buffalo, due to their braveness. Here metaphor is not giving a supporting role, but a direct role of the action. The artistic benefit of the image of elephant as a gigantic and powerful animal is used to represent the *Ogburos*. The imagery of the elephant, lion and Buffalo evoke the right atmosphere and sense of reality of the mightiness and importance of the *Ogburo* lineage in the society.

To further show the braveness of the *Ogburo*'s braveness as warriors, the praise song personifies war thus

<i>Ogun o le gbagada to lowo won</i>	<i>War entered the river of Oya, it entered Ijesa land</i>
<i>Ogun gbodo we to oya igbale ijesa</i>	<i>War was waged against Ijesa Abeni</i>
<i>War was waged against Ijebu Abeni</i>	<i>Ogun aja jesa abeni</i>
	<i>the land that grows kolanut</i>

Fig.V

Here war is being personified to be a human being or warrior too, that enters a particular location. But despite that, the *Ogburos* are not scared of war, as they are always overcome.

The use and importance of simile literally abound in this praise poem. It is used in a panegyric presentation of the *Ogburo* lineage as he describes them thus:

<i>“Omo a tu dede bi aro Ilorin”</i>	<i>“The son of a person that dressed like the dyes of Ilorin”</i>
<i>Omo a fi toro gbaja</i>	<i>I am the son of a person that has footpath at the</i>

<i>Omo afija gboooo agbo</i>	<i>Roof-top like cat</i>
<i>Emi lomo ataja bi ologini</i>	<i>A person that has foot path at the rooftop like cat</i>

Fig.V

The above lines appraises and eulogies the character of the *Ogburos*.

Allusion is a short reference to a famous person or event. The poet constantly makes use of this over and over. The poet alludes the *Ogburos* to a lot of great people in their society, thus;

Omo aji beku omo eweje ni ni *I am the son of Ajibekun, the son of Eweje*

Omo eweje nbe niran baba mi *The son of Eweje belongs to my father's*

Ancestors

Ae sa je mbe niran baba mi *The son of a person that has peace lives long*

Omo alaye more

Omo jawe gbogbo sogun

The son of a person whose charms always answer

Fig.V

This allusion also expands the appraisal and character of the *Ogburos*. It does not necessarily mean that they are the “son of Eweje” but alluding them to Eweje whose charms always answer shows that the *Ogburos* have the same quality as *Eweje*.

It was on October 15, 2013 at one of these celebrations, which took place at the homestead of the Chief Angolo section of the Alamo, that we recorded songs and praise poem. The researcher was immediately struck by the fact that the praise poetry of each of the young men was in Northern area of Ado Ekiti. The system of praising in the context of Agoo is clearly an adopted one. This probably also applies to many aspects of the ritual itself; in fact, the very name Agoo is derived from the word Agoo Aduloju.

It is therefore not surprising that all the young men's praises have almost the same number of lines and make use of the same or similar motifs. We recorded the words of nine young men as they were praising themselves. Here is one example:

<i>Emi loun fun omi ara mu Agoo</i>	Where does it flee to?
<i>Ni bo lo sa lo?</i>	It flees downwards to Agoo
<i>O ododo Lan gbododo Agoo</i>	Agoo, they have gone to destroy
<i>Won lo da gun ro ni Agoo</i>	
<i>Won ti lo ja gun kiriji ati gbomo le oh gbaja</i>	They have gone to engage in the war of the Kiriji
<i>Loju ogun oun re okun inu</i>	On the way I went to wrench
<i>Igbe odo o mi</i>	My horn of being a young man.
<i>Igbe rara, ni igbe efon ni gbo</i>	A bull bellowed, a ram's horn was heard
<i>Won ni: kin se ti agbo, tin se tonlongo-tonlongo</i>	They said: it is not a ram's horn, it is a ting ting
<i>Awa okunrin ni fohan fere</i>	The flutes blown by us men.
<i>Emi ni Ogbogbonioron</i>	I am Ogbogbonioron
<i>Pelu igbee oloola iju ti ki sha</i>	With the horn
<i>Emi ni pa ni owe</i>	I control the idiom n of a rhinoceros I do not stab.
<i>Emi ni gbe oun tin se ti baba nla mi</i>	I am carrying that which belongs to my grandfather
<i>Ti se ooja agba pupa</i>	That which has red belts
<i>Emi kin fi pa, emi ni pa owe</i>	I don't shoot with it, I control the idioms.
<i>Eta erin ni ibon ologun</i>	It is a three-four the rifle of the soldiers
<i>Yin yin ni bi won won tin un sun gere</i>	They shoot while they advance slowly.
<i>Emi kin pa inaki pelu re</i>	I do not shoot a barbarian with it
<i>Pelu e emi yan... [inaudible]</i>	With it I shoot ...

Fig.V

These praise poems are an interesting blend of repeated and unique motifs. In all lines of the poem the young men are keen to identify themselves by means of a name or names; these could be called personal eulogies (lines1-3). In more than one poem there is reference to the cow-

milking motif that occurs here at the beginning. Another common element is circumcision or the obtaining of manhood via the metaphorical phrase “horn of manhood.” Connected to this motif is the assertion that it is not a ram’s horn as well as the identification of what appears to be a musical instrument the “ting-ting.” The motif of the rhino horn is important in these poems, since it refers to manhood and sexual knowledge. In a few of the poems the phrase “I am *Ogbogbonioran*” occurs, perhaps referring to the evening star with which the young men become so familiar as they spend many clear winter nights out in the open grass. The motifs of the red belts (war attire line 16) and the controlling of the idioms (line 17) also recur. The latter is another important constituent because it indexes the initiates’ newly acquired verbal authority, for instance their ability to partake in adult discussions.

The young men clearly learn these praises by heart while they are in the hills. Uniqueness consists of the individual’s name in the poem together with a few unusual lines or phrases. The problem with these copied versions is not so much their similarity, since all praise poetry shares a certain linguistic likeness, but the fact that even action motifs are copied, thus giving the impression that the speakers’ forebears actually participated in certain actions, such as a “*Kiriji*” war (line 6). Nonetheless, the performances have a role in illustrating the range of values of Ado-Ekiti Praise poetry.

A lot of information about the Yoruba traditional society’s ideology is also contained in character sketches of individuals in *Alamo* art. The individuals whose character sketches occur in the particular art include the *Alamo* artists and members of their immediate audience. The excerpt below is from the repertoire of the Idere group. It was meant as an introductory bit in a particular performance.

Adeyanju: Emi Oladapo Olopo-ese-ti-n-jo

I, Oladapo surrounded by many dancing legs.

Emi Oladapo Omo-o-see-fibinobi

I, Oladapo, it-is-not-possible-to-beget-a-child-at-will

<i>Oladapo Ajinyobiogo</i>	He-who-daily-grows-taller-like-a-palm-frond
<i>Omoo ya Oloti</i>	A son of the woman who sells guinea-corn liquor.
<i>Oladapo eni a biire</i>	Oladapo, a person of noble parentage
<i>Eeyen gbogbo lo mole:</i>	All human beings know a thief:
<i>Eeyen meloo l'ol e o mo n'le aye yi?</i>	How many people will a thief know in this life?

