

**DYNAMICS OF MUSICO-CULTURAL ENGAGEMENTS IN SELECTED PRAYER  
MOUNTAINS IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA**

by

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## **CERTIFICATION**

I certify that this research was carried out by the Toyin Samuel AJOSE under my supervision at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to all praying patriarchs and matriarchs in Indigenous Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria and to my parents, Rev. (Dr) E.B. and Rev. Mrs. Titilayo Ajose for showing me the pathway of prayer.

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## ABSTRACT

Prayer Mountain (PM), commonly referred to as *Orí-Òkè*, is a known phenomenon among the Yorùbá Christians in Southwestern Nigeria. Yorùbá Christians consider PM as a site to aid contact with the Divine with a view to attaining victory in spiritual warfare. Existing studies on PM in Nigeria have focused largely on their historical, socio-religious and economic relevance. However, musical engagements on these sacred locations have not received much scholarly attention in spite of the vast musical activities on PMs. This study was, therefore, designed to examine the dynamics of musical and cultural engagements in selected PMs in Osun State, Nigeria.

The study was anchored to the Spatial and Ethnomusicological theories and adopted ethnography design. Two famous prayer mountains, namely, *Orí-Òkè Ìkòyí* in Ìkòyí and *Orí-Òkè Bàbá Ábìyè* in Ede, Osun State, were purposively selected, given their denominational affiliation, attachment to spiritual personages and time-honoured existence. Key informant interviews were conducted with two founders/presiding pastors, four mountain prophets and two administrative pastors. In-depth interviews were also conducted with 16 musicians and 20 worshippers/participants on the mountains. Participant observation was used, during which audio-visual recording of prayer sessions on the PMs were made. Data were subjected to content and musicological analyses.

Ancestral reverence and appropriation of relics, spatial sacredness and religious gender-spatial segregation were strong cultural markers of the Yorùbá on the PMs. Music making, which was initially based on volunteerism by amateur musicians, later witnessed the occasional engagement of professional guest musicians, singers and instrumentalists. Song composition was often spontaneous and hinged largely on divine inspiration and individual creative instinct. Two distinct techniques, namely parodying new texts to existing Yorùbá folk melodies and new texts set to existing popular Christian tunes characterised the style of composition. Hymns, choruses and lyric airs were predominant music typologies on the PMs. Contemporary Western gospel songs were new musical forms used on the PMs. Song texts contained religious narratives laced with various socio-cultural themes, including praise and thanksgiving, prayer, faith and testimonies, and religious satire. The tempi of songs and the performance practice were greatly influenced by the notion of spiritual warfare among participants as evident in rigorous handclapping, intensity of sound production and bodily gestures to highly danceable rhythms accompanied by membranophonic, idiophonic, aerophonic and chordophonic musical instruments. Melodies were largely based on pentatonic scale, with the use of call-and-response form. The Yorùbá *wórò* rhythmic pattern was the dominant music performance on the PMs. The state-of-the-art musical facilities, technological innovations as well as diverse ethnic participants on the mountains reflect various socio-dynamic responses which were largely hinged on the academic, social and ministerial exposure of the founders and leaders of the PMs.

Musical engagements in Prayer Mountains in Osun State, Nigeria, were largely indigenised in style and content, making them sacred sites for the sustenance of old Yorùbá musical forms while negotiating new musical styles. Prayer mountain songs (*orin orí-òkè*) are increasingly populating the repertoire of Yorùbá Christian music.

**Keywords:** Prayer mountains, Yorùbá Christian songs, *orin orí-òkè*

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the study**

Globally, music remains an important element in religion and performs several functions, including communicative, invocative, and intercessory amongst others. Many of the world religions, ranging from traditional/indigenous to foreign, communicate with the ‘other’ world through music. Christianity, in particular, is a religion of music so much so that the idea of conducting Christian worship without the use of music is almost inconceivable; music is to divine service in the same way as breath is to living. In other words, the incessant use of music in Christian worship reveals its essentiality in liturgy or divine services. Scholars have unequivocally emphasised the importance of music in Christian worship (Afolábí, 2000; Loko, 2011; Price, 2015). For instance, Afolábí (2000: 153) quoted Martin Luther as stating: “next to the word of God, music deserves the highest praise. The gift of language combined with the gift of song was given to man that he should proclaim the word of God through music.” The proclamation of the word of God through music implies that music can effectively aid the transmission of liturgical texts or narratives during divine worship.

Before the advent of Christianity in African societies, music had always accompanied, and still accompanies the day-to-day activities of the people. In African traditional religion, music is a potent force in the observance and performance of religious rites by its worshippers. It is believed that music aids smooth connection with the divine, not only in African traditional religion but also religions of other world cultures. For instance, music in vocal or instrumental forms is often offered as prayer, and in the same vein, prayer may also be offered in musical forms. While music helps humans to communicate their feelings with each other, prayer, on the other hand, serves as a means of communicating with the divine. Both prayer and music are engaged in worship, whether at individual or collective (congregational) levels.

