

## CHAPTER FIFTY-FIVE

### **ANALYSIS OF SELECTED WORKS OF DOTUN OLAYEMI: A CONTEMPORARY YORUBA CHURCH MUSICIAN**

Sunday A. Ajayi

#### **Abstract**

There are many Nigerian art music composers with different ideologies, styles, techniques, and approaches to their works. Some dwell mainly on writing for the instruments, others for voices or a combination of the two. This paper, hinged on inter-acculturation theory, aims at analyzing three selected works of DotunOlayemi, a Yoruba church musician, and to bring out some techniques employed in developing these works. The primary source comprises an unstructured interview with the composer. The secondary source includes books, journal articles, newspaper, magazines, musical scores and the Internet. Findings show that themes of analyzed works are got from common church choruses and hymns, developed and rearranged for voices and organ accompaniment, employing techniques like imitation, ostinato, extemporization, repetition, contrapuntal polyphony, modulation, and interludes. It is also revealed that the motive of each theme is subtly included in a brief introduction with a touch of suspense. This paper, therefore, concludes that, although DotunOlayemi is a part-time musician, the foundation of his musicianship from his family and church background, having been exposed to music from his childhood has built-in him a wealth of compositional ability that rivals adept scholarly composers. Further studies need to be conducted to establish the stylistic uniqueness of Olayemi's compositions, a preliminary study in this paper has revealed a few techniques that are prevalent in the three works analyzed.

Keywords: Composition, Analysis, inter-acculturation, Church musician.

#### **Introduction**

Composition is a creative phenomenon that brings out an idea that has never been heard before. Mereku (2012:2) alludes to Arnold Whittall (2011), “composition is both the process and the product”. Whittall explains further that “it is not an exclusively musical term – applications to prose, poetry, painting, architecture and a variety of other media are common – and in all cases, it describes a process of construction, a creative putting together, a working out and carrying through of an initial conception or inspiration”.

Lots of scholars have written on African art music generally and church music specifically. Agawu (2011:50) opines that the audience for the performance of African art music is relatively small compares to that of African traditional and popular music. This is one of the challenges of African art music. A critical look into African art music will reveal that audience of this type of music is gotten mostly from the church and its performance has a great impact on most of the church musicians. Omojola (1995:4) focuses on composers that are trained in universities and conservatories.

Dotun Olayemi is a composer who got his compositional skill from being a performer. Though he

is not a music scholar, he has a lot of experience in music composition and arrangement as a church musician in the process of learning and performing many works of both Western and African composers. Many of his works are borne out of this experience. Ozigwe (2016:68) alluding to Euba as cited in Oikelome (2001) submits that: art music can be described in four (4) different categories: (1.) music based on western styles and which makes no conscious use of African styles or idioms (2.) music in which melodies, rhythms or concepts derived from African culture are deliberately used in musical works that carry western idioms and instrumentation. (3.) Music in which African and western elements are more or less co-dominant, often through the combination of western and African instruments or by use of African texts. (4.) music based entirely on African traditional models. Dotun's most ideal compositional style falls in the second category.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This paper is hinged on inter-acculturation theory. The conceptualization of inter-enculturation, according to Kimberlin and Euba (1995) in Oikhilome (2013: n.p), emphasizes a situation where elements from two or more cultures are integrated into a music performance or composition. The performer or composer of the music usually belongs to one of the cultures from which these elements are derived. The theory is quite relevant to and has been adopted for this study in its application to the analysis of how Dotun as a contemporary Yoruba church organist and composer has been able to showcase his identity in his works by the use of his local language and integrate it with the Western concept of harmony of SATB without losing the tonal inflexion of the language except where impossible. Therefore, the approach to the analysis of his selected works shall be based on the combination of Western and African analytical approaches.

### **Dotun Olayemi as a Contemporary Church Musician**

Adedotun Olayemi was born on the 30th of April, 1979 to the family of Late Mr Emmanuel Adeyinka Olayemi and Mrs Margaret Olubukola Olayemi who were both Anglicans by birth. Adedotun's grandfather, Late Venerable Joseph B. Olayemi, was an Archdeacon of the then Oshogbo Archdeaconry (now Diocese) who was also a very dexterous Organist. From his grandfather downwards to his generation, the Olayemi family has been highly involved in the practice of church music either in singing or playing musical instruments.