Fig .V

Mr. Adeyanju Oladapo introduces himself as a tall lanky person; a versatile songster usually surrounded by many competent *Alamo* dancers on occasion of formal stage performances of the poetic activity; a son cherished by his mother who is a hard-working, popular local guinea corn-liquor-seller; a person whose parents, are morally upright (noble); a person one of whose nicknames is a pointer to the Yoruba belief that child-birth depends on divine providence and a popular songster who, though known by many people in the locality, does not and cannot in return know all the people. This last point of self-introduction made in lines 6 and 7 of the excerpt, has a moral overtone. The idea is that the average Yoruba man should guard his (good) conduct jealously because many people are watching his every step and behaviour.

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CHAPTER FOUR

LITERARINESS OF ADO-EKITI PRAISE POETRY

4.0 Introduction

Yoruba oral poetry can conveniently be divided into two broad categories in terms of its geographical spread. The field of traditional praise poetry in Africa has been widened and the scope of communication promoted through literary devices. For example, independent forms of performances are accommodated in the body of core traditional role.

4.1 Form and Style

A form of the different praises mentioned so far reveal how similar they are in terms of formal conventions. Invariably, the characteristics and deeds of the subject are clothed in metaphor, the expression that rules supreme in the praise poem. These metaphors range from relatively simple equation (expressed in a single noun) to extensive syntactical and multiple semantic layering. The nature and extensive use of metaphor is the result of praise poetry's peculiar reference system, as Barber (1999:29-30) has shown: "the conventions of the genre require or encourage various kinds of oblique, opaque or far-fetched attachment of meaning. It is as if composers and listeners are playing a game of signification, in which meanings are generated, secreted, and withheld or retrieved according to definite and specialised conventions, and where access to these meanings may be highly restricted, filtered or layered." This way of referring to people, events, and places has strong bearing on how praise poetry deals with history that is vital in the study of the genre.

Forms equivalence (repetition), although less in evidence than metaphor and other figure of speech, rhythmically punctuates the excitement created by the action motifs. Repetitions are found in sounds and syllables, verb and noun stems (commonly called linking), complete words

and phrases, grammatical and semantic structure (referred to as parallelism), and the recurrence of popular action motifs, which are shared even across different languages. There are, of course, many other poetic devices, such as the manipulation of grammar, direct address, and so forth. But the fact that Ado-Ekiti praise poetry makes use of similar devices does not mean that different traditions' ways of remembering the subject are the same.

It is the appreciation of the beauty as well as the ugly in all parts of life including the arts. It comprises of what is good and bad in any work of arts. Among other aesthetics in the praise poetry performance includes: Drums, Dance, Music, Costumes, Languages, Audience and so on. The different types of musical instruments used during the performance such as *fere, bata, dundun, gangan, bembe*, and (beaten by the drummers), most especially the drums were be use to praise or warn. Drums are powerful means of communication during the praise songs. It is the drums that reflect the mood of the chanters. The drums are beaten to the praise of *Ewis*, and other warriors for their numerous achievements. During the performance, the *Ayan* (drummer) plays the dundun drums, while the *Oriki* chanters accompany them with their chants and praise songs. The *Ayan* drummers invoke the spirit of the past *Ewis* and her orisa by playing the drums accordingly. As the drums are beaten to the rhythm of these songs, the women, children and men begin to dance to the rhythm of the drum beat.

Generally, drums accompany praise songs to which the populace dance to the drums are used during all the activities that make up the performance. These drums beats says different meaning during the praise poetry like praising the *Ewi* (the king), the entire people of Ado-Ekiti and the drums have different types like *gangan, duru, bembe, bata*, with different drummers.

Costumes make any festival colourful. The performance of Ado-Ekiti praise poetry is apparent in the array of colours. The *Ewi* and other high chiefs, chanters and singers are dressed in different

colourful attire, which symbolises diversity and the authority of Ado-Ekiti. They also have their hair plaited in styles that identify them especially the women. The king's wives are dressed in *Aso-ofi* and beads. They also have their hair plated, while the Ewi dresses in *Agbada* made with *Aso ofi*. He also has beads around his neck and wrists. He wears the ancestral crown, which he wears only once in a year and that is on the performance day of the festival, with the *opa oba*, which he has in his hand. The Ewi-in-council dressed in a white linen gown, covered with an upper golden *aso ofi*. They wear beautiful beads and their face beautifully made up. The different display of attires by the different group and their different colours add to the beauty of the festival. The impact of these attires is to show different groups with different performance in the festival.

4.2 Language as aesthetics in Ado-Ekiti praise poetry

To study the aesthetics of Ado-Ekiti praise poetry as a marker of identity without examining the use of language of the chant would be an incomplete job. In Ekiti poetry, language is used figuratively. Among the figurative expressions used in the genre are parallelism, simile, metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, oxymoron and repetition. Metaphor is effectively used in the poetry to make direct comparisons between human and non-human beings. An example of this is seen in Madam Abeke Oyemefun excerpt; which was performed at her resident at Odo-Ado in Ado-Ekiti on 29th November 2013.

<i>Efinrinni won</i>	They are Efinrin
<i>Beniyan o baja won</i>	If they are not plucked
<i>Won ko je run</i>	They will never smell.

Fig.III

The character being discussed here are said to be dangerous, but never harmful except they are humiliated. They are as contaminating as the smell of ‘*Efinrin*’ leaf. Another example of metaphor is seen where the chanter is referring to her father’s physical feature illustrated in Madam Abeke Oyemefun’s performance.

<i>Agoro ni baba mi</i>	My father is an ‘ <i>agoro</i> ’
<i>Iporo kii fomo re bi kete</i>	<i>Iporo</i> never give birth to an <i>Ikete</i>

Fig.III

Agoro and *ikete* express opposite meanings lofty and short respectively. The chanter indirectly puts the characteristic of the tallness in her father. A lot of examples of personification abound in Ado-Ekiti praise poetry. An example is seen where the chief Elemure Ogunyemi at his resident on 27th October 2013 tries to describe the sea as a living being:

Bi e ba lo s’Ado o lese Ogbese If you go to Ado at the feet of the *Ogbese*.

Fig.VI

The ‘river side’ is the term personified as a ‘sea feet’ here to show the closeness of the city of Ado to the river. Another example of personification used by him is found in the following verse:

<i>Igba Ibanuje maso korun wole kiri</i>	When sorrow dresses up and goes from house to house
<i>Ba ni ayo n maso korun wole kiri</i>	So joy dresses up and goes from house to house

Fig.VII

Sorrow and joy are addressed in the above as if they are living beings who can dress in clothes and go visit from one place to another. The above is used to describe a crisis situation in history. However, at the end, the joy overcomes sorrow.

Simile is used mostly to give an indirect comparison of non- human being with human being. An example from Madam Abeke Oyemefun excerpt: on 29th November 2013.

Okunrin faka fiki bii baba A man as tall as 'guinea corn

Fig.III

The tallness of the man being addressed is compared with that of guinea corn stem. This shows the fact that the man is almost a giant. Simile is also used by her in the following example:

Omo areru bi eni rogi The son of he that buys slaves Like pap is bought.