Prayer is another indispensable element in religion. Prayer is as an act of communicating with God. In a religious context, prayer connects the human to the spiritual realm (Baquedano-Lopez, 1999: 197). People pray with the understanding of their human limitations and dependence on the “other” world. Hierarchies of different beings populate the spiritual world.



Prayer always starts with a relationship with one of these beings (Evans, 2015). The connective nature of prayer between two persons validates the communicative function of prayer.

Religious activities including rituals, prayer, and music take place in designated places or spaces of worship. According to Fleming and O'Hara (quoted in Ojó, 2014), one of the elements of a religion is that believers often come together to express their faith in worship and celebration in sacred buildings and places. This implies that a space or a place of worship is not just an ordinary place but also a sacred space. A sacred space should, therefore, be distinguishable from other spaces. One question that arises then is what makes a space or place sacred?

The notion of sacred spaces has generated several scholarly discourses in the field of religion (Eliade, 1959; Adrian, 2003). In making further clarification and description of the distinction between spaces within the religious context, Eliade argues that sacred spaces are places known to have experienced hierophany or theophany. He describes hierophany as an experience whereby the sacred reveals itself to humans using a certain object(s) as media of revelation. Such objects may include, but not limited to; trees, stone, water, animals and mountains to mention a few. These sacred objects are not worshipped as ordinary objects because they are hierographic showing things that are no longer stone or tree but the sacred, the *ganz andere* (1959: 11-12). He further explains that theophany is an experience where man invokes the sacred through the opening of a line of communication with the gods and the supersensible world. In other words, theophany shows the non-homogenous nature of space to a religious man thus, the need for a religious man to consecrate a place as sacred distinct from other profane space.

Sacred places open up a line of communication with divine beings. Sacred spaces include but are limited to seashores, hills, rivers, valleys, lake, streams, and mountains. The mountain is historical and very significant among adherents as well as pilgrims of many religious sects, including Christians. The significance of mountains to African Christians and the people's religious experience is not far-fetched. Historically, the Holy Bible recorded many theophanic experiences on several mountains such as Mount Moriah (Gen.22:2), Mount Sinai (Ex. 19-18-20) and Mount Carmel (first Kings 18:19-39). In the New Testament, the ministry of Jesus Christ also witnessed notable events on some mountains, including Mount Olives and Mount of Transfiguration (Matt 17:1-21).

Similarly, there is the biblical account that Jesus preached his longest sermon on a mountain- Mount of Beatitudes. Against the backdrop that God's habitation is in the heavens, mountains are unique places, which adherents believe can facilitate much easier access to God due to their elevated and vantage position. Worshippers, therefore, explore elevated places from time to time for much closer proximity and in the bid to experience the supernatural. In the same vein, the Yorùbá worldview believes that the abode of *Olódùmarè* is in the high places" (Òshítèlú, 2007: 107).

Among the Yorùbá, sacred places used for religious worship are categories and named to reflect their purposes (Àlàbí, 2012). An example is *Ojúbo* meaning a "place of worship" or "worship place" or "shrine." The utility of shrines is evident in the authority vested in them by the *Òrìsà* – divinities. Another distinct place deemed as sacred and powerful in Yorùbá traditional religious domain are sacred forests or groves used for worship. Such forests or groves are called *Igbó* and they take their names after the designated worship carried out within them. For instance, *Igbó Orò* and *Igbó Odú* for Egúngún and *Ifá* worship respectively. These sacred groves are more often than not distant from the immediate community where people live. The potency of sacred sites in African traditional societies accounts for the significant patronage witnessed on these sites.

However, the act of prayer mountaineering as seen in the frequent visits to some specific prayer spaces or mountains popularly referred to as *orí-òkè* (mountain top) or *orí-òkè àdúrà* (prayer mountain) among the Yorùbá Christians in Southwestern Nigeria. The belief in the potency of certain sacred spaces in African religion, especially the Yorùbá, accounts for the patronage and proliferation of Prayer Mountains within the Southwestern part of the country. It is a common belief that Prayer Mountains are potent and are capable of aiding speedy answers to prayer requests made in such places (Fàlayè, 2015: 12). Just like sacred groves and forests in African traditional societies, Prayer Mountains also have priests/officiants attached to them. The priests are *Bàbá orí-òkè* (Father in charge of the mountain) or *Bàbá Alàdúrà* (Father of prayer). These spiritual heads of the prayer mountains are thought to be vested with spiritual authorities to mediate between congregants and the Supreme Being.

