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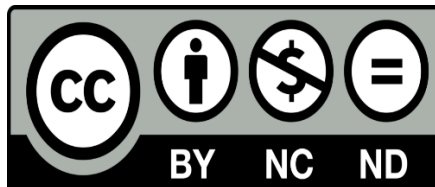
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EDITORIAL

Among the Senufos from the north of Côte d'Ivoire, the sacred grove is called "Sinzang". The first of these would date from the time of the patriarch and leader of Korhogo SORO Zouakagnon (1840-1894). It is the tutelary space of the initiatory institute of the secret society: the Poro. These sacred forests exist in all the villages of the region and are highly protected and managed. The proof is that in their midst, adolescents perform the rite of passage leading them to the age of maturity. The "Sinzang" is also the centre of intergenerational knowledge transmission. Thus, the teaching of ancestral knowledge, ontology and cosmogony-contributing to the future spiritual, moral and social formation of the Senufo elite-is associated with this pantheon.

In line with this pedagogical and academic logic, the SINZANG Journal aims to promote African and Western humanities in Literature, Language, Communication and Education Sciences. To do this, it is part of a process of promoting the reflections and studies conducted by Teachers-Researchers and Researchers for the sustainable development of society.

As distinctive signs of "Sinzang", Jacqueline DELANGE, in *Arts et peuple Sénoufo de l'Afrique noire*, identifies among others the huts, earth cones and statues (masks). The visual identity of this magazine presents two masks, one symbolizing ancestral knowledge and the other Western science. The two facing the entrance of a sacred hut express the encounter of diverse knowledge put at the service of humanity. *In fine*, they export to other horizons, hence the idea of huts in perspective.

SINZANG is a pluridisciplinary and biannual peer-reviewed scientific journal. It is published in English and French but also accepts work written in German and Spanish. Moreover, depending on the requests made at the discretion of its review committee, it may issue special thematic publications and conference proceedings.

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ÉDITORIAL

Chez les Sénoufos du nord de la Côte d'Ivoire, le bosquet sacré est communément appelé « Sinzang ». Les premiers du genre dateraient de l'époque du patriarche et chef de Korhogo SORO Zouakagnon (1840-1894). C'est l'espace tutélaire de l'institut initiatique de la société secrète : le Poro. Lieux fortement protégés et aménagés à l'envi, ces forêts sacrées existent dans tous les villages de la région. La preuve en est qu'en leur sein, les adolescents effectuent le rite de passage les amenant à l'âge de la maturité. Le « Sinzang » est aussi le haut lieu de la transmission de la connaissance intergénérationnelle. Ainsi, l'enseignement du savoir ancestral, de l'ontologie et la cosmogonie- contribuant à la formation spirituelle, morale et sociale de l'élite Sénoufo de demain-est associé à ce panthéon.

S'inscrivant dans cette logique pédagogique et académique, la Revue SINZANG ambitionne de faire la promotion des humanités tant africaine qu'occidentale dans le domaine de la Littérature, des Sciences du Langage, de la Communication et de l'Éducation. Pour ce faire, elle s'inscrit dans une démarche de vulgarisation des réflexions et des études menées par les Enseignants-Chercheurs et des Chercheurs pour le développement durable de la société.

Comme signes distinctifs du « Sinzang », Jacqueline DELANGE, dans *Arts et peuple Sénoufo de l'Afrique noire*, identifie entre autres les cases, les cônes en terre et les statues (masques). L'identité visuelle de cette revue présentant deux masques, l'un symbolisant le savoir ancestral et l'autre la science occidentale. Les deux se faisant face à l'entrée d'une case sacrée expriment la rencontre de connaissances diverses mis au service de l'humanité. In fine, elles s'exportent vers d'autres horizons ; d'où l'idée des cases en perspective.

SINZANG est une revue pluridisciplinaire à comité de lecture et scientifique. Elle est bilingue : éditée en anglais et en français. Mais elle accepte également les travaux écrits en allemand et en espagnol. C'est une revue semestrielle, tenant deux parutions l'an. Au demeurant, elle peut

procéder, selon les demandes ou les sollicitations formulées à l'appréciation de son comité de lecture, à des parutions spéciales thématiques et à la diffusion d'actes de colloque.

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AN EXPLORATION OF STYLE AND PROSODY IN *WĒRÎ MI O* (WASH MY HEAD O) BY ADEBAYO FALETI

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ABSTRACT

There is divergence in the opinions of scholars on the relevant knowledge by which the prosodic elements in texts, and in oral poetry in particular can be mitigated. Extracts relating and relevant to the stylistic and prosodic elements in the poem were sampled and analyzed using stylistic theory with case method. Using *Wĕrî Mi O*, - 'wash my head o', a Yoruba indigenous poem performed by Adebayo Faleti, as a case study, it is found out that, various linguistic elements are deployed around non-verbal communication media and materials. This study concludes that, on the one hand, it is the stylistic studies that validates prosodic elements and styles in texts; since it is the knowledge that navigates through the linguistic and literary routes in texts. And, occurrence of prosodic elements in oral poetry are unpredictable as such varies in accordance with text and poet's styles.

Keywords: culture, language, poetry, prosody, style, stylistics.