Fig.VII

Pap' is a type of a common light food made of corn that is taken in the morning among the Yoruba. So, the frequency with which the father of the person addressed bought slaves is compared with the frequency with which pap is bought. Synecdoche and Onomatopoeia are another figurative expressions used. Examples of the two are shown from *Idere* group excerpt: on 4th November 2013 at Agoos Aduloju (suburb of Ado-Ekiti)

Ojo oyinbo gba oju sanma koja lo kora

The day the Whiteman passed through

Ojo ni ojo na

Our farm was a memorable day

Igba a lu-pu-pu yo loju sanma

The helicopter appeared on the sky

Ibanuje kan eni komo kan

The unconcerned were also sorrowful.

Fig.III

From the above 'alu-pu-pu' represents the sound of the helicopter, which is onomatopoeic, representing the sounds of the helicopter's blades. On the other hand, the same 'alu-pu-pu' is an example of metonymy because the word represents the helicopter itself, apart (the sound of a helicopter) representing the whole.

Repetition is a very important figurative expression common found in all Ekiti praise poetry. It takes place in every song that comes up in the chant. These songs are repeated as refrains to reveal the beauty of the chant. Examples are:

Orun dedeko de le *Orundede* ' makes the ground soft
Orun dedeko dele Feni tiku o *Orundede* make the ground soft for the dead.

Fig.III

In the above, the term '*orundede*' is used to represent God. It is also an example of metonymy. It addresses God to allow the dead person to have peace in heaven.

4.3 Functions of Ekiti praise poetry

Praise poetry's function is largely determined by the context and situation in which it is performed. Clan poetry performed at weddings and praises in the context of divining are clearly more mediatory in that they serve to make a connection with the ancestors. Poetry extolling chiefs or kings and political figures may range from serving as a "traditional" means of propaganda to offering highly critical remarks. Essentially though, praise poetry seeks to individualize, that is, to set the individual apart from all others, to build and maintain his or her austere character and position.

Whatever the case, audiences enjoy it immensely, so that the functions of entertainment and education (in the sense of inculcating the conventions of the genre) must not be underestimated. Vail and White strongly argue that oral poetry is driven by what they call poetic license: "the convention that poetic expression is privileged expression, the performer being free to express opinions that would otherwise be in breach of other social conventions" (1991:319). Accordingly, they contend, this aesthetic should form the bedrock of a poetics for oral poetry.

4.4 Attitude of the people towards Ado-Ekiti praise poetry

The traditions of praising that have attracted the most attention by far are Yoruba, and not without reason; this language boasts the most speakers, and praising is correspondingly the most diversified and developed in these traditions. Apart from the fact that language other than Yoruba has been more thoroughly studied, (i.e) Linguistic theatrical the genre of praising has also attracted the attention of scholars in other departments, and with it diverse critical questions have been applied to the practice of praising poetry.

An individual can thus be the beneficiary of more than one kind of praise poem. In the past it was quite common for Ekiti mothers to compose *orin aremo/ oriki omo* for a child after its birth. *Oriki omo* is “praise poetry” in the sense that it is composed for a specific child but actually provides an opportunity for the mother to lament aspects of her married life and to talk the circumstances of the child’s birth. As a child grows he or she may acquire praise names for certain achievements; these names form the basis of the praise poem. The most common reason is the proclaiming of the individual’s uniqueness, regardless of what feature makes that individual unique.

In a literary studies of this nature, particularly using a functionalist analysis, the focus of study is not the language per se, though language constitutes the vehicle through which aspectual abstraction are realized and conveyed. The people are more concerned with the dialectal process, that is, the form or experiential use of language with special attention on aesthetics and contextual elements of the traditional oral poetry combined to achieve various levels of meaning in relation to the praise cum heroic poetry of Ado-Ekiti.

Ado Ekiti praise poetry is essentially an oral poetry, and for the essence of this type of poetry to be captured, it is better experienced in real live performance than read. The impact of Praise

poetry here is more of a positive one rather than negative, as part of promoting culture and tourism in Yoruba land. This art work is performed at various festivals and exhibitions for visitors to buy as souvenirs. When these are sold out, the receiving end tries to modify and reproduce them while the originating end also tries to improve on the performance.

Praise poetry has always been an important part of Yoruba culture and is used different at occasions such as religious festivals, events and entertainments.

4.5 Social Significance of Ado-Ekiti Praise Poetry

Virtually all scholars who have studied African oral poetry come to more or less the same conclusion that this art form serves important roles. Singing for the sake of singing is not therefore a feature of an African artist. Equally, poetry for its own sake is not a feature of African poetry. Olajubu (1981) and Babalola (1981) discuss oral poetry in rituals. Among the *Yoruba*, for example, the devotees of *Ogun* use praise poetry to win his favours.

Before planting among the *Ekitis*, prayers and praises were offered through song and chants for the same reasons as the *ijala* performances among other *Yorubas*. The songs were also used as a form of thanksgiving to God and the ancestors for such blessings as bumper harvests, children and livestock. Praise poetry thus offers the worshippers an important channel to communicate with God through the ancestors. This can be compared or are similar to performances in other Ekiti communities.

Praise poetry among the *Ekitis* has also been considered as an important facility through which the different forces, contradictions, and fears in society can be seen. Through Smith's (1957) discussion of the *Hausa* praise singer, we are able to see that society is stratified into the rich and the poor. Further reading into the institution of the *Maroka* (praise singer) reveals the hypocrisy that exists in this society. The rich pay heavily - in fact - bribe the singers to sing about how

generous these rich people are whereas many of them are in fact selfish. Further evidence of the rich literally buying off the singers is revealed in Finnegan's (1970:93) description of the professional roving poets in Africa. These poets are normally silenced by elaborate gifts otherwise, their songs will consist of innuendo about the rich persons they have identified as their targets.

One of the significant of praise poetry in Ado Ekiti is to record history. This is especially so in Ado Ekiti old kingdom where the history of the kings, rich chiefs and any other leader with pretence to power was recorded and sung on special occasions such as the coronation of a chief, burial of a king or an important public gathering. On such occasions, the history might be exaggerated as a means of indoctrinating the people to respect and even fear the king and the dynasty.

Kabira and Mutahi (1988:10-41) while discussing the functions of praise poetry in a students' guide to oral literature based on the *Kikuyu* community of Kenya, see praise poetry as serving such functions as teaching, warning, informing, entertainment, promotion and transmission of culture and advising and training. Okpewho (1994), in a general textbook on African Literature, sees poetry as serving similar roles to those identified and discussed by Kabira and Mutahi. In an unpublished Ph. D. thesis on the oral literature of the *Zezeni* people of Zimbabwe, Mutswairo (1978) also identifies and discusses more or less the same significance of praise poem as those outlined above. There is therefore a general consensus that praise poetry serves important functions to its user and their communities.

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CHAPTER FIVE

5.0

CONCLUSION

The study is limited and is concerned with Ado-Ekiti Praise poetry and why it is going into extinction. This study is an attempt to contribute to the existing literature in Ado-Ekiti praise poetry. It is also to sensitize the people on how to preserve and see appreciate the continuity of Ado-Ekiti praise poetry. To be able to recommend the existing ones before they die out.