The establishment and leadership of these prayer mountains in Southwest Nigeria can be linked to the expanded religious activities of the African Indigenous Churches (AICs), to other sacred spaces outside the conventional church spaces. As classified by Aiyégbóyín (2002), AICs in Nigeria include Christ Apostolic Church, The Church of the Lord (*Alàdùrà*), Cherubim and Seraphim Church and The Celestial Church of Christ. These African indigenous churches also referred to as the *Alàdùrà* movement, with *Alàdùrà* meaning in Yorùbá, “the prayer people” because it implied that they pray more than other churches (Kofi, 2011: 150). These “prayer people” are known to be people given to incessant prayers and believe in the powers of prayers, dreams, revelations, and prophecies. A much greater emphasis on prayers is evident in the teachings as well as the practice of the *Alàdùrà* movement (Fáláyè, 2015:12). The need to expand their prayer haven and to ensure a more serene environment devoid of distractions and noisy surroundings, which characterise their regular church settings led to the establishments of Prayer Mountains outside their initial church buildings.

Given the supernatural powers claimed to be divinely vested on these prayer mountains, patrons believe that chronic issues, spiritual or physical can be resolved only at such sites. Prayer Mountains, either on a hilly site or at ground level provide a more conducive atmosphere of worship and divine revelation. This conduciveness is made possible by the solemnity and calmness that characterise the locations of the prayer mountains, for it helps the attendees/worshippers to focus their attention on the spiritual events taking place at such sites. In the words of Smith (cited in Kilde, 2008:185), “ritual practice and spaces on the truly important, that which is spiritual or divine; they encourage us to pay attention”

Not only are prayer mountains for spiritual alertness, but they are also places where chronic spiritual ailments such as insanity, acute sicknesses and diseases and other related mishaps are referred to for spiritual diagnosis and cure. Commenting on the significance of prayer mountains among the Yorùbá Christians in African Indigenous Churches, Aiyégbóyín (2005:13) notes that the *Alàdùrà* generally insists that sick persons and other petitioners must engage in fervent prayers for healing. If the sickness is beyond individual prayer efforts, petitioners are referred to special prayer sessions conducted at *Ile-ìgbàgbó* (faith-home), or *Ile agbára àdùrà* (prayer power-house), or *Orí- òkè* (the mount). The foregoing points out two issues in relation to the significance of Prayer Mountains, Firstly, fervent and special prayers are

somewhat guaranteed on Prayer Mountains which may not be present in the mainstream church setting. Secondly, the cooperate nature of prayers on Prayer Mountains provide some form of spiritual synergy needed to combat certain supernatural ailments. In some cases, however, the faith homes and the prayer-power houses or mountains (described above), are secluded places within the church premises. For instance, Àgbàlá Daniel (Daniel's Courtyard) and Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè Agbára (CAC Mount of Power) both based in Ibadan are typical examples of such faith homes and prayer-power houses.

Music remains one of the regular worship engagements taking place in sacred spaces, including prayer mountains and it is worthy of scholarly investigation. In view of the high proliferation and patronage of prayer mountains in Southwest, Nigeria, adequate attention needs to be given to the artistic activities, especially the musical performances being carried out on prayer mountains.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

While existing studies have examined the social, economic, ecumenical and historical relevance of prayer mountains in Nigeria (Aiyégbóyin, 2002; Àlàbí, 2012; Fáláyè, 2015; Nwosu et al., 2017), there is a dearth of scholarship on various musical activities as experienced on the myriad of prayer mountains in Southwest Nigeria. Given the vast musical activities that accompany prayer sessions in various prayer mountains which have been ignored in the extant literature on sacred spaces, prayer mountain in particular; there is the need for a proper understanding of musical activities being carried out at prayer spaces especially in the south-west Nigeria where prayer mountains are largely concentrated. In addition, there is the need for an ethnomusicological examination of the musical form and content of these 'prayer-songs' (*orin àdúrà*) and the socio-cultural ideologies that influence or shape the production and usage of music on the prayer mountains.

### **1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

This study investigates the music-prayer interactions in selected prayer mountains in Osun State, Nigeria. Its specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the cultural features of the Yorùbá and the social dynamics on prayer mountains;
2. Discuss the role of various music makers on the prayer mountains;
3. Identify compositional techniques and typologies of music, specifically, songs used during prayer activities on the prayer mountains;
4. Analyse the structural forms and stylistic feature of music performances on prayer mountains.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the socio-cultural dynamics of prayer mountains in Òsun State?
2. Who are the people responsible for music-making on the prayer mountains?
3. How do music personnel deploy compositional techniques to create songs used on the prayer mountains?
4. What are the structural forms and stylistic features of music performances on prayer mountains?