Dotun received music training under some notable church musicians such as Mr Orenuga, Mr Sola Adejorin, Mr Olaolu Omideyi, and Mr Akin Olubi. Dotun sat for The Music Society of Nigeria (MUSON) Piano exams Grades 1, 2 and 4 and passed with Merit. He recently took the Grade 5 Organ Playing exam with MUSON in January 2012 and passed with Distinction. He also participated in one-week training for Church Organists in June 2013 as organized by the Royal School of Church Musicians (RSCM) in York, United Kingdom after which he got a personal recommendation letter from the Head facilitator at RSCM, Rosemary Field. All these training were on a part-time basis.

Dotun started his musical career in 1991 at the age of 12 years after he left the Choir of St. Annes' Molete Ibadan. He was appointed the Organist and Choirmaster at St. Barnabas Anglican Church Felele Ibadan. Here he was able to tutor the Choir to the point where they held the Maiden Choir festival in 1993. Adedotun held this post as Organist and Choirmaster until August 1997 when he was appointed the Assistant Organist at The Cathedral of St. James 'the great' Oke-bola Ibadan. He was confirmed the Cathedral Organist in June 2001 and named the Diocesan Organist of the Diocese of Ibadan in April 2004 by the then Archbishop of Ibadan Province – Most Rev. J.O. Akinfenwa now Bishop of Ibadan Diocese. Dotun doubled as the Diocesan/ Cathedral Organist up until August 2016 when he relocated to the USA and got appointed as the Organist and Music

Director at All Saints Anglican Church Hyattsville Maryland.

His interests in parish music and organ focus on the organ music of Fela Sowande, J.S. Bach, Diestrich Buxtehude, Louis Vierne, Jean Langlais and other great composers. While at the Cathedral of St. James' Oke Bola Ibadan, Adedotun co-founded the Resurrection Voices Ibadan in the year 2000 which is an independent Choral group that specialized in the performance of Sacred Choral and Secular Music.

Dotun developed the art of writing and arranging music at a very early age of 14 years when he wrote his first arrangement of Keregbet'ofu – A Nigerian folk song. Dotun's compositions and arrangements are Sacred as influenced by his various commitments as a Church Musician since the age of 12. Some of his works and arrangements include: Oyigiyigi, Jesu mi Seun Seun, Gbopet'a mu wa, Magnificat, Dansaki Oba 'ye, A bi Olugbala, S'ohunnere, Igbagbo mi duro'ori, Swing low sweet Chariot, Psalm 150, Joshua fit the battle of Jericho, Me I no go suffer, Emi yo yin Olorun, Iku Oro, Ayo Igbala, Tire nimo je o, Go tell it on the Mountain, O gaju aye lo, Olorun mi mowa dupe, to mention but few.

### **Analysis of Three Selected Works of Dotun Olayemi**

The three pieces selected for analysis are *Jesu mi seun*, *Oyigigi*, and *O gaju aye lo*. They are selected because of one unique style deployed in the introductory section common to these three pieces; a short organ introduction, followed by a vocal introduction being accompanied by the organ.

Ratifying the modality behind and the sensibility of analysis of African music as proposed by Kofi Agawu and several other African music scholars as opposed to some scholars who campaign against such on the premise of 'otherness' in relation to Western musical perspective, Lewis (2016:1) opines that “to deny African music the right to analysis, some argue, is to deny it the right to legitimacy.” Whittall (1983:58) argues that “The analytical process is two-fold: to identify the various materials of a composition, and to define how they function.”

Agawu (1997:298) submits that “Reading notation, for example, requires an analytical act; analysis is the prerequisite for an adequate performance, and aesthetic theories on music are inconceivable without analysis.” He further argues that: Analysis allows practitioners to come to grips with the detail of a musical whole. Perhaps, this is what Adedeji (2013) refers to as the microstructure and macrostructure of the music.