UNE EXPLORATION DU STYLE ET DE LA PROSODIE DANS *WĒRÎ MI O* (LAVE-MOI LA TÊTE O) PAR ADEBAYO FALETI

RÉSUMÉ

Les opinions des chercheurs divergent quant aux saviors pertinents permettant d'atténuer les éléments prosodiques dans les textes, et dans la poésie orale en particulier. Des extraits relatifs aux éléments stylistiques et prosodiques du poème ont été sélectionnés et analysés au moyen de méthodes d'études stylistiques et d'études de cas. Sur la base de l'étude de cas de *Wĕrî Mi O*, - "wash my head o", un poème indigène yoruba interprété par Adebayo Faleti, il s'avère que divers éléments linguistiques sont utilisés autour de supports et de matériels de communication non-verbale. Cette étude permet de conclure que ce sont les études stylistiques qui valident les éléments prosodiques et les styles dans les textes, car c'est la connaissance qui permet de suivre

les axes linguistiques et littéraires dans les textes. D'autre part, l'apparition d'éléments prosodiques dans la poésie orale est imprévisible car elle varie en fonction du texte et des styles du poète.

Mots-clés : culture, langue, poésie, prosodie, style, stylistique.

INTRODUCTION

The argument about the scope of knowledge around which prosodic elements are comprehended in Yoruba literature among scholars is hazy. This is why O. Olatunji writes “that stress, phonetic or phonological, plays no significant role in the Yoruba language, and none at all in Yoruba oral poetry” (O. Olatunji 1973, p. 712). And that, whether or not prosodic element such as rhythm of “Yoruba poetry is not based on the numerical regulation of the phonological material of the language, rather that of the distinctive rhythm of Yoruba poetry is achieved predominantly through the use of syntactic parallelism” (O. Oyelaran 1975, p. 746). However, in oral performance, the use of language varies from text to poet. This can be captured by the stylistic knowledge that “in literature, the language is used creatively, and one important concept in stylistics is that of *deviation*. The stylistic study of literary text usually seeks to find out the author's specific use of a particular language to create all the effects that he does manage to create” (A. Banjo 1983, p. 17). Implication of this opinion is that, the knowledge of stylistics best expressed or describes the level or degree of deviation (linguistic and literary), including prosodic features which also evolves round the use of language.

In oral poetry, different factors influence the level of deviation. This may arise as a result of privilege, freedom or license in the use of words has made the use of prosodic features in a poem to be flexible, especially in Yoruba oral poetry. In some poetic discourse, poets may be “bending or even breaking the grammatical rule of the language” (A. Banjo 1983, p. 18). This is a normal process of performance in poetry, where “language is a phenomenon we all recognize as poetic license” (A. Banjo 1983, p. 18). It is established in stylistics that various language use in texts bring about the style of a text or discourse. Meaning that deviation may result from prosodic elements as an oral artist may “heightened pitch and the freedom or liberty to prolong any vowel or any length to the idiosyncrasies of the chanting artist” (TM Ilésanmí 2004, p. 50). Implication of this opinion is that application of stress, rhythm and metre among others vary considerably as every text is well described along “stylistic variant of language appropriate to a particular social setting. Also called style” (R. Fromkin et al 2007, p. 558). Output or outcome of deviation is variation.

In oral poetic performance, language use varies from text to poet, the knowledge of which can best be shrouded by stylistics. F.B.O. Akporobaro (2012, p. 301) writes: “in

most traditions of Nigerian oral poetry however, there is always a tendency to vary the form, style, rhythm and even the musical instrument used". Therefore, the main aim of this study is to navigate the style and prosodic elements in *Wẹrù Mi O* as indigenous Yoruba oral poetry. The objectives of the study are to; examine the influence of indigenous Yoruba oral poetry on the poetic style of Faleti and to; account for prosodic feature influence on Yoruba oral poetic performance as demonstrated in *Wẹrù Mi O*.

1. Corpus presentation and Research Methodology

1.1. Corpus presentation

Unlike in a closed form where there are guiding frame-structure with which a poem is created free form poem is a form of poem where, "poet seeks to discover a fresh and individual arrangement for words in every poem. Such a poem, generally speaking, has neither a rime scheme or a basic meter informing the whole of it. Doing without those powerful some would say hyhotico elements the poet who writes in open form relies on other means to engage and sustain the readers' attention" (X.J. Kennedy and D. Gioia 2007, p. 217). Even though, this form encapsulates some prosodic elements, however, such are liberated from the shackles those prosodic elements. That is, the poem is in open form. It is not that poetry are devoid of form, arrangement or order but "instead, that poets capitalize on the freedom either to create their own forms or to use the traditional fixed forms in more flexible ways" (R. DiYanni 1990, p. 495). The arrangement and structure of the poem was mitigated by Faleti's initiative.

In this form of poetry, "a poet seeks to discover a fresh and individual arrangement for words in every poem" (X.J. Kennedy and D. Gioia 2007, p. 217). Faleti's choice of this form is informed to create an avenue or atmosphere for the poem to be remembered-and memorized on the one hand and, on the other hand, to extend the involvement or participation of the poem to all and sundry. That is, the poem is in ballad, it is incorporated to lyric, where "story is subordinated to song, and action to emotion. The music of lyrics makes them memorable, and their brevity contributes to the intensity of their emotional expression originally designed to be sung in a musical accomplishment" (R. DiYanni 1986, p. 425). The use of indigenous material such as beaded gourd gives the poem an indigenous flavor and aesthetics values.

