

CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

EMEM KE NIGERIA: A DIDACTIC IBIBIO CHORAL MUSIC COMPOSITION

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Abstract

This composition work re-evaluates, defines, and contextualizes Ibibio choral music within the compositional framework of Nigerian Arts music. This work was conducted in order to assess the importance of the Ibibio language in vocal music. Texts drawn from the bible, rhythmic motifs derived from the Ibibio traditional orchestra instruments and other compositional techniques underpinned this composition. The work derived its theme from scrutinized and detailed research and study of existing literature. It was observed that Ibibio rhythm, style, and harmony employed western harmonic styles; the selected traditional orchestral instruments employed are of different sizes and shapes, and as such produce different sounds and pitches which also influence Ibibio beat patterns. An analytical research method was employed. Primary and secondary sources were sourced through the internet and library. Recommendations were made. In the end, it was observed that the song text in 'Emem Ke Nigeria' portrays the identity of the Ibibio people; it also encourages a state of peace and tranquility, through prayer for a nation where people crave love and oneness during political events of a country (Nigeria). This study is an attempt towards creating and documenting new genres in the contemporary Ibibio musical work repertoire, as well as providing comprehensive material for further musicological and compositional research in the near future.

Keywords: Rhythm, language, choral, composition, style, harmony, Ibibio.

Introduction

Composition is a work set into music to express feelings, ideas, beliefs, and impressions of events, incidents, and the world around. According to the Encarta dictionaries (2009), the composition is defined as the creation of musical or literary works: the art or the process of creating something such as a piece of music or writing. Harper Cothins Dictionary of Music (1972: p.86) defines it as the process of creating a musical work. It involves work, literature, or art of a particular culture put into music. Ibibio music, like other African music, is not only to produce lyrical and melodious sound but, rather, also convey messages through the language of its ethnicity to the community. Jones (1963), observed that: The Ibibio tradition do not themselves provide any coherent historical perspective, taken collectively, they offer a very broad and vague sequence of events or pattern of dispersion when considered and ascertained in conjunction with geographical, cultural, social, legends and political data. Many young scholars among the Ibibio people seemed to have lost interest in their music, implicitly this may lead to extinction due to the influence of western music. Corroborating this in comparison to Igbo music, Nwamara (2006-2008) submits that, the continuous decline in the interest of the Igbo, especially the youths, in Igbo music appreciation, composition and practice, and the craze for its

western counterpart, is obvious. This has adversely affected so many areas of the life of the Igbo. In the church, the story is the same as church musicians and composers have followed the trend in composing and performing what can be best described as western-music-influenced Igbo music. The study is an attempt towards creating and documenting a new genre in the contemporary Ibibio musical work repertoire, as well as providing comprehensive material for further musicological and compositional research in the near future. Ibibio choral music composers are culturally and duty-bound to, create a musical identity that should be found in melodies, rhythm, harmony, instruments, form, meter as well as all other compositional materials utilized during the composition process. This composition 'Emem Ke Nigeria' draws from folk materials to create character and mood. It is imperative to note that, there is a need for composers wishing to draw creative materials from the Ibibio socio-cultural music to appreciate the ethnic's language. The work is accompanied by traditional orchestral instruments to create and apply effectively the various constructs and techniques of composition to reflect the cultural idioms, phrases, and concepts of the Ibibio. In African orchestra, Akpabot (1967) observed that the drum is the foundation of most African music ensembles, it fits into both the percussive and melodic rhythm of Africa, the author further pointed out the need to be receptive to folk music and more importantly, embark on an analytical study of such music. The work 'Emem Ke Nigeria' is an attempt at creating an original compositional choral work in the Ibibio language in SATB, accompanied with selected Ibibio traditional musical instruments, its purpose is to display the contrasting mood, rhythm, variation, tone colours, and other techniques inherent in Ibibio composition. The work is anchored on the theory of primordial musical styles propounded by Curt Sachs (1940), he posited that there are three classifications of all forms of vocal music: Pathogenic, which refers to songs written out of emotional outburst of the composer; Melogenic, songs that are melody (word) borne out from the folk materials of the society in which the song emanated; and Logogenic (speech) borne which are melodies built on the contour of the speech. Nzewi (1985: 64-82), remarked that it is a tribe that ascribes meaning to music, in terms of its sound implications and non-musical essence. The methodology employed for this study is the analytical research method. Primary and secondary data were sourced through the internet and library, recording, notation, review of related literature and existing works. This method was considered to ascertain the extent to which scholars have contributed to Ibibio choral music.