The classical and traditional Ado Ekiti praise poetry probably into extinction and these praise poetry are of high knowledgeable contribution to the continuation of customs, norms and traditions of Ado Ekiti people that should not be allowed to die. The documented praise poetry is a step forward for the preservation of culture of Ado Ekiti people. The elites and academicians

are not taking interest in the cultural performance of Ado-Ekiti poetry. The elites who are even interested in the literature of the people in Nigeria, especially that of Ado Ekiti have neglected praise poetry. A study like this is an attempt to see how it can stimulate other researchers to take interest in preserving the Ado-Ekiti praise poetry. The Ado-Ekiti praise poetry is more than just mere ceremonial performance and entertaining guests; it must be documented in archives where people can have access its aesthetics values, linguistics and literay features always.

There are studies on praise poetry even though there is no particularly study in the area of interest of this course. However, this study has benefitted from information in historical documents provided by Professor Oloomola, a historian have been very helpful which paved the ways for gaining more information relevant to this study.

Conclusion

In discussing the oral poetry in Yoruba culture, the researcher have explored the ways in which praise poetry aesthetics function as tools of performance and as objects of religious worship and how performers act as intermediaries between spiritual forces and humans. Praise poetry function as a means of delineating the character of individual gods, of invoking their presence as well as of performing sacred. It also illustrates the ways in which musical performances are organized and mediated. There is need to preserve the beauty in the traditional past of Ado-Ekiti. Apart from the facts that the past generation may not forgive the present as a result of the great damages it has done to its literary past, it should be noted that a quick reactivation of the oral artistic past will be of great benefit to the present generation. An adage in Yoruba language says '*Odo to ba gbagbe orisun re, gbigbe lo n gbe*' (A river that forgets its fountain dries up). It has

also been recorded that a society that refuses to learn from its past will not be at the prime of the tower. The opinion of researcher is that research into Ado-Ekiti oral tradition, is a means through which the past historical, cultural and political information of the Ado Ekiti people has been transmitted, has been neglected by current the people. Finally, an investment into the artistic past of the people is a profitable venture. A further study of Ado-Ekiti poetry will be a great source of inspiration, particularly in the area of transmitting traditional knowledge and values to the people. The sound effect of its production, the tune of its performance and the didactic nature of its expression are great sources of academic, social, religious and political awareness. It should be noted that every aspect of Ado Ekiti praise poetry contains a lot from which we can learn. It is in the opinion of the researcher that more scholarship should be undertaken in the field of oral literature to unravel and discover Ado-Ekiti's creative potentials.

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Idere group member of Agoo Aduloju clan from Ado-Ekiti interviewed on the 4th of November, 2014

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APPENDICES

PRAISE POETRY FOR SUPREME BEING

Appendice1

Oni Ogbogbonioran tiko se se
Alara joko si orun

He is Ogbogbonioran the unshakeable,
Thunderer-while-sitting, son of *Orun*.

Eeye tin je eye keye

He is the bird that preys on other birds,

Ake tin sa akeke yio ku

The battle-axe that excels over other -axes.

Eni tin le omo Oba le re

He is the long-strided pursuer, son of *Oba*

Eni tin le oorun ati osupa

Who pursued the sun and the moon.

Eni ti dun bi oke nla

He is the great echo like the rocks of *Oke nla*

Nibo erin gbe eluju

Where elephants take shelter

Ni gba ti orun du

When the heavens frown. . . .

Iba ere o

I pay homage to Ere

Ere, mo juba o

Ere, I pay homage to you.

Bomode n kòrin

When a child is singing.

Aa juba ere o *He/she must pay homage to ere.*

Ere, mo juba *Ere I pay homage to you.*

Araagbo adamoyoyo *Fellow in the bush who is accompanied by plenty children.*

Mo pale *I've beautified the house.*

Mo sose *I've performed weekly ritual.*

Ma da mi loro *Don't harm me.*

Fomo mi fun mi *Give me my children.*

Praise poetry for Kings

Appendice 2

Alayeluwa Oba . . . *Your royal highness, the King . . .*

Oba Alayeluwa, iku- baba- yeye *The King, your royal highness, death-that-kills- The-
father-and-the-mother*

Alase, ikeji Òrisa, omo Ajiloru-ke-riri *The great authority, second in command to the deity.*
Omo oberiri-lookun *Who-already-like-a-king-had-an-abundance-of-everything,*
Omo Osupa- le- a- ni- o- gun *Adelabu, also known as,*
Eni owi e ba to o ko lo tun un se *Child of Aroloye, offspring of he who rises*
Omo Aroloye *in the middle of the night and radiates a great light*
Oba Ogun-eranko-ni-wo *The King who rides the animal on the horn*
Oba Ogun-efön-ni pataka idi *The King who rides leisurely on the buffalo's back*
Oba deeee! *Hail the Oba!*
Oba Afelegb'owo-olowo *The Oba He-who-gently-collects-other-persons'-money*
Oba deee! *Hail the Oba!*
Fig.IV

PRAISE POETRY FOR SOCIALITE

Appendice 3

Lánrewájú ọmọ Badmus, èniyàn *Lanrewaju the son of Badmus, a good man*
Lánrewájú ọmọ Badmus, èniyàn rere *Lánrewájú the son of Badmus, a very good man*
Lánrewájú oko ọmọlará, èniyàn *Lánrewájú, the husband of ọmọlara*
Baba Rótímí o se baba Dérémí, èniyàn *The father of Rotimi thank you, the father of Deremi*
Baba ọmọbólá, èniyàn *The father of ọmọbola*
Ọmọ Alhaja Mábolájé, èniyàn *The son of Alhaja Mobolaje*
Larry publicity ọmọ ni, èniyàn *Larry publicity such a nice man*

Lánrewájú ọmọ Badmus, ènìyàn rere
Awo Alákàá o sé oko Betty, ènìyàn
Lánrewájú ọmọ Badmus, ènìyàn rere
Baba Káyòdé mi ò awo Jayéolá, ènìyàn
Lánrewájú ọmọ Badmus, ènìyàn rere
N'lé yé onítèmi ni, ènìyàn
Lánrewájú ọmọ Badmus ènìyàn rere
Lánrewájú o, ọmọ Badmus mi
Lánrewájú ọmọ óloyè ní 'Bàdàn
Èdùmàrè má mà jé o sè ní sòro
Lanre Badmus mà bá e délé
Ọmọ olóyè, ọmọ Alhaja Mábolájé
Awo Alákàá, oko Betty Baba Káyòdé
Ọmọ olóyè ọmọ gbajúmò

Lanrewaju the son of Badmus, a very good man
 The friend of Alaka, thank you the husband of Betty
 Lanrewaju the son of Badmus, a good man
 The father of Kayode, friend of Jayeola,
 Lanrewaju the son of Badmus, a very good man
 How are you my bossom friend, goodman.
 Lanrewaju the son of Badmus, a very good man
 This is Lanrewaju the son of Badmus
 Lanrewaju the son of an Ibadan Chief
 God will not lay difficulty in your way
 Lanre Badmus I will follow you home
 The son of a chief, the son of Alhaja mabolaje
 Friend of Alaka husband of Betty, father of Kayode,
 The son of a chief, son of an eminent man.

