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## PORTRAIT OF YORÙBÁ AESTHETICS IN SAHEED ÒŞÙPÁ'S FÚJÌ MUSIC

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### Abstract

*This paper examines how the subject of Yoruba aesthetics is constructed in the performance and works of Saheed Osupa, a prominent fuji music exponent in Nigeria. The study adopted discographic research approach and used purposive sampling technique to select Omoge, a track on Osupa's music album entitled Reliable. Recorded materials were transcribed and subjected to thematic and structural analyses. Ambivalences of postcolonial cultural production expressed in Omoge are marked ways by which Saheed Osupa's desire and clamour for character of beauty: a notable canon of Yoruba aesthetics are constructed. Textual analysis reveals a form of antinomy as signified by the way the musician tend to place a greater emphasis on dressing and artificial beauty than paying attention to a lady's good character, which is a more culturally acceptable inner form of beauty. Musical elements in Osupa's works undulate between its through-composed formal structures to repetitiveness as a prominent compositional device. The paper stresses the futility in trying to separate the subject of beauty from other well established virtuous attributes which the Yoruba hold so dear.*

**Keywords:** Yorùbá aesthetics, Saheed Osupa, Nigerian popular music, Fuji works, Ọmọ̀lúàbí

### 1 Introduction

The Nigerian Popular Music (NPM) is that category of music which appeals to a wide range of audience of different socio-economic backgrounds. Its listeners often experience this brand of music either as live performances in night clubs, beer parlours, palm wine joints and at social celebrations or as recordings on various technical media platforms, including the radio, television, cassette/CD players, Ipods and MP3 and MP4 (Adedeji, 2011 and Omojola, 2014). Examples of NPM genres are highlife, reggae, *waka*, *apala*, afrobeat, *sakara*, *juju*, hip-hop, *fuji* and so forth. *Fuji* music is commonly found among Yorùbá Muslims of Southwestern Nigeria. It was historically identified as an offshoot of certain Islamic bands invented by youngsters and endorsed by adult religious leaders for effective observance of Ramadan (Olaoluwa, 2011 and Omojola, 2014).

The common adage: 'beauty lies in the eye of the beholder', is a testimony of the relativity of the notion of aesthetic. African aesthetics has been described as a process of evaluating and interpreting art works predominantly from the African worldviews (Kofoworola, 2004:8). Various cultures have specific terms by which they describe or capture the essence of the term beauty. For instance, among the Acholi of Kenya, there are terms like *ber* which connotes good (P'Bitek, 1986). Similarly, the Yoruba also have terms like *iwa* (character), *ẹwà* (beauty), *ọmọ̀lúàbí* (a virtuous person), and so forth to connote aesthetics (Rowland 2013). However, the Yoruba tend to accord a far greater recognition to "inner beauty" compared to human outward appearance. For example, the appellation: *omoluabi* emphasizes good virtue as the bedrock of human character. Yorùbá affirmation of a person's good behavior or commendation for a display of good qualities finds expression in the following statement:

"*omọ yii şomọliàbí*" that is, the person is of good character. In addition, *iwa l'ewa* means that good character is beauty. A representation of the subject of Yorùbá aesthetic as constructed in the performance and works of Saheed Osupa, a prominent *fuji* music exponent in Nigeria is the focus of this paper. Existing studies on *fuji* music have focused more on its historical development, characteristic features and main practitioners (Waterman, 1990; Olaniyan, 2002 and Olusoji, 2010) than on how Yoruba aesthetics is represented in the genre. This paper, therefore, explored themes of African, particularly Yoruba aesthetics in the *fuji* works of Saheed Osupa, using the lens of musical figuring, which is an approach by which musical elements, including lyrics are used to represent certain materials in a musical or art works (Samuel, 2015). Specific antinomies in respect of the life and message of Saheed Osupa were interrogated through content analysis of the lyrics of select songs.