The Music of Ibibio

The traditional make-up of Ibibio music is not entirely different from other ethnic groups in Africa, this is because compositional characteristics are not exclusive to one community, culture, or country. One can extract the dominant musical concept and procedures in a given area. Scholars like Nettl (1954) and Agordoh (2002) refer to this as a 'cultural concept', defined as 'geographic units whose inhabitants share a relatively homogenous cultural style. Nwamara (2017) also states that many aesthetic features of a wide range of the arts of music, dance and drama fill the lives and environments of Igbo rural communities. As the very essence of culture, folk music forms the basis of people's traditions and identity. Transmitted orally among generations, it does not necessarily conform to the music of other cultures. The culture of Africa can then be categorized according to the reoccurring styles and tendencies that are displayed in musical compositions. Ibibio music is vocal, instrument (traditional), or vocal and instruments; and this helps to create and apply effectively the various constructs and techniques of Ibibio which reflect the cultural idioms, phrases, and concepts of the Ibibio. The scale usually maintains a distinct tonal system that is tone inflected, it is often constructed on the heptatonic scale and the first note of the scale (tonic) is repeated at the octave. The dynamics used in Ibibio music depicts and portrays the mood, scenarios, and intensity in the song. The concept of music is pre-determined and not by reactions. The mood and character of most Ibibio compositional works are cheerful and lively as expressed in bright melody, in addition to the tempo and dynamics except in

the case of death. According to Tracy (1963) the way Africans conceive music is different from the way the Europeans do, to Africans 'music' is a word meaning 'vocal participation, the physical manipulation of the instrument and rhythmic or dance movement associated with music. comparing the aforesaid with the Igbo music, Nwamara (2019) state that, in all Igbo activities, the role of music is obvious as there can hardly be any meaningful function without music. Music-making in Igbo functions/occasions 'educates, informs, addresses issues, corrects impressions, directs people, heals, inspires, encourages, energizes, and criticizes and so on.' This, then, suggest that Ibibio music just like other African music affects the ways of thinking and feelings of their society.

This work is a non-ritualistic in nature, the use of unison, solo part voices, call and responses, and traditional Ibibio accompaniment comprising percussive, rhythmic, and Melo-rhythmic instruments are clearly depicted. It is written in a steady rhythmic pattern, and the compositional style and content is folklore; which is defined as the traditional beliefs and stories of a people (Oxford Dictionary). In the same vein, Amos (1971) posits that folklore is a communicative process. Abraham and Foss (1976), defines folklores as being oriented more strongly towards the community of a tradition. The pre-compositional factors considered for the work are: Form (which features unison, call and responds phrases varying from one another, and chorus); Setting of Texts to Melody (the melody is speech pattern, and the language and texts are interrelated influencing the pitch and rhythm elements of the songs to a large extent); Harmony and Texture (harmony are based on seconds, thirds, and sometimes fourth. The voice parts maintain the meaning of each word in the song text imitating melodic leaps strictly). The rhythm is naturally phrased from the spoken language, with emphasis on 'ong' in 'isong, 'e wong o.' Tonality is a distinct tonal system, while the dynamics depict and portray the mood and intensity of the song. The mood and character are pre-determined and not by the reactions; and expressed in a bright, lively, and cheerful character.