Wẹrù Mi O is performed around folk ballads, which is an "anonymous story- song transmitted orally before they were ever written down" (X.J. Kennedy and D. Gioia 2007, p. 137). The poem has its origin in orality before it was transmitted to written form. Prosodic features such as stress, meter and rhythm are valued and validated in

oral performance. With the transformation of Yoruba written poetry from oral poetry some features of the old (oral) are equally implied on the new (written form).

Wẹrù Mi O is structured along stanzas. That is stanza “in (Italian for ‘stopping place’ or ‘room’) is a group of lines whose pattern is repeated throughout the poem” (X.J. Kennedy and D. Gioia 2007, p. 137). Since the poem is in a song mode, it explores refrains which “are words, phrases, or lines repeated at intervals in a song or songlike poem. A refrain usually follows immediately after a stanza” (X.J. Kennedy and D. Gioia 2007, p. 133). The poem is weaved around an internal refrain and terminal refrain.

These are words changes that occur within stanzas in fixed form throughout the poem.

1. 2. Research Methodology

Case study method is adopted for this study. This is because, “you cannot study everyone everywhere doing everything” (P. Ariya and A. Bhimrao 2021, p. 3). That is, all the stanzas and lines of the poem cannot be comprehensively analyzed with a study. Therefore, relevant stanzas, lines and words were sampled to describe style and prosodic elements in *Wẹrù Mi O* based on the level of occurrences.

There are three divisions in *Wẹrù Mi O*- *lílẹ* (leading), *ẹgbẹ* (refrain) and *ewì àti ilù* "poems and drums." Leading contains of 10 stanzas. 4 lines stanzas are 7, one is sampled; 5 lines stanza is 1, the only one is sampled and 6 lines stanzas are 2, one of the 2 is sampled. The sampled stanzas contain the same content. Therefore, the sampled stanzas are the representatives of the other stanzas.

The refrain division contains 19 stanzas of 4 lines. One is sampled, since the contents are the same with others. The poems and drums division contains 8 stanzas: 3 lines: 1, 4 lines; 2, 6 lines; 2, 7 lines; 1, 9 lines; 1, 15 lines is 1, 21 lines is 1 and 28 lines is 1. 15 lines stanzas are sampled on the analysis of meter, stressed and syllable structure since it is near average of the longest stanza that contains 28 lines.

2. Stylistic and prosodic features in *Wẹrù Mi O*

2. 1. Stylistic features in *Wẹrù Mi O*

2.1.1. Indigenous non-verbal materials in *Wẹrù Mi O*

In *Wẹrù Mi O*, musical instruments such as drum, *Sẹkẹrẹ* (beaded gourd) play significant roles. This informs why some stanzas are produced or performed in the poem at the exclusion of voice. There is no stanza without the use of the drum along the use of poem’s performance. This demonstrates the influence and impact of

indigenous musical instruments on Yoruba poetry. As demonstrated in the poem, there is simultaneous use, and inclusion of “the Yoruba drum performs both rhythmic and communication functions” (B. Ajayi 2009, p. 33). This is the case in *Wẹrî Mi O*, where, Fálétí makes use of indigenous non-verbal materials in his poetic performance such as *ọfọ*- incantation, proverbs and aphorisms. One of the indigenous aesthetic elements prominently used in *Wẹrî Mi O* is *ọfọ*- incantation. This is one of the unique features of African poetry that differs from foreign poetry.

- (i) *koko là á bOgùn-un/Ògún* is always met in hard form
Koko là á bókè/we always meet mountain in hard form
 (p. 25 lines 45-6)
- (ii) *Béyẹ bá fò nínú igbó, gbogbo ibi rẹ a gbòn dà nù*/If a bird flies in the bush all
 evils targets are shaken off (p. 25 line
 53)
- (iii) *pírí ní jǐjǐ olongo*/Olongo bird always wakes up well
Eyẹ kùì gbé orí itẹ̀ ẹ̀kùnrùn/A bird is never in the nest sick
 (p. 25 lines 59 and 60)
- (iv) *Nijọ̀ tọ́jọ̀ bá fẹ̀ burú*/on an impending evil day
Koorun ó gbé ẹ̀ni tó fẹ̀ jí rooko lọ/let the one that sleeps be carried away
with sleeping.
 (p. 28 lines 139 - 140)

Among the Yoruba, and in culture of nations of the world, names are used as symbols. This is the case in the contexts of *oríkì*- panegyrics and *ọfọ*- incantation that are communicated through the verbal or spoken mode of expression as examined in the context of this study. O. Ọ́yínká affirms that: “everything within nature possesses an attribute of consciousness” (2008, p. 7). It is established that “*everything* had a name, that *everything* could be communicated with symbols!” (G. Leski & J. Leski 1987, p. 19). This is the case in the poem where, *ọfọ*- incantation is used. This is a situation where, power of the spoken words is explored “to control people and events, to possess things, to give and receive affection, to express oneself aesthetically and in other ways, to be respected and admired, to have emotional, aesthetic, or religious experiences, and to discern order and meaning in life” (G. Leski & J. Leski 1987, p. 19). The quoted expressions from the poem are derived from the indigenous relative power in them. In this situation, I. Crofton writes “the property of consciousness whereby, it is directed towards an object, even when this object does not exist in reality” (2000, p. 103). Among the Yoruba everything with a name can be referenced as a result of power, value or attribute.