Following the opinions of these scholars above, it is worthy of note that the concept of analysis is a mandate in any scholarly work to appreciate and showcase the beauty of a composition. Therefore, macro and microanalysis of these selected works shall be made and other musical elements such as tonal organization, melodic range and registers, harmony (cadences and chords), rhythm and tempo, text, and forms shall be sought.

#### *Jesu Mi Seun*

This piece of music is one of the most famous of Dotun's arrangements, it got its inspiration from the commonly sung lyrics in churches. Jesu mi seun, seun, Olorun mi seun, seun. The theme of the music as commonly sung in churches is shown below:



The music is arranged for SATB and organ with a short organ introduction followed by the choir in unison. The introduction features a kind of dialogue between the organ accompaniment and the voices (bars 1-10).

The macrostructure of this piece is in ternary form with three contrasting sections ABC. But there is a ten bar vocal and instrumental introduction that precedes the first section (bars 1-10), a four-bar instrumental bridge that links B and C (bars 76-79), and a twelve-bar coda that ends the piece of music (bars 96-107). Section A starts in bar 10 with an instrumental interlude (bars 10-13) and ends at bar 50, while the second section is from bars 51-75, and the third section brings back the motive starting from bars 80-93, though it comes up in another key.



There is a feature of an organ interlude extemporizing (bars 94-96) on a motive from section C, serving as also as a bridge to the coda, changing the key from G major to B flat major using the chord g minor as a pivot chord.

This piece of music in its original state employs the diatonic major scale of the west and it is reflected in the arrangement of Dotun. It's as shown below;



Other scales employed are melodic minor and pentatonic scales. With the use of all these scales, it is obvious that the music is tonal showing several tonal centres as there are changes in key (bars 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 49, 75, 76, 80, 95 and 97).

The standard ranges of all the parts i.e SATB are as stated below to compare them with Dotun's way of managing the ranges of these voice parts;



Vocal ranges as specified in New Harvard Dictionary of Music

Comparing the lowest and highest pitches in Jesu mi seun with the range of voices given above; there are little or no differences because they are basic differences of tone or semitone lower or higher. The lowest pitch in the soprano part in this arrangement is B below middle C (19, 25),

while the highest pitch is A on the first ledger line above the treble staff (9, 46, 47), alto has the lowest pitch of G below middle C (31) and highest pitch on E in the fourth space of the treble staff (3, 4), tenor part with the lowest pitch on B an octave below the middle C (25), while the highest pitch is on A above middle C (46-47), and lastly, bass with its lowest pitch on G the first line on the bass staff (85, 89, 93, 100, 102), while its highest note is F above middle C (44, 45, 46, 47) five semitones above the standard pitch.

This piece of music features lots of African harmonic designs even though the concept of harmony employed, is that of western SATB. These harmonic structures could be found in bars (2, 20-22, 80, 96-97), where he employs singing in unison which can also be called polarity, homophonic singing bars (8, 46,-47, 106-107), contrapuntal polyphony etc. and the use complex chords in the organ accompaniment, an example of this is shown in bars (2, 3, 6,7) most especially the chromatic approach in modulation to key F in bar 3 and for chord resolution in bar 7.

The metric organization in this work is a reflection of Dotun's Africanism in the sense that he applied lots of metric modulations bars interchanging them between symmetrical and asymmetrical schemes (2-6, 79 -80) an excerpt from one of these sections is shown below:

*Jesu Mi Seun* Dotun Olayemi  
Nov. 2001

*Allegretto*

The musical score is for a vocal quartet and organ. It features five staves: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Organ. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The lyrics are 'Je - su mi se - un, Ma - a'. The organ part includes a dynamic marking 'f' and a tempo marking 'Allegretto'. The score shows a vocal quartet and organ accompaniment. The lyrics are 'Je - su mi se - un, Ma - a'. The organ part includes a dynamic marking 'f' and a tempo marking 'Allegretto'.