PRAISE POETRY FOR ANIMATE OBJECT

Appendice 4

Aparo
Eni ti a o femo lowo re
Tó n gbana lowo eni
Abi-tete-npologun eru
Abi-janja-pologbon iwofa.
servants.

Bush fowl
 The one that we do not marry his daughter
 And he is receiving dowry from us
 The one with thighs that are inviting owner of twenty slaves
 The one pieces of meat that are inviting the owner of thirty

Etu Obeje
Elese osun
Aritete- gbon-on-ni
Eranko tii le tiroo
Eranko tii wa gonbo.

Antelope Obeje
The one who has legs painted red with camwood
The one who has thighs with which to touch the dew
The animal that put on eyelashes
The animal that wears gonbo tribal marks

Obo akaja lode
A-gbori-iti-pete-ika
A-gbori-iti-pète-èké
Ogboju Akítì tii gbàbon lowo ode
Eranko tii tan ode wogbe suasua.
Fig.

The Monkey that teaches the dog how to hunt
 The-one-who-schemes-evil-while on- tendrils
 The-one-who-schemes-lies-while on- tendrils
 The brave Akiti who seizes the gunfrom the hunter
 The animal who lures the hunterinto the thick forest.

Aja mi o!
Ajá ode
Ògemo- gerere

My dog!
 The hunter's dog
 The one that tears a child into pieces

Aja ode
Òsopaka-gbemi
Ògbale-gbarawe
Aja ode.

The hunter's dog
The one that picks it and swallows
The one who sweeps the floor with leaves
The hunter's dog.

PRAISE POETRY FOR INDIVIDUALS

Appendice 5

Emi loun fun omi ara mu Agoo
Ni bo lo sa lo?

O ododo Lan gbododo Agoo

Won lo da gun ro ni Agoo

Won ti lo ja gun kiriji ati gbomo le oh gbaja

Loju ogun oun re okun inu

Igbe odo o mi

Igbe rara, ni igbe efon ni gbo

Won ni: kin se ti agbo, tin se tonlongo-tonlongo

Awa okunrin ni fohan fere

Emi ni Ogbogbonioron

Pelu igbee oloola iju ti ki sha

Emi ni pa ni owe

Emi ni gbe oun tin se ti baba nla mi

Ti se ooja agba pupa

Emi kin fi pa, emi ni pa owe

Eta erin ni ibon ologun

Yin yin ni bi won won tin un sun gere

Emi kin pa inaki pelu re

Pelu e emi yan... [inaudible]

Where does it flee to?

It flees downwards to Agoo

Agoo Wa they have gone to destroy

They have gone to engage in the war of the Kiriji

On the way I went to wrench

My horn of being a young man

A bull bellowed, a ram's horn was heard

They said: it is not a ram's horn, it is a ting ting

The flutes blown by us men.

I am Ogbogbonioron

With the horn of a rhinoceros I do not stab

I control the idioms

I am carrying that which belongs to my grandfather

That which has red belts

I don't shoot with it, I control the idioms.

It is a three-four the rifle of the soldiers

They shoot while they advance slowly.

I do not shoot a barbarian with it

With it I shoot ...

E seun seun ooo Eku ere ooo

Bi mo ba to lona ife Mo mo ile wa

O dile olup nda olu

Omo Alekete ni jo

Omo ofalala joye mode

Eeyan to ba so lupo pele won a maa lowo

Olupo pele o

Eeyan to ba solupo pe le

Oluwa re aya re a niaa bimo

Ogidi asa ja omo Akanbi ilu

Kare omode yi Temi ba

No lona ibe hun Mo mo Re won

O pere omo owe
 O pere owo kan owe
 Omo Oyatinuke fi sawo
 Nile opere sa la to yan
 Oya bolupo ti aro ti fon
 Oya dolu oya tipe tipe rule eki
 Opere oya dolona oya pelemoje
 Oje lonike obinrin Sango egun nla
 O kare o o
 Omo ringbe, iya to jo irumole loju mi
 ina mani kooto joni
 O suuni baba awon ojo Se dada ke wa bi o
 Ala Agba oko ibidun
 Okare oga mi
 O seun ti o ba mi ki awon baba ini
 Ko tan sibe naa ni Oyatinuke oya ti e pe
 Nigbo eki ni opere oya dolose
 Oya pelemoje
 Opere on la pate aso
 Orun la pate ileke
 'Bebe idi la pate omo
 Oyadolu oya ti e nigbo eki ni
 Nijo ti oya ring ti iyawo oko re
 Rubo oju wa ni
 Hi - hun
 Oya lodabi kee keee keeee
 Oya to robi sala mi enu
 Oya ya nu to tooto to
 Yee yee ee ee
 Oya ooo
 Duro naa mo mbo wa
 Je ki gbale awon baba re to
 Alade agba oko ibidun
 Se bi o ti mo pemi foyanmu
 Alade igba gbede Akerengbe
 Nwa gbale awon baba mi to
 Mo mo ile wa
 Nijo ti oya nsunu
 Ti Sanngo oko re subo
 Ti Sanponna fnffii sile ti sanje
 Oju wa wonyi naa ni
 Mo mewe ta'ju to fi dami oya
 Kabo baba se o motan pupo
 Bee ni mo mewe taja to fi dami eeyi ki
 Ma ni bale baso enu welemu ni
 Ina je ijinle ho ho ni ragaji

Iya Sango oko oya
 Mo mewe ta'ja ti a fi dami Sonponna iku egba
 Omo dabogi dabo eeyan
 Mo mbo wa naa orin o gba be to ni
 Lanla orin mbe ninu
 Awon omo keekeke ni mo sa ko
 Agbo fori ede mbe lenu Ogundare
 Omo Foyanmu
 Ori dami joko lemi
 Mi o jo eni on nle kiri
 Ori mi dami joko
 Now seni on nle kiri
 Obinrin to waye to mori oko waye
 Dara ju eniti o dele aye ti yanko
 Bi obinrin ba dele aye ti yanko iya
 Lo nya
 Apon yan iya oni ohun ya iya
 Ngbo tala fun nisu meji ti o koyan
 Fun ni je
 Obinrin o je gbese kinu oko re odun
 Agan ma binu inu orogun re yoo dun si
 Won ni e inu re e
 Kii seeyan
 E mu re kii seeyan. Inu yara
 'lo wa. Bawo ni ki ti jise yin to bade
 Mo mbo wa naa. Ogbere
 O gbeere. Eeyan to ba gbeere
 Ako ole loja
 Alade Agba beni ri o bi wo rimi
 Bi abere lari sira wa
 Bi ipade ekanna si
 Reluwe ati oju. rin
 O da gege bi ipade oko laya loru
 Ni oju orun, ni oju onm
 A dupe Olorun yoo je kan rira pe
 N'lo sile wa naa
 Okeyemi ko je modo gbe
 Eeni sira ko da je modo gbe rau rau
 Alabi ajile a mba ra nija tele ni
 Sugbon korisa to soba ikato
 O ma reni to gidi soko
 A mbo wale a mbo wale
 Mo wa yale Oyatinuke
 Ti o re lekan
 Oyatinuke opere on la
 Pate aso