2.1.2 Register in *Wẹrù Mi O*

Appropriate use of register results to “variation according to use in specific situation is also studied in terms of **register**. There is a religious register in which we expect to find expressions not found elsewhere” (G. Yule 1985, p. 245)’. This is the case in *Wẹrù Mi O*. In *Wẹrù Mi O*, register is one of the style markers of Faleti.

Ẹmọ jùre lópòò ilé/Ẹmọ rat wakes up peacefully along its track
Àfẹ̀mòjò jùre nísà a rẹ̀/Àfẹ̀mòjò rat wakes up peacefully in its hole. (pp. 27 lines

37 and 38

The above quoted statements are used along with greetings discourse or context. It is a statement of peaceful day break: in the morning.

In a preceding statement, Faleti demands response from his audience to be responding that they wake up in peace:

Bí mo bá m bí yín, ẹ máa wí pé/When I am asking you, be responding that:
“Mo jùre ee”/I woke up well (pp. 27 lines 34 and 35

There is the use of words in trading or business and hunting contexts. These are expressed as:

- i. *Ìṣòwò yóò lọ sọjà sòwò jèrè/Trader shall go to the market with profit making*
Agbẹ̀ yóò roko àrolà/Farmer will farm and be prosperous (p. 26 lines 73 and 74)
- ii. *Ẹ̀yàn tó n ṣalájàpá, kò ní rìn rìn àrìn rá/The farm produce seller shall have*
safe travelling trips
Níjọ tẹ̀ bá rà/The day you bought
Ẹ ó rọ̀pọ̀/You will buy cheaply
Níjọ tẹ̀ bá tà/The day you sell
Ẹ tọ̀wọ̀n/ sell with high profit (p. 27 lines 93, 96-98).

In example i, the words *ìṣòwò* is used along with trading and profit and *àgbẹ̀`* is used along with hoeing in relation to making profit. In ii, the *alájàpá* trader is known for travelling through buying and selling.

2.1.3 Lead and Follow in *Wẹrù Mi O*

This poetic style is adopted in sung mode. Lead and follow is mostly adopted in the poem. The lead stanzas in the poem are rendered as:

Lilé (leading):
Wẹrù mi o o/Wash my head o o
Wẹrù mi oooo/ Wash my head oooo
Ọba Ẹ̀dùmarè/ Everlasting king
Wẹrù mi ooooo/ Wash my head ooooo
(p. 8 lines 12)

It is the pattern of the lead stanza that is rendered by the refrains; and sometimes in lead and refrains as:

Wẹrù mi o o/Wash my head o o

Wẹrùù mi 0000/ Wash my head 0000
Ọba Èdùmarè/ Everlasting king
Wẹrù mi 00000/ Wash my head 00000.

(p. 24 lines 5- 8)

Presence of indigenous materials and style makes such a poem to be described as Africanist. In lead and follow poetic style, poems are performed in collaborative and participatory manner. This may be by collaboration of some poetic performers or a poet and audience. In this situation, audience are co-participants. This style makes the poem to be memorable by all and sundry and easy to be remembered.

There are repetitions of varying degree, formed by the use of lead and follow poetic style in *Wẹrù Mi O*. The effects of the use of repetitions by Faleti, O. Olatunji writes “structural, lexical semantic and thematic and the effect varies from intensification of an idea to the creation of an atmosphere and imagery, which all add up to promote the dramatic presentation of the action of the poems. In this respect, Faletí is very close to indigenous Yoruba oral poets, whose basic stylistic device is repetition, and illustrates his indebtedness to the tradition which he had spent time to study and assimilate.

Apart from the use of repetition, it is also evident from his poems that Faleti is always conscious of, and has mastered, the Yoruba poetic structure” (1982, p. 89). This style is used in most of Faleti’s poems generally, and in particular, *Wẹrù Mi O*. From this opinion, one is informed by the influence of the indigenous poetry in structure, contents and language among others on the style of written poetry.

2.1.4. Reference in *Wẹrù Mi O*

Reference is a stylistic feature of prominence. There are various ways reference is adopted in texts, however, reference is prominently used in *Wẹrù Mi O*. One of such reference is locative reference, which points to a specific place or around a place. Locations such as there, here, up, down, edge and so on belong to reference. In this situation, “the speaker identifies the referent by locating it on a scale of proximity” (M. A. K. Halliday and R. Hasan 1976, p. 57). However, the location may sometimes be neutral or selective, far and near.