Ostinato rhythms are detected in bars 53-72, the use of accents and staccatos on some notes both on voices and the organ accompaniment (21, 41, 78-79, 99-100, 104, 107) shows his percussive nature, even though it might be challenging to achieve that on the organ due to its tone colour.

Describing the texture of the music, monophony, homophony, and contrapuntal polyphony are featured. The monophony sections reflect in tenor and bass bars 13-16 and later in soprano and alto parts at bars 17-20, also in bars 42 -43, 48-49 all accompanied by the organ. The use of homophony is scantily reflected in bars 106-107. Contrapuntal polyphony can be found in bars 53-60, the entry starting from bass to tenor, alto and soprano consecutively.

### Oyigiyigi

The arrangement of this piece of music got its inspiration from the indigenous hymn Oyigiyigil'Olorunwa o as one of the added tunes in Iwe Orin Mimo (I.O.M), the hymn book

mostly used by the Yoruba speaking members of the Anglican church. The section of these indigenous hymns in I.O.M is called Orin ni Ede atiOhun Ile wa. The music is in its original state and is in strophic form. The first stanza is as shown below:

The composer of the music above in its original form is anonymous and it was written in unison. Dotun's arrangement of this song presented it in the choral form written for SATB and organ. The introductory section is as shown below:

### OYIGIYIGI

In the introductory section above, Dotun showed the originality of the song by making all parts sing in unison and later split into chordal harmony.

This piece of music in its original state hangs on one of the most common types of scales used in Africa. That is the pentatonic scale. A five-note scale. It is shown below:

In Dotun's arrangement, the organ introduction shows the application of the diatonic scale but does not affect the originality of the music. Another scale employed is harmonic minor from bars 55-67. Therefore, the music is tonal, but with different keys varying from major and minor. This point of modulation could be found in bars 22, 55, and 69.

The range of all the parts is as stated below; The soprano range is a perfect 12th, alto is a perfect 11th, the tenor is perfect 11th, and bass a Major 14th.



The lowest notes of all these parts are still in line with their corresponding vocal ranges, while the highest notes of alto and bass are out of place. The normal vocal range of alto should be on or in-between G below middle C and D an octave from the middle C, and Bass should be on or in-between E and D as shown below:



The highest melodic tones “F” and “F” assigned for alto and Bass parts in Oyigiyigi, could only be considered appropriate for soloists, who as a result of serious training for being a soloist could find it easy to reach the pitch.

According to Amoah (2009), harmonic vocabulary constitutes a determining factor in a composer's work. Dotun truly paints the real colour to depict the meaning of the title of the song, starting with all parts singing aloud in unison (one voice) accompanied by some heavy chords showing changes in key between E flat and A flat major. It is shown below:



Even though the introductory section is sung in unison, a sense of harmony comes out from the accompaniment. Other forms of harmonic devices are polyphony, showing lots of imitations between the parts (23 – 34), and homophony. From the harmonic plot, Cadences employed majorly are perfect cadences in bars 9- 10, 67, 88, and an unusual imperfect cadence of chord I –III in bar 73.

The four crotchet beats in a bar used in this piece of music would have portrayed it as music in strict time, but the changes in tempo resulting in different rhythmic patterns and the use of fermatas interrupted the flow of the strict timing. Some examples of these features are; the use of ralletando in bars 7 – 10, change in rhythm from bars 35 – 47, bar 70 – 73. . A bridge to the second stanza in the accompaniment imitates the style of military drumming in bars 35-41, the rhythmic idea in the bridge still continues serving as ostinato while the improvisation starts in the soprano part. Bars 42 – 45.

Dotun in Oyigiyigi, employed monophony, followed by the application of polyphony and later till the end of the piece, featured homophony. Monophony is found in bars 15 – 22 for soprano alone and accompanied by the organ. Contrapuntal Polyphony is featured in bars 23 – 34. The tenor introduces the motive and it is being imitated rhythmically by the alto part, followed by bass and soprano to reflect independent singing among the parts. The starting point of the counterpoint is shown below:

Musical score for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass. The lyrics are: O - yi - gi - yi - gi, O - yi - gi - yi - gi yi ni Je - su, FO - lo - run wa o, FO - lo - run wa.