Orun la pate ileke
Bebe idi la pate omo bibi inusi
Oya dolosin baba mi
Oya tire nigbo ekini
Ogbere ina aga kii ku weewe
Oba ti o bi bi oya so won
Mo mo ka fun ara mi
Osa ti o bi bi oya ko wopo
Oya to ragan ragan

Ofo ni bee naa to
Gbogbo erin dinlogun oun ni
Iya ise fi to kagbo nitori omo
Ni wipe yunki yunki e ma yiimu mo
Moin moin moin o ni e ma maa maju mo
Jeeje jeeje niya ise fi foko re sile
E' wo n tete, ewo ni gele, file,
Wo ni tisale ma ge lageju
Gingoro robo to abulaya nitori omo oya
Oya to bi bi, oya to sinu ogao to bi si
Oya dolupo si oya to bi dudu
Lo bi pupa omo keji Ara isokun
Nwa gbale awon baba mi to
Oyatinuke oya tire ni gbo ekini
Ara mo nda ki e ma wo mi
Se nle san abi o san?

A dupe o, a dupe o
Alabi agba oko ibidunni
Aamu
Kii se dun mi o

Eduke e ma pe mi ni Daddy mo
M'o ti poruko da lona oko ni
Han-an
Mo ni ema pe mi ni Daddy mo

Mo ti poruko da lona oko ti mo to
Bawo le nje ni si yi baba
Emi ni kondoro ti fari

Fomo onijala ti mba se fari
Larin agbo to wa ile oba
Agbede gbeyo
Kondoro ti fari fomo onijal
Ti mba timi se fari larin agbo ni
Ajao Foyanmu Ogundare omo odo agba
Emi kodoro ti fari fomo onijal
Ti a ba dagbo ere ode Ajao if gbede
Mo wa mbo naa

Ogbgbo ara ni mo fi to

Aw tun niye kan oniyekan
 Yekan tani to ni?
 Oyatinuke oyatire nigbo ekini Ogberi oya ooogberi
 O gberi oya ooooo
 Heee Ogberi ara onaa
 ee ogberi oyatinuke
 Ogbere oya ti kankan
 Obinrin ti gbongbon fi gbongbon
 O oya mi Heee Heee
 Oya mi ewe iyeeeye
 Heee Hee oya mi o ooya mi
 Ewe iyeeeye
 Awa laya oya awe ooo
 Awa ma ma laya oya
 Awa ni la brin Olodumare o
 Oooya mi ooo
 Hee Hee ogba ogba
 Ewe Agba as
 Oya mi o o
 Ogbere Oyatinuke o pere ti
 Nigbo ekini wewe
 Oya tolupo taro ti fon
 Oya dolupo to ya tire nigbo ekini
 Eeyan to pe lode o ba oya to
 Oya ti jo oya ti to
 Eeyan ti o pegede oya ko boya mo
 Oya tinuke, oya ti ya tire nigbo ekini
 Alade mo soyandokele agba
 Now tun gbale baba iya mi to
 O da be
 La peri oga ni mi
 Omo moyosoro
 Omo moro sawo ko jule kokoko
 Edida ini folorigi
 Emi ledida ti ndari omo re tele
 Koto dori omo olomo
 Maa kin lehin so lele
 Won npe bi o solele ko solele
 Bi o solele eje o lu
 Akanbi Ade sewa nko
 Alabi Ade o ohun gbogbo lewa nko oo
 Alabi oga olohim adun
 Anperi Oga olohun adun
 Ase wo koju le kokoko
 Eji omo edida folorigi
 Edida ti nda ri omo re tele

A nto tori omo elomiran mokinlawo
 Solele to ba ti fe solele
 Eje ki o salele
 Affi chin ehin banron jo'lu
 O san pon kan ri katui le wa o
 Ojo oni kemi wa gbode baba milo
 Oni to ri gbon gbon
 Keni ma tode anperi wa
 Bi won o ba fun e ni ehu gudugbe
 Won a fun e ni eho tara
 Won fun Oluwa re ni kumo lorun kumo lorun
 Awon omo re pami ore land
 Ore mi ni kingbe igba itaja
 Mo re kese mo gbe tomo
 Mo gbe taeku boro gbale awon ewa
 Ore mi ni kid gbe gba itaya .
 Mo gbe ke se mo gbe gba awon
 Nno bu simi loju osolo
 Nile anperi oga ololiun edu.
 Omo aleju koko, kojule le
 Edida mekun olorigi

Mo ngbo eti mi o di

A mbooloro.edu omo abini koto seni
 Emi tun ni yekan oniyekan
 Ti a mba gbale moon baba mi
 Mo ti mo'le wa
 Awa ni yekan oniyekan omo aseyin oro
 Omo ebedi moko

Omo me roko, Omo mi rook

Omo mi sokonu gbarwnu gbaramu
 Omo mi sokonu jolo, o simi
 Omo mi re ra agogo
 Joloko o simi joloko o simi
 Eji omo edida
 Oni gbogbo elelun ni jogun o
 Erin lona oko
 Agba - gba Akinbala teelee agba

Alabi ekewa oo

Omo oba semi inbio o
 Omo'oba ki o mu lialia awa
 Omo oba semi ki o mu wo wo diwo oo
 Ki o nia ba naaja ile wa

Alabi Ogun, ogwi se nkan

Ogun jale Hausa ogun ja ogun
 O mo ibi kankan
 Ogun goke liti ogun o kuku swi to

Ni agbere ogun ni oilikaluku ngbe ho
 Ogun goke titi ogwi o kuku sumo
 Ogun ja ogwi o ku
 Ogun dori agada oloju merindinlogun
 Ogun to re subu mego
 Ogun si iltego titi
 Ogun o le gbagada to lowo won
 Ogun gbodo we to oya igbale ijesa
 Ogun jaja jesa abeni
 Ogun to gege, ijesa abeni ouile obi
 Ogun gbailii, ogun san
 Now tctc lc jogun laaro
 Ogun oloti owo tuiludagba
 Awa lomo Adckoro, Adetoun
 Afewa konli sopo loja
 Emi lomo orogun do oiri yooyo
 Omo ale kanike wole tibon tibon
 Oino orogun do ogiri yooyo
 Omo a tu dede bi aro llorin
 Ki foya
 Mo No le wa lado
 Omo odere ascyin oro
 Elerun ni baun
 Kinni owl sese nibo ara bo ni
 Enu kiro rcltiwe emi itan
 Orin sese nti ile ife ibo
 Ni tun foyatimu
 Awa fun niyekan oniyekan ye kan
 Iyekan oguro tun niwa elefon aye
 Ologburti onio ayawe so loiuko iyekan mi
 Ekuro lalabaku okete.
 Omo pangala pongolo
 Ono nkan we we we teti aja bole
 Omo Sangolade
 Omi ti o ba somo ekun yoo somo eyolo
 Ti o ba somo eyolo omo amotekun ni
 Omo afi toro gbaja
 Omo afija gbooo agbo
 Emi lomo ataja bi ologini
 Ato para bi omo yauni
 Omo aji beku omo eweje ni ni
 Omo eweje nbe niran baba mi
 Ae sa je mbe niran baba mi
 Omo alaye more
 Omo jawe gbogbo sogun
 Omo ewe maa je o.