In the poem, there is application of reference of location as:

(i) *Ewé méta ló ñ bẹ lúlẹ̀ odò tó ñ sọkùnfà ire/*There are three leaves **at the bottom of the river** that cause one to be

fortunate

*Ewé kan ñ bẹ lésẹ̀ odò/*there is a leave **at the extreme of the river**

*A má a jéwé ire/*It is a leave of fortunes (p.29 lines 155, 158 and 159)

(ii)*Ewé kan ñ bẹ lésẹ̀ odò,/*There is a leave **at the extreme of the river**

(p.29 line 174)

There is also a deployment of descriptive reference in the poem. The political historical reference to the ancient periods of Olúgbón and Arèṣà are described as peaceful as evinced from the poem that:

*Ohun tó ṣOlúgbón tOlúgbón fi jùire nilé-Igbón/What made Olúgbón to wake up in peace
in Igbón town
Èṣe tẹyin ò ní jí tẹyin ní rere?/Why is it that you will not wake up in peace?
Ohun tó ṣArèṣa tó fi jùire ni Ilé-Ìrèṣà/What made Arèṣà to wake up in peace in Ìrèṣà town
Èṣe tẹyin ò ní jí tẹyin si rere?/Why is it that you will not wake up in peace?*
(p.25 lines 38-40)

In reference situations pointed out above, one past relevant event is connected to the present because of its relevance. Sometimes, plants, animals and inanimate objects are referenced to the present situation because of their natural power in names or effects of nature. Faleti makes reference to Olúgbón and Arèṣà periods of reigning is connected to the natural peaceful situations of two species of rats: *Ẹmó* and *Àfè̀mòjò* as:

*Ẹmó, n wón jùire ní òpó ilé/ Ẹmó rat wakes up along its track
Àfè̀mòjò jùire nìṣà rẹ̀/Àfè̀mòjò rat wakes up in peace in its hole inside the ground*
(p.25 lines 36 and 37)

Since the poem is an intercessory in nature, there are two forms of personal reference in the poem:

- (i) *Wẹ̀rì mí o o/Wash my head o o* (p. 24 line 1)
and
- (ii) *Ọba È̀dùmà̀rè̀ yóò wẹ̀rìì gbogbo wa/The Almighty king will wash our heads
all
Kó wẹ̀rìì wa sówó/To wash our heads to be riches
Kó wẹ̀rìì wa sómọ./To wash our heads to rearing children
KÈ̀dùmà̀rè̀ ó wẹ̀rìì wa sáìkú baálẹ̀ ọ̀rọ̀/The Almighty God should wash our heads
to longevity of life which is the greatest wealth*
(p. 24 lines 16-20)

In example i, there is use of personal reference of first person singular object: **mi- me**. This reference gains prominence in the poem as it is used in 95 times in all the leads and refrains stanzas. This is why the title of the poem is situated around the reference- *Wẹ̀rìì mí O*: ‘Wash my head o.’ In example ii, there is use of first person plural in object position: **wa- us**. This is done by the poet to make the hearers or audience to also intercede for purification of their heads.

2. 1. 5. Lexico-Semantic Relation in *Wẹ̀rìì Mí O*

There is use of words with similar to create and esthetic value in the poem. Words in use are not some related in meaning but having the same sound effects. These are used in form of homonyms or homophone, which are words with different meaning but

pronounced the same and may or not be spelt the same way. There is use of metonym, which is words used in substitute for an object, the name of an attribute or concept associated with the object. This is case in:

Awedewèṣà and *Ọba Èdùmarè* refer to God (p. 24 line 3 and 8)

Likewise, homonyms, which are words that have different meanings but are pronounced the same, and may or may not be spelled the same is used in the poem.

È yin ò wo rọ̀rọ̀ ọ̀gèdè télẹ̀pọ̀ fì ń sọ̀ sọ̀bọ̀/ Look at the soft particle from the
shoot of a plantain

*Bẹ̀ẹ̀ gégé ni yòò máa rọ̀ yín lórùn gbèdè bí ayaba fọ̀wọ̀ méti aṣọ̀/*so it shall be
well with you as a queen holds the apron of her cloth
(p. 26 lines 73 - 77)

In the above example *rọ̀rọ̀*- soft particles from plantain shoot is arrived at by full reduplication from the verb *rọ̀*- soft or easy. The sounds of the two words sound similar. However, their meanings are different.

2.2. Prosodic Features in *Wẹ̀rù Mi O*

Majorly, prosody is “is the theory or study of specifically poetic devices – versification, meter, rhythm, scansion and rhyme. A line of poetry is usually sub divisible into metrical units, known as feet: units of stress or beat... division into feet does not necessarily respect the integrity of individual words but rather of phonemes – units of sound – or syllables” (S. Matterson and J. Darryl 2000, p. 21). This is the case in *Wẹ̀rù Mi O*, where there are prosodic elements as: refrain and lead, rhythm, stress and syllable patters, meter, stress and syllable patterns and rime or rhyme scheme. *Wẹ̀rù Mi O* is folk-ballard, it is structured along refrain, lead and drum and poem. The basic refrain and lead is:

2.2. 1. Refrain and lead

- (i) *Wẹ̀rù mi o o*/wash my head **o o**
Wẹ̀rù mi o o o o/ wash my head **o o o o**
Ọba Èdùmarè/ Èdùmarè, the king
Wẹ̀rù mi o o o o o/ wash my head **o o o o o**.
(p. 24 lines 1-4)

The lead is:

- (ii) *Wẹ̀rù mi o*/wash my head **o**.
Wẹ̀rù mi o o o o/ wash my head **o o o o**
Wẹ̀rù mi o/wash my head **o**.
Wẹ̀rù mi o/wash my head **o**.
Ọba Èdùmarè/Èdùmarè, the king
(p. 24 lines 5-8)

Looking at the structure of refrain and lead stanzas above, the lead derives its structure from the refrain. While the refrain and lead stanza contains 4 lines, the lead stanza contains 5 lines, with internal refrain: *Wẹrù mi o* “wash my head o.” There is also incremental refrain of the vowel ‘o’. In refrain and lead stanza, in line 1: 2’ o o’, in line 2: 4: ‘o o o o’ and in line 4: 5: ‘o o o o o.’ This is rendered in an incremental order.