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study covers the music and musical activities in selected prayer mountains in southwestern Nigeria specifically Òsun State. The study is limited to music used during worship and prayer sessions on the prayer mountains. The metaphysical aspect of music production is not within the purview of this work. In addition, this work does not consider the campgrounds of some Christian denominations in Òsun State as prayer mountains.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This work is significant for practitioners and researchers in the field of sacred musicology in several ways. First, the findings of this work provide individuals, religious and academic institutions better understanding of the social and cultural features expressed in the various prayer activities as witnessed on the selected prayer mountains. It also explicates the implication of music in Christian worship in the selected prayer mountains in Òsun State on contemporary African Spirituality, particularly, Yorùbá Christian worship. Second, this study offers the opportunity for transcription and documentation of the music, mostly songs, which in most cases are composed spontaneously on these prayer mountains. This process transforms the songs, orally performed and taught, into standard music notation that could facilitate further musical analysis, arrangement, rearrangement and performance for larger public consumption.

## **1.7 Operational definition of terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are contextually defined:

- a. Prayer mountain: this refers to a designated physical elevated space where incessant prayer activities are engaged in daily. These prayer mountains are inherently unique in their establishment, mode of worship and religious operations as opposed to the mainstream church building. Campgrounds, prayer camps or headquarters of mainstream churches are not considered as Prayer Mountains in this study.
- b. Prayer activities/rituals: These include all religious activities such as prayers, fasting, vigils, deliverance sessions, testimonies and music (singing, drumming and dancing).

## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Theoretical framework

Given this research stance in the fields of ethnomusicology and religion, it is of the essence to investigate this study using relevant and appropriate theoretical frameworks to both disciplines. Therefore, this study is anchored to spatial and ethnomusicology theories for a better and deeper understanding of the work.

##### 2.1.1 Spatial theory

The spatial theory is the study of space and place. It involves, but is not limited to, geography, material objects, the built environment, social institutions, the body, imaginary sites, and ideological positions. Two critical notions in the definition of Spatial Theory are space and place. Preucel and Meskell (2004:215) define space as “the physical setting in which everything occurs while place is the outcome of the social process of valuing space; a product of the imaginary, of desire, and the primary means by which we articulate with space and transform it into a humanised landscape.” Although, Preucel and Meskell’s definition has been contested or accepted by various scholars. Some scholars hold the view that space is a product of place while others consider both space and place as social constructs, hence the contextual application of the theory in different disciplines.

Whilst no specific scholar is regarded as the proponent of this theory, many scholars (Knott, 2005; Stewart, 2012; Fuller & Low, 2017) have unequivocally remarked the significant contributions of Henri Lefebvre to the development of Spatial Theory through his revolutionary works on the study of space which witnessed a radical era referred to as “the spatial turn”, a period in the early 1990’s when continental theorists and postmodern geographers produced a swell of work in which they attempted to think about and understand space in new ways. Since the spatial turn, space is no longer viewed as static or inert background action, but as an arena of struggle that shapes ideas, beliefs, principles, and values. Modern spatial theorists understand space as dynamic, relational, and agentic. Space is intertwined with embodiment and lived experiences, touching every arena of social and cultural life, including, of course, religion

(Gunderson, 2014). In other words, the spatial theory suggests that space is meaningless without its humans as social actors.

The spatial theory expatiated in Lefebvre's groundbreaking work titled *La production de l'espace* written in 1974 and later translated as *The Production of Space* by D. Nicholson-Smith in 1991 while exploring the modes of production of spaces. In spatial theory (social theory), Lefebvre (1991) posits that society and space are not independent entities but largely interdependent. The implication of this interaction between society and space is that spaces are social constructs. Lefebvre anchors his concept of space to what is known as a spatial triad; perceived space conceived space and representational space. Lefebvre argues that representational space transcends both the perceived and conceived space has the capacity to reconfigure both spaces. Lefebvre's goal in delineating this triad is to demonstrate that space is not an object, but the result of a set of relations. In other words, space is dialecticised in its production. According to Lefebvre, space is not a container or a static setting inherited from nature but produced and reproduced by humans and their interests.

Spatial theory has also been applied in interrogating the notion of space in many studies, both in the fields of religion and geography. In religion, Smith (1978, 1998) advanced the study of space by demonstrating that place is more than natural or material space. Rather, space is lived and socially organised, from which sacred or profane space is produced. He asserts that places are created through ritual, a process by which people make their world meaningful. In an article on "Spatial Theory and Method for the Study of Religion", Knott (2005) notes that "religion, in its physical presence, social orderings, and cultural forms, is a consequence of spatial practice, though it is the attribution of meaning that gives such practice its character as "religious" (Knott, 2005: 163).