## 2. Methodology

The study largely adopted discographic research approach. This is purely a qualitative method of gathering of data. Purposive sampling technique was used to select a track titled *Omoge* (Damsel) from the album: *Reliable* by Saheed Osupa. In-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted with selected fans of the musician. In addition, a close reading after extensive listening to recorded audio tapes and watching of video musical performances formed part of the secondary sources of data. Recorded materials were transcribed and subjected to thematic and structural analysis, while IDIs were content analysed.

In what follows, I present an overview of the historical background of *fuji* music with a view to situating the issue within its cultural context, thereby creating a platform to unpack the subject under discussion.

## 3. *Fuji* music in Yorùbá Land: A brief background

*Fuji* music epitomizes the culmination of the process of transforming an initially Islamic musical activity into a successful Nigerian popular idiom. In *fuji* is the maturation of all the socio-stylistic tendencies and expressions of *sákàrà*, *wákà* and *àpàlà* musical arts. According to Omojola (2014), before the annual *Id-el-Fitri* muslim festival in Yoruba land preceded by the thirty-day Ramadan fast, there used to exist a forum for musical activities among the youths. Early in the mornings, youths play a music that can be described as 'wakeup' music in Muslim neighborhoods, encouraging people to get up, pray and start another day of fast (*saari*). In other words, the inception of *fuji* started from the outgrowth of *were*, which is a form of socio-religious music performed by young muslims at dawn during the month of Ramadan, the fasting period. Adesokan (2004) and Omojola (2014) only pointed out the importance of religious and youth culture of *sari* but failed to point out how the Ramadan period helped to ease the financial stress of the early risers. While *were* bands woke muslims for *saari*, which was seen as a form of sacred duty invented to promote the observance of the pillars of Islam, it also inadvertently developed a subculture of patronage. Olaoluwa observes:

*In those days around the 1940s and 50s, a number of school children forming part of such groups later testified about how the handouts from the faithful during this period of Ramadan helped to ease their financial stress in school as they were able to pay their fees and do a few other things. Notable among beneficiaries of the Ajiwere bands, was the late MKO Abiola, the Nigerian*

politician and influential businessman believed to have won the annulled presidential election of June 12 1993 (Olaoluwa, 2011:8-9).

In other words, Muslim faithful let out money as an act of gratitude and admiration for the commitment and vigilance of the *Ajiwere* group. As a secular rapture from a sacred background, *fuji* music has since produced mega stars in the early 1960s. This counters the view of Omojola (2014) and Olaoluwa (2011) that the music garnered fame in the 1980s and Stapleton's (2005) view that *fuji* stars hit the limelight in the 1990s. Moreover, it was verified that in 1965, the Nnamdi Azikwe cup competition was held at Evans square, Ebutte Metta, Lagos for the best *Ajiwere* musicians where Kolawole Rasaki Ayinla, also known as Kollington Ayinla (Kebe n' Kwara), and his *were* group won the competition. The trophy, according to Adesokan (2004:96), was presented to Kollington Ayinla's group at the State House, Marina, Lagos. In other words, some of the *Ajiwere* bands had been performing before the 1980s.

Since the 1980s, *fuji* music has undergone different revolutionary changes from its humble stage (formative period), through the developmental stage up to the transitional stage. The formative stage was characterized by such activities whereby *Ajiwere* musicians used to organize themselves in groups during fasting period, visiting and calling on prominent Muslims to wake up and eat at the same time entertaining them. The instruments used at that period were empty-bottles, empty tins, sticks, *sakara*, gongs, and local drums and the musical language used was the Koranic and Arabic languages (Omojola, 2014). The developmental stage was a period when *fuji* music developed from its original forms to a standard form in which some of the local instruments were abandoned and replaced with modern instruments such as conga drums, bongo drum, clappers, maracas and tambourines and the *fuji* musicians performed at hotels, open places as well as media stations. While the transitional stage was the period *fuji* musicians introduced more sophisticated instruments including electronic keyboard, trumpet, equalizers, saxophone and so forth into *fuji* music (Adesokan, 2004).