This is done to create an emphasis.

2.2.2. Rhythm in *Wẹrù Mi O*

In *Wẹrù Mi O*, rhythm has a great effect on the poem and on the audience or hearers; since, it is more effective in oral poetry. This is produced by the recurrence of a sound in the poem. In the poem, stresses entails meanings, when two or more fall side by side an emphasis is implied. This is mostly inscribed at the end of lines by punctuations. In this situation, it is regarded as end-slopped rhythm.

(i) *Emó jüre lópòó ilé/Emó* rat wakes up peacefully along its track

(ii) *Àfèèmòjò jüre nísà a rẹ/Àfèèmòjò* rat wakes up peacefully in its hole.

(p. 25 lines 37 and 38)

(iii) *Kó wẹrù wa sówó,*/to wash our heads to riches,

Kó wẹrù wa sọmọ/to wash our heads to children

KÉdùmàrè ó wẹrù wa sàikú, baálẹ ọrọ/God should wash our heads to longevity of life which is the greatest wealth

(p. 24 lines 17 – 20)

(iv) *Àkàsọ kò ní yẹ lésẹ òmọlé*/step will not break on the feet of the house builder

Èkerẹ kò ní já lésẹ agungi/ supporting object will not break on the feet of the one that climbs a tree

Adému kò ní torí gòpẹ kó torí sọ kalẹ/A palm wine tapper will not climb a palm tree from the top and climbs down from the top.

(p. 28 lines 22 – 24)

(v) *Ìsòwó onímótò tó n sòwò Ògún*/ Motor driver that are trading with Ògún- the divinity of iron and war

Ògún yóò máa fi yín sọmọ ni/Ògún shall be making you his children

Kò ní sẹ̀sẹ̀ fi yín sẹ̀ran/will not mistakenly make you his meat

Ògún ò sí ní tọwọ̀ èyìn sẹ̀sẹ̀/you will not be mistakenly implicated by Ògún

(p. 29 lines 147 – 150)

2. 2.3. Stress and syllable patterns in *Wẹrù Mi O*

In the poem, some syllables are stressed making such syllables in a word louder, slightly in pitch, and somewhat longer in duration than other syllables. This prominent stressed syllable is ‘o’ as evinced in lines 1, 2 and 4 below:

Wẹrù mi o o/wash my head o o

Wẹrù mi o o o o/ wash my head o o o o

Ọba Èdùmàrè/ Èdùmàrè, the king

Wẹrù mi o o o o o/ wash my head o o o o o.

(p. 24 lines 5-8)

The output of vowel repetition is vowel lengthen. However, the repeated vowel 'o' is without a break- continuous, which results in vowel lengthen. This is rendered in midtone. This performs the role of emphasis. The minimum number of duration of pitch in voicing of 'o' is 2 and the maximum is 9. The minimum is expressed in the beginning of the poem while the maximum is express in the last line of the poem. That is, vowel 'o' is used in 2, 4, 5, 6 and 9 times within intervals of lines of the poem. This is the main focus of the poet. It opens and closes the poetic performance.

Since the poem is performed in song mode, the syllable patterns of stanzas in refrains and leads are similar since this pattern gains prominence in use throughout the poem as demonstrated that:

Ègbè orin (Refrain):

- (i) *Wẹ/ri/ì/ mi/ oo/Wash my head o o = 5 syllable*
Wẹ/ri/ì/ mi/ oooo/ Wash my head oooo = 5 syllables
Ọ/ba/ È/dù/ma/rè/ Everlasting king = 6 syllables
Wẹ/ri/ì/ mi/ ooooo/ Wash my head ooooo = 5 syllables
(p.24 lines 5- 8).

- (ii) *Lilé (leading):*
Wẹ/ri/ì/ mi/ oo/Wash my head o o = 5 syllables
Wẹ/ri/ì/ mi/ oooo/ Wash my head oooo = 5 syllables
Ọ/ba/ È/dù/ma/rè/ Everlasting king= 6 syllables
Wẹ/ri/ì/ mi/ ooooo/ Wash my head ooooo = 5 syllables
(p.8 lines 12)

In the above lines of stanzas, the minimum syllables in a line is 5 as in lines 1 and the maximum syllables as in lines 6. Likewise, the first, second and fourth lines contain the same number of syllables: 5 syllables. The refrains and leading stanzas have the same or equivalent syllable patterns. This syllable pattern also forms 28 out of 40 stanzas of the poem. That is, it is the prominent and basic stanza of the stanzas of the poem.