Findings and Discussions

The conceptualization of this work 'EMEM KE NIGERIA', which means 'PEACE IN NIGERIA' can be viewed from various perspectives, though was conceived as a prayer song for peace to reign in Nigeria. It is borne out of passion, craving for a lasting unity and harmony among Nigerians irrespective of tribe, tongues, and other ethnic connotations. Stressing that Nigeria is our God-given land and our place of abode, we should be united, and promote love amongst our citizens. It condemns evils at all levels; advocating that all will come to terms with peace- a vital tool with which to guard against chaos, turbulence, and instability in Nigeria. The work prayed to God for peace in the country and on earth, among citizens and also seeks an end to war.

Transliteration and Translation Analysis

Transliteration

Nigeria, *isong Abasi*
isong ewong o
isong iyene
song idem
song ubok
 mum Nigeria *kama*
 Nigeria *isong ete'n yin*
 Nigeria *ebiet idung'n yin*

Translation

Nigeria, God's land
 land of covenant
 land of riches
 be strong
 be firm
 hold onto Nigeria
 Nigeria our fathers' land
 Nigeria our place of abode
 'Giant of Africa'

<i>ke'n yin ido</i>	that's what we are
<i>k'i song Abasi</i>	in God's land
<i>yak Emem odu</i>	let there be peace
<i>tad esit 'fo</i>	open your heart
<i>tad ubok 'fo</i>	open your arms
<i>ma'a yin uka</i>	love your sister
<i>ma'a yin uso</i>	love your brother
<i>ye'm boh'i dung 'fo</i>	with your neighbors
<i>yak i diana kiet k'i ma o</i>	let's live together in love
<i>ima ke'n yin iyem</i>	love is all we want
<i>yak Emem odu k'i song'n</i>	let there be peace in our land
<i>yin yak Emem odu ke</i>	let there be peace in Nigeria
<i>Nigeria Emem ke'n yin</i>	peace is all we want
<i>iyem Emem o, Emem o</i>	peace, peace
<i>Emem ke isong'n yin</i>	peace in our land
<i>Emem k'e yong, Emem k'isong</i>	peace in heaven, and earth
<i>Emem ke Nigeria'n yin o</i>	peace in our Nigeria
<i>anam idiok</i>	evil doer
<i>awod owo</i>	murderer
<i>anam uke</i>	gossips
<i>ayip ino</i>	thieves

Textual Analysis

All: Nigeria, *isong Abasi*
Nigeria God's land

<i>isong ewong o</i>	land of covenant
<i>isong iyene</i>	land of riches
<i>song idem, song ubok mum</i>	Nigeria kama be strong, be firm, hold onto Nigeria
<i>Nigeria isong ete'n yin</i>	Nigeria our fathers' land
<i>Nigeria ebiet idung'n yin</i>	Nigeria our place of abode

Call: 'Giant of Africa'

Resp: *ke'n yin ido*

k'i song Abasi yak Emem odu

All: *tad esit 'fo tad ubok 'fo*

that's what we are
in God's land let there be peace
open your heart open your arms

Call: *ma'a yin uka ma'a yin uso*

Resp: *ye'm boh'i dung 'fo*

All: *yak i diana kiet k'i ma o*

love your sister love your
brother with your neighbors
let's live together in love

Call: *ima ke'n yin iyem*

All: *yak i diana kiet k'i ma o*

love is all we want
let's live together in love

Call: *Emem ke'n yin iyem* All:

yak i diana kiet k'i ma o yak

Emem odu k'i song'n yin

peace is all we want
let's live together in love
let there be peace in our land

Bass Solo: *yak Emem odu k'i song'n*

yin yak Emem odu k'i song Nigeria

let there be peace in our land
let there be peace in Nigeria

First Entry: *Emem o, Emem o Emem ke isong'n yin* peace, peace, peace in our land
Emem k'e yong, Emem k'isong Emem ke'n yin iyem peace in heaven, and earth peace is what we want

Third Entry: *Emem ke Nigeria'n yin o* peace in our Nigeria

Div. Entries: *anam idok* evil doer
awod owo murderer
anam uke gossips
ayip ino thieves