Another work on religion that engages spatial theory is by Stewart (2012) in "New testament space/spatiality". Stewart demonstrates how both perceived and conceived spaces affect the "lived" spaces as shown in some New Testament narratives. He notes that "authors of texts, as members of societies in which spatial practice, representations of space, and representational spaces are in constant negotiation, describe the spaces of their own imaginations. These spaces may be very similar to the spaces of their societies, or they may offer a significant challenge to such spaces. In either case, spaces represented in texts are spaces of the



imagination, spaces of the artist” (Stewart, 2012: 143). This foreground the notion that spaces are socially constructed as further argued by Simmel that space is indispensable for social life, a ‘conditio sine qua non’, without which social life does not exist (Simmel, 1997: 137). Space is the condition for the social. In previous discourses on spatial theory, Simmel provides a deeper understanding of space beyond coordinates in a contained topography of absolute space or space as relative to positionality. It is not absolute, topographical space or relative positions that produce social phenomena, instead Simmel shows how space is indispensable for understanding social life precisely because of the central importance of meaning-making in the formation of spaces and spaces in the formation of meaning-making. In Simmel’s words, it is the ‘psychological’ conditions and ‘spatial meanings of things and processes’ that render space significant (1997: 138). Human action produces meaningful space, for example in spatial exclusiveness as well as the dividing up of and processual institutionalisation of spaces. (Muller & Low, 2017: 472).

Spatial theory is relevant to this research in so many ways. First, it argues that sacred spaces, Prayer Mountain, in the case of the study, can be perceived, conceived and represented. As Knott (2005: 166) aptly puts it: space does not, of course, exercise agency, but people’s agency is continually expressed in and through it. Using this theory, this study examined how people’s perception as represented by their worldview, culture-religion and music on the prayer mountain. Also, this study examined how African Christian spirituality is continually expressed in and through the *Ori-òke* phenomenon as “lived” on prayer mountains in the South-west, Nigeria, particularly in Osùn state. Second, the cultural ideologies that shape the liturgical practices on sacred spaces like the prayer mountains in Osùn State were interrogated in the music produced therein since “music is seen as a medium through which people shape and reshape their identities” (Frankenberg *et.al*, 2016: 115).

### **2.1.2 Ethnomusicological theory**

In the field of ethnomusicology over the years, there have been contests and debates over the appropriateness and adequacy of the use of social or cultural theories to explain the musical tradition of different cultures, hence the need to engage ethnomusicological theory by ethnomusicologists in their research. According to Rice (2010:105), “ethnomusicological theory involves the writing of descriptions, classifications, comparisons, interpretations and

generalizations about music (and possibly sound) in general, about a particular musical traditions, about music in a set of related communities, or about music in relation to cognitive, artistic, experiential, social, cultural, political, and economic issues, themes, and processes.” This theory, in the opinion of Rice, is capable of sufficiently capturing every aspect of ethnomusicological research both in terms of descriptions and general submission about the nature of music in any given ethnography. The focal point of this theory is that rather than adopt social theories as propounded by social scientists and anthropologists in explaining the nature of music, as previously done by ethnomusicologists, the study of the nature of music in any local space should provide a scientific explanation which stems from the study itself.

Many scholars in the field of ethnomusicology have employed this theory in their various research works. For example, Nketia’s (1974) treatise on “The music of Africa” explores the ethnomusicological theory. He gave a detailed historical description of music in the region; compared the musical traditions across various geographical locations in Africa. Nketia went on to classify musical instruments in Africa using the Sachs-Hornbostel model. Certain interpretations and generalizations were made in the study about music in Africa. Other scholars such as Vidal, 1977; Akpabot, 1998; Agu, 1999, Samuel, 2009; Loko, 2011, Emielu, 2012; and Idamoyibo, 2012; to mention a few have extensively used the ethnomusicological theory whether in their description, classification, comparison and interpretation of the music of the various musical traditions, communities or processes they have worked on.

In the context of the study, the ethnomusicological theory proved very relevant given that it was used to explain the musical tradition in the prayer mountains. The theory is also useful in the classification of the musical typologies and instruments used. Comparisons in terms of musical activities among the selected prayer mountains were also be explored in light of this theory. Songtexts were also interpreted and arranged based on themes and at the end of the study, general and specific positions were taken about the music in prayer mountains in Southwestern Nigeria in relation to the religious, social and cultural dispositions of participants who visit the prayer mountains.

## **2.2 Review of related literature**

This section reviews existing literature under the following subheadings:

- i. Significance of sacred spaces in world religions
- ii. Belief in and patronage of sacred spaces in African societies
- iii. Prayer mountain and African spirituality
- iv. Prayer mountain and social changes in Nigeria
- v. Music in Christian worship
- vi. Music and Prayer as social phenomena
- vii. Structural and stylistic forms in Nigerian traditional music

### **2.2.1 Significance of sacred spaces in world religions**

The concept of sacred space among world religions has been overtly engaged in various academic studies. These studies have examined the significance of various sacred spaces from primordial to contemporary societies. Sacred spaces, natural or artificial are considered, culturally and religiously, as the abode or dwelling place of the divine. In various world religions, sacred spaces are linked in some ways to natural objects and elements such as stones, rocks, hills, mountains, rivers, grooves, forest and caves to mention a few. Since there is a creator who created all these objects, does it imply that the creator extends his abode in His creatures? Or better put, how do these objects become the abode of the divine? Several scholars have been able to clarify their thoughts on the foregoing questions. Notable among the scholars is Eliade Mircea. His pioneer work on “*The Sacred and the Profane*” interrogates the notion of sacred space.