In term of musical instrument used in the performance of *fuji*, (Olaoluwa, 2011:8) included piano among the western musical instruments used in *fuji* music. However, a more appropriate description is electronic keyboard. This is because electronic keyboard is a musical instrument that produced different musical sounds. Alhaji Kollington Ayinla, Alhaji Sikiru Balogun Ayinde, (Ayinde Barrister), Alao Adegbite, Saka Alayegbade, Wasiu Ayinde, Adewale Ayuba, Abass Obesere, Aremu Alade Owo and many others are prominent practitioners of the genre. Although Adesokan (2004) included the late Dauda Epo Akara among prominent *fuji* practitioners, it is safe to exclude him since he was associated with another genre of music known as *awurebe* music, which is an indigenous music type characterized with syncopation of rhythms generated in patterns. *Awurebe* is the fusion of *apala*, *sakara*, *woro* and even *dadakuada*. *Awurebe* is the perfect blend of these various musical cultures that have given it a uniquely definitive sound identity (Idonije, 2014). It was also observed by Adebayo (2006) that it was *were* that developed into *awurebe* music through the performances of Alhaji Dauda Epo Àkàrà but into *fuji* music through the performances of Alhaji (Dr) Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, and *fuji* turned out to be the most popular Yoruba genre of music overtime (Adebayo, 2006: 153). It was observed by Adesokan that Dauda Epo Àkàrà won the *Ajiwere* musical competition in 1964 as noted in the words of Adesokan that:

In 1964, there was the first known series of musical competition for different Ajiwere musicians at Idikan, Ibadan which was organised by prominent Moslems of the area as part of the Ramadan socio-religious activities.

Among the musicians that took part in this competition were Alhaji Dauda Epo Akara, Alhaji Sikiru Ayinde alias (Barrister), Alhaji Kolawole Rasaki Ayinla alias (Kollington), Alao Adegbite and Aremu Barrister alias (Ago-Egba). It was Alhaji Dauda Epo Akara alias and Awuerebe that won the competition (Adesokan, 2004: 96).

It is safe to attribute the growing popularity and spread of *fuji* music in Nigeria to two major factors, first is the development of the technical media, especially recording industry and radio broadcasting; and secondly, as a result of the widespread of cosmopolitan identities. There is no gain saying that *fuji* has not only grown to become a cosmopolitan form of popular music, but as a full-fledged genre, it has become a part and parcel of the contemporary social life and everyday soundscape in Yorùbá land, and perhaps in Nigeria at large. Indeed, the reputation of *fuji* music has transcended its initial Yorùbá with Arabic and Islamic inflections in lyric and rhythm with other local musical instruments to that of international reputation such that "the winning of the KORA award of *fuji* music by Adewale Ayuba in 2005 is one index of international reputation of *fuji* music" (Olaoluwa, 2011: 8). More so, today, *fuji* music has continued to attract people of younger generations. There are some popular Nigerian gospel musicians who incorporated *fuji* style into their music performances such that it has been observed that there are now some Christian gospel musicians who perform using *fuji* style. Their music is called 'gospel *fuji*' (Olaniyan, 2007). At present, Wasiu Ayinde Marshall, known as KWAMI or K1 De Ultimate, Adewale Ayuba, Wasiu Alabi Pasuma, Alayeluwa (King) Sule Alao Malaika and Saheed Osupa and many others are dominating the scene.

It is also instructive to note that *fuji* music and musicians in contemporary Nigeria have hit the international music world. Similarly, the genre has gradually extended beyond its original orientation as Olaoluwa (2011) had observed in his analysis of Saheed Osupa's song entitled: *Olaju de in Reliable*. The study examined Osupa's clamour for the utility of African indigenous system along with western knowledge practice as Africa seems to have abandoned the products of its indigenous knowledge system.