In bars 37 – 47, giving an idea of the contrapuntal passage, there are ostinati by alto, tenor, and bass. Soprano improvises on these ostinati, by singing the melody. See the excerpt below:

Musical score excerpt showing Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts. The lyrics are: I - wo ma lo - pe i - yin ye fun o, E wo - le jo - sin FO - lo - run wa o, I - wo ma lo - pe i - yin ye fun o.

Homophony: From bar 70 – 88, even though there is some occasional polyphony (bar 83 -85), homophonic texture dominates the music in full.

Originally, this music is in strophic form and it's about eight stanzas. Also in Dotun's arrangement, the same structure is maintained but with some modifications. Three stanzas were selected, with an introduction and coda. The first stanza was written for soprano only (bars 15 – 22), it's repeated with melody in the tenor (bars 23 – 34). The second stanza is within the arrangement in bars 35 – 50, with a melody sung by the soprano (bars 42 -50). The last stanza picked is shown in bars 56 - 67, alternating the melody between tenor, bass and soprano, alto. The melody is rounded up by the soprano. The introduction is in bars 1 – 10, while the coda starts from bars 70 – 88. Dotun creates different interludes between the introduction, all the stanzas, and the coda. This could be found in bars 11 -14, 35 – 36, 52 – 55, and 68 – 69.

### *O GaJu Aye L?*

This piece of music like *Jesu mi seun* got its inspiration from the commonly sung lyrics in churches. The theme of the music as commonly sung in churches is used in its original state in bars 22-37 of this work written for tenor and the bass. This piece is an arrangement written for SATB and the organ is structured into two broad sections. The first section starts in bar 22 and ends in bar 79, while the section is from bars 80-138. This piece of music has an organ and vocal introduction (bars 1-21), and a coda (139-155). The organ introduces the music using a different musical idea and starting with a minor chord (bars 1-2). It is shown below:

*Moderato with Energy* **f**

Soprano A-gba-ra n .  
Alto A-gba-ra n .  
Tenor A-gba-ra n .  
Bass A-gba-ra n .  
Organ *Moderato with Energy* A-gba-ra n .

The coda ends the piece of music in its highest volume with a decoration in the accompaniment.

**ff** a - wa ju a - se - gun .  
**ff** a - wa ju a - se - gun .  
**ff** a - wa ju a - se - gun .  
**ff** a - wa ju a - se - gun .  
**ff** a - wa ju a - se - gun .

The melody is built on a diatonic major scale. The management of vocal registers of the four parts in *O gaju aye lo* shows Dotun's understanding of the vocal ranges. The highest note in soprano is A first ledger line above treble stave, while the lowest pitch is D above the middle C. Highest in alto is E in the fourth space in treble stave while the lowest is A above middle C. G above middle C is the highest in the tenor part, and the lowest note is D below middle C. As for the bass, the highest now is E above middle C, while the lowest note is G first line on the Bass stave.

This piece in its harmonic organization of western SATB prominently employs homophonic and monophonic textures. Though, it showcases polarity in the introduction and some other areas (bars 2-4, 98-43, 106-113, and 128-136). Cadencial homophony could be found after the use of polarity (bars 5-8, and 137-138). The use of imitation between the parts in bar 9-11 showcases contrapuntal polyphony of the African harmony. It's also noticed between the voices and the organ accompaniment in bars 76-77. The main theme sung by tenor and bass features hemiola (bars 22-23, 26-27, and 35-36) relating it vertically with the accompaniment, it employs cross-rhythm between all the voices (bars 22, 26, and 35), in the accompaniment (bars 143 and 145). Bars 114-121 feature dance-like rhythm and syncopation in bars 116 and 120.

### **Summary of Findings**

Adedeji (2009:5) alluding to Cope (1977), Echezona (1966), and Kofie (1994), identified some 20th compositional techniques such as chromaticism, pointillism, polytonality, interval exploration, cluster, microtones, indeterminacy, multimedia, musique concrete, electronic, computer, minimalization and decategorization. Nigerian compositional techniques include: repetition, limitation, systematic modification of rhythm, shifted accent, changing meters, non-accentual rhythm, asymmetric meter, asymmetric division, ostinati, transposition and sequence, dual-modality, polytonality, pan-diatonicism, shifted tonality and polyphony. Some of the above compositional techniques are found in the three selected works of Dotun Olayemi.