Eliade attempts to define the term sacred “as the opposite of the profane”. He advances that man becomes aware of the sacred because it manifests itself, shows itself, as something wholly different from the profane”. Further, Eliade coins the term ‘hierography’ to explain the manifestation of the sacred (1959: 10-11). He opines that certain profane objects such as trees, stones, water to mention a few are chosen as media of revelation or the manifestation of the sacred without these object themselves necessarily participating in the profanity (Àlàbí, 2012:19). This implies that those hierographic objects are no longer ‘ordinary’, having manifested the sacred. Eliade succinctly puts: “what is involved is not a veneration of the stone

in itself, a cult of the tree in itself.... The sacred tree, the sacred stone are not adored as stone or tree; they are worshipped because they are hieroglyphic, being they show something that is no longer just a stone or tree but sacred, the *ganz andere*” (1959: 12). The implication of this hieroglyphic experience on the religious man is that he sees his immediate environment as heterogeneous, a part of his space been ‘qualitative’ than the others. Eliade further states that theophanies and signs are peculiar to show the non-homogeneity of nature. Clarifying the distinction between hierophany and theophany, Eliade (1959) explains:

The hierophanic experience involves direct manifestation on earth of a deity while the theophanic experience is that of somebody receiving a message from the deity and interprets it for others. “...in the sacred enclosure, communication with the gods is made possible; hence there must be a door to the world above, by which the gods can descend to earth and man can symbolically ascend to heaven”(20-26).

From the foregoing, it suggests, therefore, that sacred space could be ‘God-provoked’ or ‘man-invoked’. Man-invocation is symbolic, thus the need to relate with the divine through his immediate environment be it animate or inanimate. Corroborating the need for the religious man to continuously and permanently relate with divine beyond in his bodily space, the philosopher Plotinus (205-270 CE) explains it this way:

Those ancient sages who sought to secure the presence of divine beings by the erection of shrines and statues, showed insight into the nature of the All; they perceived that, though the Soul is everywhere traceable, its presence will be secured all the more readily when an appropriate receptacle is elaborated, a place especially capable of receiving some portion or phase of it, something reproducing it, or representing it and serving like a mirror to catch an image of it. (Rigoglioso, 2009:35)

An in-depth examination of the last few sentences of the ancient philosopher raises the question on the idea of the sacred or sacred spaces. Firstly, can the sacred be reproduced? If yes, how and why should the supreme or divine allow himself to be reproduced? Secondly, even and when the sacred is reproduced, is there a need for its representation anymore? With these questions raised, one can infer that sacred spaces can be culturally or religiously constructed and reconstructed (Levi & Kocher, 2012).

Culture continues to shape beliefs, values and worldviews towards the environment and environmental behaviour (Shinde, 2011: 448). The way and manner people relate to their environment is often a product of their cultural experience. This informs why some environments especially sacred spaces are ‘qualitatively’ different from others. The differential perception is significantly influenced by cultural meanings given to space whether sacred or profane. It, therefore, suggests why some pilgrims to a religious or sacred site consider it as a spiritual experience while others see it as a mere recreational activity. Suffice to say that a religious or sacred space can be mutually exclusive in utility in the sense that, both sacred and secular activities can take place simultaneously thus providing ‘space hybridity’.

With reference to Judeo-Christianity, particularly the ancient Israel culture, sacred places such as water, hills and mountains are places of symbolic importance. Mountaineering activities are part of the cultural experience of the Israelites. Several religious activities were notable because they took place on different mountains at different times by different people. Mountains are culturally seen as natural means of defence. For example, Jerusalem also known as the city of God is physically surrounded by mountains and hills. This is attested to, in the figurative expression of the Psalmist in the holy bible: “as the mountain surrounds Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people both now and forevermore” (Psalm 125:2).

In the same vein, Àlàbí (2012) stresses the cultural significance and belief in sacred places among the Canaanites when he noted that: “their gods dwelt on “high place” and the gods were sky gods who dwelt on places like hills, rocks and mountains. The mountains of Canaanite gods are sacred places and the dwelling places of their gods”. He further notes the implication of the cultural contact that took place between the Canaanites and the ancient Israel and the consequent impact it had on ancient Israel when he remarked that “by the time ancient Israel had contact with the Canaanites in the land, they too were influenced... ancient Israel too embraced this religious culture as a result of the change in their occupation from nomad to agrarian occupation” (p. 226).