2. 2.4. Meter, stress and syllable patterns in *Wẹrù Mi O*

Representation of meter, stress and syllable patterns are presented as¹:

Line	no of stress	no of syllable
<i>E/wé/ mé/ta/ > ló/ m/ bẹ/ lá/lẹ/ o/dò/ >> tó/ n/ tó/kùn/fà/ i/re/ >>> 7</i>	19	3
There are three leaves at the bottom of the river that cause one to be fortunate		
<i>Gbo/gbo/ rẹ/ ná/à/ > yó/ò/ má/a/ pa/dà/ yó/ò/ di/r/e >> ló/wọ/ wa/ ni/ >>> 4</i>	19	3

¹ Notes: stressed is marked by bold, syllable by slash: / and meter by greater than: > for short purse, medium: >> and long duration purse: >>>

Everything shall turn to be good for us <i>E/ tẹ̀/tẹ̀/ sà/mí/ >, gbo/gbo/ mù/tú/mù/wà/ >></i>	3	11	2
Quickly say amen, all and sundry			
<i>E/wé/ kan/ m/ bẹ/ lẹ/sẹ/ o/dò/ ></i>	2	9	1
there is a leave at the extreme of the river			
<i>A/ má/a/ jé/wé/ i/re/ ></i>	2	7	1
usually pick a good leave			
<i>Gbo/gbo/ o/hun/ tí/ > ẹ/ bá/ n/ fọ/wọ/ bà/ >></i>	11	2	2
Whatever your hands touch			
<i>Yó/ò/ > má/a/ di/re/ >></i>	1	6	2
will turn to be good.			
<i>I/sẹ/ a/jé/ > lẹ/ bá/ n/ fọ/wọ/ bà/ >></i>	1	10	2
Whatever money venture you lay your hands upon			
<i>Yó/ò/ > di/re/ >></i>	1	4	2
will turned good.			
<i>I/sẹ/ o/mọ/ > lẹ/ bá/ n/ fọ/wọ/ bà/ >></i>	2	10	2
If it is on children prosperity you are embarking on			
<i>Yó/ò/ di/re/ ></i>	1	4	1
will turned good.			
<i>Ki/re/ > ó /má/a/ bá/re/ >> / lẹ/wọ/ọ/ wa/ >>></i>	3	11	3
good thing should be multiplying on our hands.			
<i>À/mi/n ></i>	1	3	1
Amen			
<i>Kó/ sẹ/ bẹ/ẹ/ ></i>	1	4	1
It must come to pass like that			
<i>O/b/a > È/dù/mà/rẹ/ è/è/ >></i>	2	8	2

Everlasting King.

(p. 29 lines 155 -169)

2. 2.5. Rime/ Rhyme scheme in *Wẹrû Mi O*

In the poem, there is rhyme, which has to do with the words order in which rimed words recur in a poem. It occurs when two or more “words or phrases contain an identical or similar sound, usually accented, and the consonant- sounds (if any) that follow the vowel sound are identical” (XJ. Kennedy and D. Gioia 2007, p. 131). This may follow different forms: a, b, a, b or a, b, b, a, b, b.

There is a slant rime in *Wẹrû Mi O* as indicted that:

A máa jéwé ire/ usually pick a good leave

Gbogbo ohun tí ẹ bá ń fowó bà/Whatever your hands touch
Yòò máa dire/will turn to be good.
Işé ajé lẹ bá ń fowó bà/Whatever money venture you lay your hands upon
Yòò dire/will turned good.
Işé ọmọ lẹ bá ń fowó bà/If it is on children prosperity you are embarking

on

Yòò dire/will turned good.
Kíre ó máa báre lówọ wa/good thing should be multiplying on our hands.
 (p. 29 lines 159 - 166)

Rime is mostly determined by the sounds ending a word (the vowel) in lines of poetry as shown in the lines of the poem above. This is enforced or validated on vowel sounds of the last syllable. There is a full rime as a result of the use of final vowels in lines of the poem. This is between vowels ‘e’ (high tone) and ‘à’ and ‘a’ on low and mid tones. The rime scheme in the above example is: a, b, a, b, a, b, a.

3. Thematic Influence of *Wẹrù Mi o*

One of the variables that influences Fáléti’s choice of appropriate words is the theme that the poem is weaved around. The poem, *Wẹrù Mi O* belongs to the philosophical and religious themes in Yoruba beliefs. It is a form of poem that cultivates and disseminates rich heritage and cultural values in thoughts and beliefs. The poem gives a “critical account of some of the theories of ‘tradition’ put forward in poetics this century, and with an account of a specific poetic genre” (S. Matterson and D. Jones 2000, p. 54). Poem of this category belongs to the community. It is centrally rooted in the Yoruba belief system on *àyámọ*, *kádàrà*, *’ àkọ́lẹ̀*: destiny symbolized in *Orí*, literally meaning head. Even though, such a poem had its root in orality, when it belongs to the community, however, because of transformation of the poem to a written form, it has been individualized; making the poet an author of the poem. This arises as a result of “shift from an oral to a print medium has been that the poem itself has become more individualized. This act of individuation exists on several levels. This poem is no longer the property of all, or part of a collaborative, communal expression, but is considered the personal expression of the individual” (S. Matterson and D. Jones 2000, pp. 94-5). This is the case in *Wẹrù Mi O*. The use of language, proverbs, aphorism and philosophy canvasses in the poem belong to the Yoruba culture and communities.