#### 4. Social dynamics and political influence of *Fuji*

The rapid growth and development of *fuji* music was in response to the harsh economic conditions which Nigerians were subjected to in the 1980s. It was comparatively easier for young and relatively poor Nigerians to form a *fuji* band because of relatively limited reliance of *fuji* on western musical instruments. The ethnographic context of *fuji* performances can be well illustrated with urban slum areas in Ibadan and Lagos because *fuji* has been tailored towards the social needs and aesthetic tastes of the urban working class. (Omojola, 2014) illustrated *fuji* performances in urban slum areas in Ibadan such as Inalende, Oje, Aperin, Yeye, Mapo and Itutaba where young boys gathered in the evenings especially on weekends to entertain, performing with few percussion instruments and singing about issues of local and community significance, about sex, about poverty. In addition, they would render vaguely disguised abuses to members of the community who were judged to have committed abominable crimes, members of the audience, the entertainers themselves and working class people,

such as bus and taxi drivers, artisans and young boys and girls who had dropped out of school for financial reasons. While performing, the performer would have wads of money placed on his forehead (a popular practice and a form of cultural appreciative response by audience known as 'spraying'). It was through this that some of the back street *fuji* entertainers rose to become superstars. More so, *fuji* signifies a forum for a liberated self-expression.

Furthermore, with the emergence of numerous *fuji* musicians, unhealthy rivalry crept in. There were rivalries among *fuji* musicians in terms of seeking recognition or being given a primal position as the 'king of *fuji*' as well as controversies surrounding who was the richest among *fuji* musicians, or over who was most prolific in terms of productions of live show performances and sales of Compact Disks, and so on. On the general music scene (of which *fuji* is a significant part), there have been several instances of unhealthy rivalry among artistes. Some *fuji* musicians may have had their psyche bruised following abusive songs from fellow songsters. Since the days of its early exponents, peace on *fuji* landscape has been in short supply. For decades, the late Alhaji Ayinde Barrister and his archrival, General Kollington Ayinla, were at each other's throat over the former's claims that he pioneered the *fuji* genre.

In addition and following in the footsteps of their role models, other (younger) *fuji* artistes have taken up the gauntlet, bickering with one another over allegations of name-dropping, title theft, piracy and the like. Since his coronation as *fuji* king, Wasiu Ayinde, now known as K1 the Ultimate, has hardly had a tranquil reign. On many occasions, younger artistes have queried his claim to kingship and thus tend to contest the space by challenging his authority. Notable among them is Alhaji Abass Obesere. At other times, there have been feuds between *fuji* exponents like: Obesere and Easy Kabaka; between Obesere and Rasheed Ayinde; Saheed Osupa and Alabi Pasuma; Saheed Osupa and Muri Thunder, as well as several others.

The purported crowning of Saheed Osupa as king of *fuji* by Barrister raised considerable dust which continued to cause ripples on the *fuji* scene (Naija music stars magazines, 2009). Politically, some well to do people in the society and politicians are known to be fond of inviting musicians to perform for them as a form of entertainment. What really mattered to *fuji* musicians was the financial reward that was attached to the performance. Musicians who sang praise-poems in honour of such patrons were paid handsomely, and made further contacts for future engagements. In addition to the fee that *fuji* musicians are initially paid, they received substantial amount on the dance floor. The more adept they are as praise-singers, the more money their patrons pasted on their foreheads (Omojola, 2014).

##### **5. Yorùbá Aesthetics in Saheed Osupa's *Omoge***

The song selected for analysis was *Omoge* from an album: *Reliable* by Saheed Osupa. An exploration of the lyrical contents is provided in this section. There are various ways by which the concept of African aesthetics is expressed among the Yorùbá of Nigeria. They include *asa* (style or tradition), *ifarabale* (calmness and gentle), *iluti* (being teachable), *oju inu* (insightfulness), *oriki* (praise poetry), *suuru* (patience), *iwapele* (gentleness), *iwa* (character), *ewa* (beauty) and so forth, with all these expressions encased in the notion of *omoluabi* (a virtuous individual).