Ogun maa je omo ajisa .
 Emi ba ni ewe ile oni je opa
 Ni o pa iran baba re gbogbo
 Ouio ekun aaye
 Eni lomo olode okuta
 Awa lomo a ba Sanngo je
 Awa lomo to wcku fun sonponna
 Sika
 Kekere ologburo e ku be kun

Egbe: Agba oo gburo e ku bekun
Ogundare: Kekere ologburo e kubikun
Egbe: Agba ogburo e ku be kun
 Ile eni pe wa larin

Hobi a wale yin
 Ile eni pe wa lace

Egbe: Ile enipe wa lalo
Ogundare: Hobi a wale yin
Egbe: Ile enipe wa la lo
Ogundare: Segan Segan o se baa gbo ko
Egbe: Ko maa ro kii ninu won
Ogundare: A seke eniyan oju ti o
Egbe: Ko maa ro ki i ninu won
Ogundare: Egba de ororo o o
Egbe: Egba de ororo o o o
Ogundare: Omo mi roko
Egbe: E bade ororo
Ogundare: Omo me rook
Egbe: Eba de ororo
Ogundare: Omo mi sokonu, sande
Egbe: Eba de ororo
Ogundare: Emi lomo elehin nijogun
 Erin lona oko
Egbe: E ba de ororo ooo
Ogundare: Semi ki mbio
Egbe: E ba de ororo ooo
Ogundare: Won ki wa semi oo
Egbe: Eba de ororo oo
Ogundare: Semi ki o maa ba naa ja ile wa
Egbe: Eba de ororo ooo
Ogundare: Ile mi to da awodi oro
Egbe: Eba de Oloro ooo
Ogundare: Awodi ti o ra lojo ale
Egbe: Eba de olooro ooo
Ogundare: Tolora loni e bo la fise
Egbe: Eba de ororo ooo
Ogundare: Emi lomo pakasalufe lodo oo

Egbe: *E ba de oloro*
Ogundare: *Omo alomi loke abodo ti ntin*
Egbe: *Eba de olooro*
Ogundare: *Se on omi rile abi kori*
Orisa kekere Joke odo
Egbe: *Orisa kekere loke odo*

Translation

Thank you, thank you
 Greetings to the performers
 When I am about to go to Ife
 I know our home
 The son of Ofalala that won hunters chieftaincy title
 It is the home of Olupomalaolu
 The son of Alekete nijo
 A person that greets Olupo, he will become rich
 Olupo I salute o
 Whoever salute Olupo
 The person, his wife will give birth
 A respectful leader, the son of Akanbi ilu
 I am very pleased my child
 If I am going on that side
 I know my home
 Opere the son of owe
 Opere's one hand of owe
 Is the one that the son of Oyatinuke uses to divine
 You came from Opere family
 Oya gave birth to Olupo with both body and intestine
 Oya has become lawyer, Oya has been long in
 existence in the home of Eki
 Opere Oya and master of the road aya Pelemoje
 Ojelonike the wife of Sango, the biggest masquerade
 Good goes on
 The son of Rimigbe, the mother that resemble oracle
 in my sight
 Fire that chokes before burning
 Osuuni the father of the rain
 Are you in peace?
 Alake agba oko Ibidun
 it is good my master
 Thanks for praising my father
 It does not end there, Oyatinuke, Oyatiepe
 At the forest of Eki
 Opere the master of the road Oyapelemoje

Opere, it is on the head that we displayed the ware of the cloth
 It is on the neck that we displayed beads
 It is on the bottom that we displayed children
 Oyadolu that gets his Oya from the forest of Eki
 On the day Oya divined for her step wife
 That her co-wife should sacrifice
 I was there
 Hun? (Onomatopoeia)
 Oya divines with small, small kolanut
 Oya divines with big, big kolanut
 Oya opens her mouth so wide
 Yee ee ee
 Oya o o o
 Stop for meanwhile I am coming
 Let me go to your father's house
 Alade agba the husband of Ibidun
 Haven't you know me that I am Foyanmu
 Alade agba sharps like gourd
 I am heading towards my father's house
 I know our house
 On the day that Oya was not in a good mood
 When Sango her husband was maintaining his gun
 When Sonponna left me behind to look for food
 I was there
 I know the leave that we cut to treat Oya
 Welcome, welcome you knew histories
 It was also the truth that I know the leave that we cut
 for treatment of Eeyi ki
 That Bale of Baso whose mouth is so smooth
 The fire that bunt with heavy flame
 The mother of Sango, husband of Oya
 I know the leave that we use for creation of
 Sonponna, the death of Egba
 The son of who fight the trees as well as human
 begins
 I am corning, my song did not follow that path
 Powerful songs are inside me
 It is the young ones that often boast of songs
 Philosophical songs are within me the son of
 Ogundare
 The son of Fayanmu

Ori has made me to sit down
 I did not resemble those that ori are pursuing
 Ori has made me to sit down

A woman who has come to this world without the luck of a husband
Is better than those who came and choose for themselves
When a woman comes to this world to choose a husband, it is a choice suffering
A bachelor chooses suffering, he said he chooses mother
Who will a person give two tubers of yam without being reciprocated with pounded yam
A woman who is a creditor has invited the wrath of her husband
A barren woman should not vex, your co-wife is pleased with your bareness
He asked them to chase
That you are not human

She is inside her room
How should I deliver your message when she comes
I am coming. Ogbere

Adade agba it is the truth, I can say otherwise We are needle to each other
Like nails to its finger
The train and its railway
It is just like the meeting of a man and his wife
At bed time.

I am heading towards Oyatinuke

She says yin ki yin ki (Onomatopoeia)

Moin, moin, moin. Don't pull your eyes
 Gently, gently the mother of Ise leaves her husband
 What do lips what do caps what do head wear
 What do those below, and those over do
 Gungoro robo because of the daughter of Oya
 Oya bore so many, she enters forest to born
 Oyadolupo, Oya bore whites
 Oya bore black the son of Ileyi
 The lineage of Isokan
 I am heading to my father's home
 Oyatinuke Oya that inherits its own from the forest of
 Eki
 I am performing it is better you look at me
 Are you well at home or not
 We thank God, we thank God
 Alade agba the husband of Ibidun
 Sir
 It doesn't pain me
 Keep silent, stop calling me daddy
 I have changed my name on the way to my farm
 Ha a a
 I have said you should not call me daddy again
 I have charged my name on the way to my farm
 What is your new name?
 I am now Kondoro that barbs
 For the sons of Ijala performers that stand proud before us
 When we are at performance of verbal arts
 Kondoro that barbs for the son of ijala performers,
 that behaves arrogantly at a performance
 Ajao Foyanmu Ogundare the son of the elder
 I am Kondori that barbs for tire son of ijala performers
 When we are performing ijala entertainment

Ajao Ifa diviner

I am coming

All my clan I am coming

We still belong to another lineage

Whose lineage?