It has been established that “all poems are – historical artefacts. They are all produced at specific historical monuments, and their meanings are in many ways produced *by* these moments” (S. Matterson and D. Jones 2000, p. 125). This means, poetry cannot

be devoid of history in one form or the other. Poetic history is encapsulated in the culture of the people, foreign or indigenous. Such poetic story may also be in an adapted of an existing story to the present one, as life itself is a story and product of history.

Fálétí relates the influence of one's destiny in human's lifecycle. As a result of this the poem is historical. F. B. O. Akporobaro writes, "life is a story and stories imitate life and life imitate stories, life reflects stories and stories reflect life. When life is over it is celebrated by a story or stories" (2001, p. 67). The poem is weaved around story and has preserved philosophical account in regards to the belief of the Yoruba on destiny.

The poetic story in *Wẹrù Mi O* is rooted in *Ifá*- the Yoruba divinity of wisdom and divination. *Ifá* is believed to be the foundation on which the culture of the peoples' rests. The concept of *Orí*- head, which is the central theme of discourse in *Wẹrù Mi O* is evinced and referenced from *Ifá* corpus or epistles. some of the important philosophical concepts embodied in *Ifá* literary corpus include the concept of *ori* (inner or spiritual head), *ebọ* (sacrifice) and *ìwàpèlẹ́* (good character). These three concepts are closely related and are complementary to one another. *Orí* is the essence of luck and the most important force responsible for human success or failure. Furthermore, *orí* is the individual's personal divinity who governs his life and communicates on his behalf with the major divinities. Whatever has not been sanctioned by a man's *orí* cannot be approved by the divinities. This is the meaning of the statement found in

Ògúndá Méjì:

Orí, pèlẹ́/Orí I hailed you

*Àtètèníran;/*who will always quickly bless your own

*Àtètègbenikòòsà /*You who blesses a man before any divinity.

*Kò sóoşà tí dá 'ní gbè leyìn orí ẹni/*No divinity blesses a man without the knowledge of his *orí* (Wande Abimbola 1975, p. 411)

As encapsulated in *Ifá* and evinced in the poem, the concept of *orí* is existential in Yoruba belief.

Orí- head, connotes an individual inner or invisible head. The Yoruba belief in the dual nature of man: physical and spiritual, seen and unseen, temporary and permanent. The beginning of journey of man's creation started from heaven as against the day of birth to the physical world. That is, "Yoruba concept of existence transcends the time when the individual on earth. It goes beyond that period" (W. Abimbola 1975, p. 417). Every one picks his or her head before the creator- *Olódùmarè*- God. *Ò run-*

heaven, is where the creator of the cosmos, *Olódùmarè*, is encountered, particularly by *ori*, the immortal essence of self-believed to dialogue with and enter into a pact with *Olódùmarè* before descending to incarnate on earth, the terrestrial world being the transaction space where the store of potential the self brings from *Ò run-* heaven, is worked out through exchanges of time and energy in the market of life, as one may see it.

While on earth, the need for continuous “purification, sanctification or ablution” of head by human beings is necessary as there are mitigating forces against the activation of one’s destiny of earth. In this situation, “the kind of *ori* a reincarnated soul chooses, or an earthly intervention by some *wilful maleficia* such as the devil, the witches and all sorts of evil spirits and even human beings, may hinder the course of his growth toward the desired good and just life. This is often known, in Yoruba thought, as the evil work of earthly re-creator (*a-túnnibí*). In this connection the Yoruba believe in constantly making appropriate sacrifices or propitiations to one’s *ori* (inner head) and *ẹlẹ́dàá* (creator)” (A. Makinde 1983, pp. 44-5). The creator, otherwise known as *Olódùmarè* is interceded to intervene in preventing the evil forces against mankind from succeeding in life. The intercession may be to succeed in business, marital issue, against sickness among others. It is the encounter of the *Olódùmarè* with one’s *ori* that can make success achievable to someone. Even when some sacrifices are performed to one’s *ori*, the ultimate end of acceptance or rejection is *Olódùmarè*. This is the main theme around which *Wẹrù Mi O* is weaved.

Conclusion

This study concludes that in Yoruba oral poetry, knowledge and application of prosodic elements are within the rubric of stylistic studies that incorporates all the language use- phonology, syntax, socio-linguistics, linguistic and literary features in a text or discourse. Likewise, stylistic variant of language appropriate to a particular social setting in oral texts or performance describes the style of the text. In *Wẹrù Mi O*, stanzas and lines are structurally rendered in free verse or open form. This form allows Faleti to improvise, create and manipulate words and expressions according to his or her proficiencies. And in some text contexts, application of prosodic elements such as rime, rhythms, stressed, syllable structure and meter occur or regulated by nature form of the poem: poetic form of the text. However, in Yoruba poetic texts in rigid form such as *ọfọ* (incantation) (of different forms), *ẹ̀pẹ̀* (curse poetry), proverbs

and *oríkì* (praise poetry) their prosodic and style of texts are in rigid forms. The places of stress syllables, rhythms, rimes are “text-marked” rendered in relation to the text types. The pitch of the voice in performance cannot be too varied from how it is inscribed in the text type. However, in oral poems of free verse as in *Wẹ̀rù Mi O* under study, the poet is at liberty to explore prosodic elements and poet’s styles of performance with which such a text can be described.

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