Generally speaking, perception of aesthetics is largely connected with the ability to acquire an insight into something or an object or a subject, and that ability is not dependent mainly on the physical manifestation of what is seen. In other words, it is not seen as a reflection that is transmitted into the eyes or the sense of sight, but perceived as reflected into the inner eyes, which belong to the sense or mind, and capable of generating some feelings. According to Kofoworola (2004), there are two levels of the manifestation of the African concept of aesthetics, namely the physical and the non-physical. He described both levels also as the visible and the invisible. The invisible is the mother of the visible (Kofoworola, 2004:2) which is *iwa* (character). In other words, *iwa* (character) is the mother of all concepts of Yorùbá aesthetics.

A major finding from our data reveals that Osupa's *Omoge* portrays the most important canons of African character of beauty. It is enhanced by Yorùbá mode of dressing and invariably expected to complement character. There is no gain saying that taste and appreciation of beauty differ from one person to another. The most important canons of Yorùbá beauty are figured from the text as contained in bars 1 and 2 of the song.

**Musical Example 1:**

**Reliable**

Saheed Osupa



Ti nba l'a ya ti o so ya ya ko le ba mi gbe le to ba

5

Text

*Ti n bá rí aya tí ò sòyàyà*

*Kò lè bá mi gbéléé*

Translation

*If a woman is not jovial*

*She cannot live with me*

Within the Yorùbá worldview, the concept of aesthetics is expressed in the common saying: '*iwa l'ewa omo eniyan*', or '*iwà rere l'èṣò omọ èniyàn*', meaning: character is the beauty/ornament of human. This connotes that although an individual may be adjudged beautiful, handsome or good looking, if this is not complemented with good character, such physical beauty is inconsequential and cannot be considered beneficial to anyone, including the individual. In addition, another Yorùbá aphorism states: *obinrin so iwà nù ó ní òun kò rí ilé ọkọ gbé*, meaning: a woman that has lost good character should not complain of being a constant divorcee, or cannot decry her lack of a stable husband. The import of the foregoing is that a lady who is not respectful, patient, jovial and possessing other indicators of inward character may not enjoy a blissful marital union; also, she may, sooner or later, lose her status/position in her matrimonial home. Against this backdrop, the best place to begin a meaningful understanding of Yorùbá aesthetics is the *iwa* (character) and a valid appreciation of beauty among the Yorùbá people

is not solely based on the manifestation of an outward attraction or a kind of beauty which is derived from the physical features of presentation.

Cheerfulness is an important ingredient complementing *iwa* (character) and it remains an essential element by which the Yorubá evaluate and judge a person's aesthetics. In the 1970's, Haruna Isola sang a song, which further attests to the foregoing point. Its text reads: "b'òbìnrín bá dára tí ò ní wà, bó bá gba kòbò kan àbò, mi ò lè fẹ, b'òbìnrín bá n'iwà tútù tó tún rẹwà , mo lè fi one thousand fẹ"; meaning: I am prepared to marry a woman of good character with as much as a prescribed dowry of one thousand naira; however, I cannot marry a woman who is without character with one and a half kobo. Saheed Osupa must have drawn his idea from Isola's song which seems to suggest the value placed on good morals/character and as an extension of beauty when monetary value is measured.

It is however instructive to also note that although the Yoruba go beyond the outward display into the invisible disposition of the character, this does not remove the disposition of individual taste and appreciation of beauty, which is predicated also on the physical features; and reinforces the universalist notion that beauty lies in the eye of the beholder. This is observed in some Yoruba terms such as: "Adú mára dán", meaning: Ebony black beauty; *apón bépo ré*, meaning: a beautiful and fair-complexioned individual (whose fair-complexioned blends with the colour of palmoil) as noted by Samuel (2013). In addition, attention may be drawn to a person's (especially a lady's) beauty by the label: *ibàdí àrán*, meaning: one with succulent buttocks. At other times, such an individual may be described as *eyin ménu gún*, meaning: 'one whose beauty emanates from a well set of teeth' or *eyin fun j'owo* (one with a beautiful set of teeth). Such an appellation is figured in lines 17-22 of the song:

#### Text

Tón bá múra  
wón á kún àtikè  
ojú á rí rekete  
Tón bá wá n'yan tán rọ rìn,  
iwájú á wuni  
Tón bá wá tún wa pòn sí èyin,  
ìyẹn wón á tún fakosì