Oyatinuke Oyatire in the forest of Eki

Ogberi oya ooo

Ogberi the lineage of the road

Ogberi oya the shower

The woman that is so heavy, so heavy

My Oya Hee Hee

My Oya the leave of iyeeeye

Hee my Oya my Oya o

The leave of iyeeeye .

Ogberioya oo

Here ogberi Oyatinuke

We are the dog of Oya our fellow oo
We are die dog of Oya
We are the representative of Olodumare o
My Ooya o o o
Here the wisdom of the elders

The leaves of Elder
My Oya ooo
Ogbere Oyatinuke opere
From the forest of Ekini
Oya that has become Olupo with both body and intestine
Oya that has become Olupo from the forest of Ekini
Those that over stayed out-door did not meet Oya
Oya has danced, Oya has gone
Those that will chant Oya
Incantatory poetry did not meet her
Oyatinuke Oya has taken from the forest of Ekini
Alade I have taken that one as an elders' morsel.
You eat it long
I want to go to my maternal home
It's good
Anperi the master
The son that belongs to the cult and perform
Divination for bravery
I am Edida Folorigi
Am the Edida that control his children before
Before he controls other children
Come behind me as my accompanist
They said if you want to become my accompanist be
my accompanist
If you don't want to become accompanist beat your drum
Akanbi Adesewa?
Alabi Ade of the golden voice
Alabi the master, the golden voice
The diviner with frank eyes
Eji the son of Edida Folorigi
Edida that controls his children before
Talkless of other children, Mokinlawo
Be an accompanist if you want to be
Let him be an accompanist
The person that dances backward to the rhythm of the drum
When the sun is high in the sky it's time you came
Today I am heading to my father's compound
In the thick death of right
No one should pass in front of Anperi's home
If they did not afflict you with elephantiasis
They will give you imbecility

They will give you epilepsy, epilepsy
The son of friends that kill and save
My friend asked me to take trading ware
I moved quickly and took that of children
I took longevity passed the home of beauty
My friend asked me to take trading ware

I moved quickly and took skin mat
They poured into my eyes Osolo
In the home of Anperi the master of golden voice
The son of a person who frowns his eyes and frowns
the face
Edida meku Olorigi

I hear am not deaf
We are coming to Oloro edu the son of a person
That asks before offending
I also belong to another lineage
When I am going to my ancestors' home
I have known our home
We are the lineage of another lineage the son of
Aseyin Oro
The son of Ebedimoko
The son of a person that has hoe
The son of a person that has hoe
The son of a person that lost his hoes at large
My son lost hoes to allow the grinding stone rest
My son has gone to buy bell
Let the owner of the hoe rest, let the owner of the hoe rest
Eji the son of Edida
He said that all that have teeth will inherit
Laughter at the way to the farm
The elder gets Akinbala to follow them

Alabi Elewa oo

The son of a king that asks before taking offence
The prince that is faithful to its divination
The prince that takes offence very reluctantly (Onomatopoeia)
So that you will not trade in front of our home

Alabi ogun, war has done havoc

War was waged against Hausa, war was waged
War does not know any particular place
War was waged at mountain top, war did not sleep
It was the cry of war that everybody was hearing
War was waged at mountain top, war did not sleep
War, war waged without any ending in sight
War entered Agada that has sixteen eyes
War was waged heavily
War was waged for long

But the war could not carry away Agada
 War entered the river of Oya, it entered Ijesa land
 War was waged against Ijesa Abeni
 War was waged against Ijebu Abeni the land that
 grows kolanuts
 War, help me war, reward me
 I could not war in the morning
 The war of the drunkard
 We are the sons of Adekoro, Adetoun
 That uses beauty to attract water into its pocket
 The son of a person that chases Kanike with gun
 I am the son of a person who is having sex with the
 wall during the war
 The son of a person that is having sex with war during the war
 The son of a person that dressed like the dyes of Ilorin
 There is no fear
 I am going to my ancestors' Home at Ado
 The son of Odere Aseyin Oro
 That one has come to an end
 I am just coming in with my chants
 Noise could not disturb train, the mouth of history
 Songs are just coming from Ife
 For Fayanmu
 We also belong to a lineage, another lineage
 The lineage of Ogburo that is gentle like Elephant
 Ogburo that names different leaves
 My lineage
 Palm kernel is the eternal friend of the rat
 The son of Pangala pongolo
 The son of Sangolade
 It says if it is not the son of a lion,
 it is the son of Buffalo
 If it is the son of Buffalo, it is not the son of a lion
 The son of Afitoro gbaja
 The son of a warrior that took a ram away
 I am the son of a person that has footpath at the
 Roof-top like cat
 A person that has foot path at the rooftop like cat
 I am the son of Ajibekun, the son of Eweje
 The son of Eweje belongs to my father's ancestors
 The son of a person that has peace lives long
 The son of a person that has peace lives for medicine
 The son of a person whose charms always answer
 Magi continues to answer the son of oracle
 Whoever says the leaves will not work epa
 Will kill the ancestor of such a family

The son of a person that catches a life lion
 I am the son of Olodeokuta
 We are the son of those who eat with Sango
 We are the son of those who dress for Sonponna
 To corrunit havoc
 Young ones of Ogburo I salute
Chorus Elders of Ogburo I salute o
Ogundare Young ones of Ogburo I salute
Chorus Elders of Oguro I salute
Ogundare It is only in the house of a person that invited us
 We did not enter into another house
Chorus It is only the house of a person that invited us that we
 Went
Ogundare Rumour mongers we did not come to your house
Chorus It should pain you heartily
Ogundare The hypocrites you are disappointed
Chorus It should pain you
Ogundare Egba has come Oloro
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare My son has hoe
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare My son has hoe
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare My son lost his hoe
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare I am the son of a person that has teeth that is destined
 to inherit laughter on the way to the farm
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare Offend me and let me know
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Chorus They said you shouldn't offend me
Ogundare Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare If you offend me you will not trade at our home
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare It is the turn of my home, the house of speech
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare The king of speech that bought in the evening
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare That trade in the thick night
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare I am the son of Pakasalufe lodo
Chorus Egba has come Oloro
Ogundare I am the son of a person that has water at banks

Chorus
Ogundare
Chorus

Egba has come Oloro
Have you seen the water or not, the oracle at the river bank
The smallest oracle at the river banks.

GLOSSARY

Abaluleado	First settler
Akodi	Court yard
Egungun	Masquerade
Oba	King
Kiriji	War
Opa-Ase	Staff of Office
Orisa-Oke	Supreme Being
Iyemole	Female
Ajinyobiogo	New palmfront
Ogbogbonioran	Old Deity
Okunrin	Men
Ekitiparapo	Ekiti United
Okiti	Rolling Hill
Alamo	Praise Song
Igbo-Amo	Amo Groove
Agoo Aduloju	Farm Settlement

Agoro	Tall
Iporo	Short
Ogbese	River Ogbaese
Etado	Festival
Udiroko	Festival
Bafun	Chieftain
Ewi	King of Ado-Ekiti
Oguro	Palm wine