Structural Analysis

The style of the music is through-composed, written in the key of F major. The scale represents the rise and fall in pitch of the note used in the song text, phrases, and sentences. There is a call and response done interchangeably by voice parts and sometimes by a solo instrument. The entire composition is accompanied by selected Ibibio traditional instruments to serve as 'contrasting' unlike in the typical choral music composition where voices are predominantly employed. The work consists of ninety-two bars, with a compound time signature of 12/8 (which is interpreted as twelve quaver beats in each bar, and each takes one count). There is also an instrumental introduction and interlude which occurs in the smaller section usually written in moderate tempo having its range and tessitura as (dotted note of 120):

Figure 1: Soprano voice range



Figure 2: Alto voice range



Figure 3: Tenor voice range

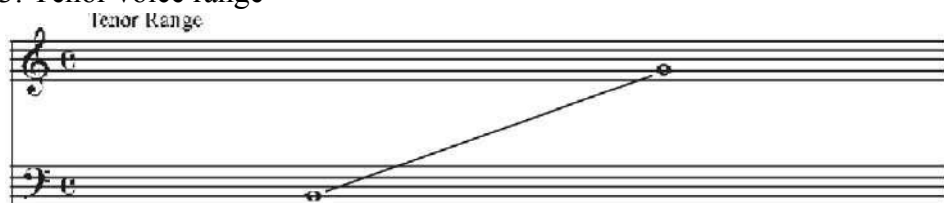
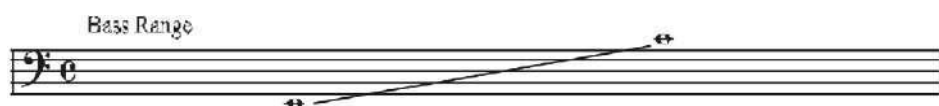


Figure 4: Bass voice range



The work is a non-ritualistic choral work for (SATB) with selected Ibibio traditional musical instruments comprising percussive, rhythmic, and Melo-rhythmic accompaniment. Both the voices and the accompaniment complement each other to produce speech melody and speech rhythm; meaning the compositional work is tonal. This conforms to the primordial musical style on which the study is anchored. The music conveys a message using the Ibibio idioms, phrases, concepts, and also through the call and response technique. It employs Ibibio theoretical constructs necessary to express contrasting style, accent, inflexion, moods, rhythms, colours, pitches, and variations. No modulation throughout the entire choral composition.

Summary of the Composition

Introduction: Ibibio traditional instrument introduction with the Nkwong/Gong initiating the lead, with the voice unison entry.

Text: Ibibio Language.

Form: Through-Compose, and Call and Response.

Melody: Speech Pattern influencing the pitch and rhythm elements of the song. The flow in the melody is influenced by the tonal inflexion of the Ibibio words.

Scale: Constructed on the heptatonic scale.

Harmony: Seconds, Thirds, and sometimes Fourth, with the voice part maintaining the meaning of each word.

Key: F major.

Time: 12.

8

Range: 9th.

Rhythm: Naturally phrased from the spoken language, with emphasis on 'ong' as in 'isong, 'e wong o.'

Mood: Expressed in a bright, lively, and cheerful character.

Instrumentation: A total number of six instruments are in use with the Eka Ibibio/Drum playing the role of the master instrument.

Conclusion

It is strongly agreed that a non-Ibibio speaking composer needs to understand the ethnics' linguistic inflexion before he/she can properly write/compose using Ibibio folk materials. Composing indigenous music such as the Ibibio entails an in-depth understanding of the spoken language (which comprises the idioms, phrases, and the theoretical basis) and is reflected in their rhythm, style, and harmony which is similar to that of the western harmonic styles.

Recommendation

1. The language and culture of the Ibibio should be understudied with apt understanding either directly or indirectly.
2. More researchers should aspire to explore Ibibio culture and tradition to create awareness, thereby making available materials for further studies.
3. The use of traditional musical instruments accompaniment should be encouraged in musical art composition to bring out the African culture in such works.

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