#### Translation

When they are done with dressing  
They apply powders  
And their faces brighten up  
When they stride gracefully,  
Their frontage attract  
If their boobs are voluptuous  
they sway them rhythmically

The foregoing descriptive phrases are used to appreciate the natural beauty of women. The point has earlier been made that each individual's taste or appreciation of beauty differs from one person to another. For instance, some men prefer fat ladies, while some may prefer slim women; like-wise, some women would rather prefer short men to tall men, who may be the choice of other women; while in other cases, preference may be for slim men or fat men. Some may prefer dark-complexioned men, and on the other hand, light-complexioned men may be others' preference. Akinwunmi Ishola, a poet, scholar and playwright appreciates the physical attributes of a woman in some of his poems.

### 6. Antinomy in Saheed Osupa's notion of beauty

In spite of the foregoing, we wish to return to an earlier made point that if a person is beautiful (*l'ewa*) but does not possess the inner beauty which is the (*iwa*), the beauty is adjudged meaningless because physical beauty does not necessarily portray someone as being good or a virtuous person (*omoluabi*). In addition, when a person possesses sterling qualities which the Yoruba refer to as *omoluwabi*, such



an individual is pronounced good. Our reading of lines 24-25 of the song affirms the figuring of dressing as complementing character (*iwa*). Also in Yorùbá worldview, there is a saying: '*irínisí ni isonilójò*', meaning: 'the way you dress is the way you are addressed'. The manner by which a person dresses determines the way the person will be addressed. This means that if a person dresses corporately well, such person will be addressed with dignity. However, in spite of the outward or physical appearance of beauty, Yoruba people care more about balancing the inward character after evaluation as seen in an aphorism: "*iwa l'ewa* which means character (good one) is beauty".

Rowland (2013) noted that:

*The word iwa can mean either character or existence. An Ifa divinatory verse calls upon the creator-divinity, Orisanla, to dye me with my iwa at the dawn of creation", that is, Orisanla creates the person with his or her character, giving the individual both existence and character. In Yoruba religion, each creation, be it a divinity, person, or thing, possesses its own inner beauty as a necessary consequence of iwa. Thus, the deities Ogun (of war and iron), Oya (of Niger River), Osun (of the Osun River), Sango (of thunder and lightning), Obatala (the arch-divinity), Sonponna (of smallpox), Iku (of death), Arun (of disease), Egba (of palsy), Ofo (of perdition), and Esu (who polices the universe) all have their individual and imperishable ewa (inner beauty), and our understanding of them should not be bound by judgments based on human moral biases (Rowland, 2013:21).*

Yorùbá people recognize existence as possessed by the one existing. This means that each person has a character, which may not be like that of the other person. For this disparity in character, there is a Yorùbá aphorism that says: *mo iwa fun oniwa*. In other words, *iwa* (character) deals with the full recognition and proper appreciation of the specific object as it is in itself. Nevertheless, the ways in which a person appreciates or evaluates beauty differs from the way the other person does it. This is because one man's meat might be another man's poison. In other words, what seems beautiful to a person may appear ugly to another. For example, *bi mo ni aya ti ko ni ewa, iwa lo wu mi o* which means: if I have an ugly wife; her character is the premium of my admiration. Thus, character is the beauty of man. However, Saheed Osupa's desire and clamour for a cheerful and respectful wife – one of the canons of African character of beauty – is easily betrayed when we consider some other part of the text. The artiste's enchantment as a result of the lady's fine dress and artificial beauty as portrayed in the video clips to the song could be seen as an antinomy in the sense that Saheed Osupa perceived beauty only from the physical angle without considering the lady he fell for possesses one of the canons of African character of beauty.