Analysis of these works shows that the first piece, *Jesu mi seun*, is longer than the remaining two due to the use of short and long instrumental interludes which serve as a bridge that links each section together (bars 10-13, 27, 51-52, 76-80, 94-95), the repeat signs in the section B where there is a feature of ostinato (bars 51-52, 53-54, 55-56, 57-58, 59-60, 67-70, 73-74). Chromaticism is found in the accompaniment used for modulations (bars 2-3 and 7-8). The application of repeated signs is found in the other two works but not as prominent in *Jesu mi seun*. This is one of the techniques employed to elongate his works. Others include; imitations, metric modulations, use of ostinato, changes in tonal centres, et al. There is a special common style employed in three works. This is the use of introduction with a touch of suspense which always comes before the main body. The motive of each theme is subtly included in this introduction to deceive and hint to the audience of is in the main work.

There are some common traits in the approach to which Dotun Olayemi arranges his works gotten from the analysis made on his selected works, they are; working on existing lyrics or chorus, the constant use of organ as a medium of accompaniment, and the employment of short organ intro at the main introductory passage these works.

### **Conclusion**

Although Dotun Olayemi is a part-time musician, the foundation of his musicianship from his family and church background, having been exposed to music from his childhood, has built-in him a wealth of compositional ability that rivals adept scholarly composers. Further studies need to be conducted to establish the stylistic uniqueness of Olayemi's compositions, preliminary study

in this paper has revealed a few techniques that are prevalent in the three works analyzed. It is recommended that the younger generation of composers should emulate the idea of incorporating the use of themes from common choruses and traditional hymns as employed by DotunOlayemi.

### References

- Adedeji, Femi. "Melodic Analysis of African Music." *An Encyclopedia of the Arts*. Lagos State University, 2006a.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Harmonic Analysis of African Music." *An Encyclopedia of the Arts*. Lagos State University, 2006b.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Metric Organisation and Scale Structure in African Music." *An Encyclopedia of the Arts*. Lagos State University, 2006c.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Form in Nigerian Gospel Music." *Awka Journal of Research in Music and the Arts (AJRMA)* 4, 2007, p. 61-71.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Compositional Techniques and Styles in Nigerian Gospel Music," *Journal of Performing Arts*, Vol. 4, No. 1, (2009-10), p. 5.
- Agawu, Kofi. "Analyzing Music under the New Musicological Regime" *The Journal of Musicology*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Summer, 1997), pp. 297-307.
- Agawu Kofi, 'The challenge of African art music.' *Circuit: Musiques Contemporaines*, 2011, 21(2):49–64.
- Dor, George W.K. *Trends and Stylistic Traits in the Art Compositions of E. Amu, N.Z. Nayo and J.H.K. Nketia?*.M.Ph. Thesis: University of Ghana, Accra. 1992.
- Lewis, Tony. "Analysis in African Music—Ghosts of the Past, Promises of the Future." Proceedings of the 38th AFSAAP Conference: 21st Century Tensions and Transformation in Africa, Deakin University, 28th-30th October 2015 (Published February 2016)
- Mereku, C. W. "Twenty-first century African classicism: Illustrations from the piano trio Pivicafrique on the theme of Jack Berry's 'Sasabonsam's March'." *Journal of Musical Arts in Africa*, 9, 2012, 39-61.
- Omojola, Bode, *Nigerian Art Music*. Ibadan, Nigeria: InstitutFrançais de Recherche en Afrique (Ifra). 1995.
- Sadoh, Godwin, *African Musicology: A Bibliographical Guide to Nigerian Art Music (1927-2009)*, *Notes* 66, 2010, p. 485-502.
- Whittall, Arnold. "Analysis". *The New Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford, 1983), vol. i, p. 58