#### **7. Some musical features in Saheed Osupa's *Qmoge* in *Reliable***

Being a scholarly contribution from ethnomusicologists, we attempt, in this short section, to locate the musicological elements embedded in the song within an overall frame of the wider textual and socio-musical matrix. In other words, we provide a brief musicological analysis to Saheed Osupa's music dwelling on the piece: *Qmoge*. The general musical structure of the music is found to closely

follow/conform to a combination of strophic and responsorial form, whereby each stanza sung by the soloist is repeated by the chorus as found in bars 13 to 17 as shown in the musical example below:

**Musical Example 2:**

## Reliable

Saheed Osupa

11  
wo ni kan ni ma ba lo t'o r'o-ye ti wa la-ra mi I so wo mu

14  
ra won o-mo ge i se yin to ga i so wo mu rao-mo ge ko si ko ma wu ni

For live performances, his voice can best be described as of tense vocal quality characterized by vibration glottalization structure with occasional lead strains at octave in delivery.

In terms of the compositional techniques, our analysis reveals the use of the following:

### 7.1. Repetition and variation:

Repetition of short refrains is common and peculiar to the music of Saheed Osupa. The song examined in this paper is a pointer to the fact that the artiste tends to satisfy his listeners through familiar and coherent short repetitive phrase, while diverse variations serve as the link. For example *a ni kónijó joba ijó, kónilù joba ilù*, meaning: the dancers dance, let the drummers drum.

### 7.2. Melodic and Harmonic Structures:

Saheed Osupa's melodies are predominantly logogenic; that is, 'word born'. This is because he employs Yorubá language wherein the melodic contours of his compositions are tonally inflected to follow speech tones. However, he sometimes delves into strict speech tone (midway singing and chanting) as a result of the Islamic heritage of *fuji* as a musical form. A common example of this compositional idea occurs in the song under review in the phrase: "eeyan ni now". It was rendered in an indefinite pitch on *eeyan ni*, meaning: 'it's human'. In addition, his melodies are built within the range of an octave while the melodic movements of most of his songs are confined to smaller intervals of seconds, thirds and fourths. Osupa adopts the pentatonic scale system, which is a five tone scale in his composition with long melodic structure. An Ornamental note played quickly before the beat, known as a grace note is exhibited in Saheed Osupa's *omoge*.

The harmonic representation of Saheed Osupa's *Omoge* is monophonic. However, when harmony is deployed, it is in the lone backup singer that sings in parallel 3rd mostly at cadential points

of the refrain. He borrowed certain motifs traceable to a musical piece of a prominent late doyen of highlife music, Adeolu Akinsanya entitled: *tí n bá láya tí ò ̀berù àgbà*, meaning: 'if a woman is not respectful to the elderly'.

### 7.3. Instrumentation

In terms of instrumentation, our study revealed the use of a combination of western and traditional musical instrument in his performance as well as recorded works. The instruments include: membranophones, such as the *gangan* (small hourglass shaped tension talking drum), *sakara*, *omele bata* (a secondary drum) and drum set; idiophone instruments like *sekere* (rattle), *agogo* (bell) and clave, mainly used to keep the time line. Other instruments include: the electronic keyboard, saxophone and occasional use of guitar. All the foregoing instruments rely on electronic resonance in form of amplifiers and speakers for appropriate operation. The function of the instruments is basically to enhance the performance of *fuji* music and facilitate reinforcement and better projection of the song texts. This is most essential since they are sometimes employed in a way to imitate the vocal section in the overall performance.

### 8. Summary and Conclusion

An attempt was made in this paper to interrogate the portrait of aesthetic in the context of Yorùbá worldview through an ethno-musicological lens with focus on the *fuji* works of Saheed Osupa. In the paper, we tried to re-emphasize the illusion and futility in trying to separate the subject of beauty from other well established virtuous attributes which the Yoruba hold so dear. The authors argue that although the *fuji* artiste may appear, on the one hand, to focus on and project one vital aspect of aesthetics dealing with 'inner' beauty of a woman, nonetheless, he also exhibits some form of antimony by concentrating on the extraneous form of beauty, on the other hand, especially from the direct reading and understanding of his illustrations of different physical attributes of a woman without adequate consideration for her character.

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