In Islam, there is the existence of sacred spaces such as mountains. There are many portions of the Qur’an that describes the mountain as a divine, natural place of spiritual development and refuge. The Qur’an refers to mountains of historic importance such as those where the *Thamud* people lived (Qur’an 7:74; 15:82&26:149). It is believed that Prophet

Muhammad's first revelation was the event in which he was visited by the Archangel Jubril in 610 CE, who revealed to him a verse from the Holy Qur'an. The event took place in a cave called Hira, located on the mountain called Jabal an-Nour, near Makkah. While on a retreat in a mountain cave near Makkah (the cave of Hira), Angel Jubril appeared before Muhammad and commanded him to recite the first lise of chapter 96 of the Qur'an. Alanamu (2018) noted that "it has become a symbolic event for Muslims over the centuries to climb to the top of the 600-meter high Mountain of Hira to visit the cave where the Qur'an was first revealed and to seek blessings.

Socially, sacred spaces can are of remarkable significance in a different part of the world. It provides a platform for social interactions that unities communities (Levi & Kocher, 2012) through pilgrimages and tourist to cultural or heritage religious sites. Various people visit sacred places for various reasons and purposes. During their visit, several social interactions take place such as the meeting of new friends, small group discussions and in some cases economic activities such as such buying and selling. Heritage religious sites experience binary interactions that are both sacred and social. These religious sites not only serve religious purposes but also aid tourist-related activities (Levi & Kocher, 2012).

From the going, the significance of sacred spaces in various cultural groups and religions has been largely explored. Specifically, some studies have explored extensively the significance of sacred spaces such as rivers, hills and waters to mention a few of such selected places in Southwestern, Nigeria. However, discourse on Prayer Mountain as a religious phenomenon and its significance in African Christianity, especially in Yoruba land, is yet to be fully explored.

### **2.2.2. Belief in and patronage of sacred spaces in African societies**

Sacred places are a fixed presence in different religions and cultures. The nature, manifestation and perception of the sacred vary across different religions and cultures (Rudolf, 1957; Jackson & Henrie, 1983). According to the African worldview, certain spaces are regarded to be sacred, because their spiritual potency makes them qualitatively different from others. These sacred places, which include unique lakes, ponds, streams, waters, lagoons, seas, oceans, grounds, monuments, trees, rocks, hills and mountains are regarded to be the abodes of gods, divinities and spirits in African societies

As far as Africans are concerned, religion permeates every facet of life and nature. Thus, the African man sees that his physical environment does not exist in isolation; it is associated with and seen in connection with the invisible, incorporeal, and spiritual beings (Mbiti 1969). It is the desire to create a closer contact and relationship with the Supreme Being as well as other deities that the African sets aside a place as sacred. However, these objects serve the purpose of marking the sacred spots and the meeting points between the natural and the supernatural, man and divine, world and the spiritual. Ìdòwú (1996) rightly observes that “the method of symbolizing the unseen began with some rough-and-ready objects- a stone, a plant, or a piece of wood, to mark out sacred spots or to set places apart as evidences of the presence of the deity” (quoted in Àlàbí, 2012:61). Supporting the foregoing, Ezenagu (2016), notes that it is at the sacred place that man communicates and communes with Beings in the other worlds. On the reasons why African belief patronizes sacred, consider Àlàbí’s comment:

...there are water cults, tree cults, earth cults and mountain cults in Africa which individual belongs to till date. There are priests and priestesses who are sacred personages attached to these cults. They function as intermediaries between gods and the adherents who patronise these places. The potency and efficacies of the sacred places are major reasons people patronise them (2012:128).

He observes further that the reality, efficacies, proficiency and positive responses derived from the patronage of these [sacred] places prove them to be real and disprove any disclaim of the reality going there (135).

The belief in and patronage of different sacred spaces is prevalent among Africans. With reference to mountains as a significant sacred space in many African societies, mountains, hills and other high standing earth formations are in no way thought to be God; they simply give a concrete manifestation of his being and his presence. They [mountains] are physically closer to the sky than ordinary ground and in that sense; it is easy to associate them with God. In Kenya, Gumo *et al.* (2012) note that the Luo consider *Got Ramogi* and *Got Alila* to be the place of God’s special manifestation and as such sacred and viewed as the dwelling places of God when he visits the earth. Furthermore, they observe, “the Gikuyu make prayers facing Mount Kenya, the chief of their sacred mountains” (p. 531).

In traditional Yoruba societies, various mountains are venerated as emblems of worship based on their socio-cultural significance. These mountains are dedicated to a particular deity,

ancestor or spirit. According to a study carried out on sacred places in Èkìtì land, southwest Nigeria, Àlàbí (2012) found a number of mountain cults in Èkìtì land namely: *Olusunta* Mountain cult in Ìkèré Èkìtì and *Olókè* Mountain cult in Ìkòlé Èkìtì. Worshippers of these mountain cults claimed that they have experienced the supernatural manifestation of the divine at one point or the other. Notably is that *Olusunta* Mountain protected the people during inter-tribal wars in Yoruba land. As a result, there are many Yoruba subgroups in Ìkèré Èkìtì today, who migrated to the town during previous wars but are now permanent residents, if not indigenes. The study further reveals the role of *Olókè* Mountain's (meaning 'he who prevails' or 'he that surmounts') as a means of protection during Ibadan slave raiding and wars in Èkìtì land. The belief in and patronage of these sacred mountains in Èkìtì still subsists owing to their efficacy. Àlàbí comments on the belief in and patronage of *Olókè* Mountain cult:

She [a priestess of *Olókè* Mountain cult] boasted of the efficacy of the *Olókè* cult when consulted for anything, especially after divination has been carried out and the client would provide the chief sacrificial material - *èsúrí* (*dioscorea dumetorum*) and palm wine that essentially needed to be provided as sacrificial materials. People from all walks of life come to Ìkòlé Èkìtì to consult the cult for their various needs. People would come and make various requests, women mostly ask for the gift of children. Everyone comes with his or her materials for sacrifice and kneel before the shrine making their requests and vows. They make vows that if the requests are granted, they [worshippers] would come back and pay their vows. The divinity may demand from the client according to their needs during consultation. Children that are provided through *Olókè* cult are brought to the shrine in the following year for more blessing (Àlàbí, 2012: 137).

It can be observed, from the above, that Africans believed that prayers and requests made in a sacred place such mountain are easily and swiftly heard and responded to by God since the mountain as a sacred place is a manifestation of God's being and presence.

The manifestation of the divine on the mountains necessitates the religious veneration and consecration accorded them, thus becoming a sacred emblem of worship. Àlàbí has also identified *Obo* Mountain as another major mountain cult in Ìré Èkìtì that is patronised by people inside and that community. It is believed that "at the sacred place, a voice speaks to people from nowhere and discerns all the intents of the supplicants and the petitioners any time they are there for oracular consultations" (p.138). The phenomenon of an unseen voice *Obo* Mountain brings to



the fore the biblical antecedence when God spoke to Moses in a burning bush (Exodus 3). A critical look at verse 10 is in line with the claim above that ‘intents of supplicants are discerned’ in the *Obo* Mountain experience. The voice that spoke to Moses is God and he said; “...the cry of the children of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them” (Exodus 3:10). Another biblical example is that of Abraham who had wanted to use his only son as a sacrifice when he heard a voice instructing him to see a ram divinely provided as a substitute for his son (Genesis 22:1-13). One can safely conclude that the unseen voice “discerns the intents” of Abraham. It, therefore, suggests that the belief in the supernatural occurrences at sacred spaces predates the advent of Christianity in Africa, particularly Nigeria.

Speaking on the relevance of *Obo* Mountain to the people of Ìré Èkìtì, Àlàbí (2012) captures it this way: “the spiritual functions of *Obo* divinity ranges from fertility to the barren women, healing of various mysterious sickness and disease, curbing of pestilence, city protections and prevention of external war against the *Ire* town” (p.138). The foregoing reveals that people patronize sacred spaces for various reasons and needs. Prevalent among the various reasons why people, Africans in particular, patronise sacred places such as mountain is the quest for childbearing as noticed in the case of *Olókè* and *Obo* mountain cults. The ardent desire for childbearing among Africans is of utmost significance in African worldview. Generally, in Africa, procreation in marriage is of utmost socio-cultural significance hence childlessness is viewed both religiously and socially, as an aberration. Procreation and fertility guarantee continuity of a family lineage (Tabong & Adongo, 2013) and it symbolises prosperity. Abasili (2011: 558) notes that among the Igbo people of West Africa “the social worth of the spouses flows from and depends on the idea of procreation. The perpetuation of the lineage is vital to the Igbo people, and marriage is the natural and cultural way of guaranteeing the survival of the lineage.

In a similar manner, Anim (2009:38) stresses the importance of procreation among Africans as it “occupies the prime locus in the African concept of prosperity.” He further remarked that among the Akan of Ghana “children are highly valued by the Akan. In spite of all the changes introduced into Akan society by modernity, procreation remains the aim of marriage, for, without offspring, marriage is incomplete.” It is thoughtful to ponder a while on the notion

that procreation is synonymous with prosperity. In traditional African society, agriculture was a major source of livelihood hence the need for sufficient workers who will increase productivity. Therefore, children, as many as possible that one can give birth to will determine largely the amount of workforce needed to do massive farm job. Simply put, the more the children the higher the productivity in the farm. In addition, during a marriage, the girl child attracts some form of brideprice to the father, which is considered some kind of source of wealth for the family. A man with many girl children can be seen to be 'wealthy' in that sense of huge bridal prices. In agreement with this submission, Sewpaul (2010) observes among traditional South African society:

...in the African way of life, children, both boys and girls, mean security and wealth. Within the more traditional practice of polygamy, the only way of competing within the family was to have more children. With girls, wealth is secured through the payment of *ilabola* to the father. In the absence of the father, *ilabola* is paid to an older male in the family. Boys worked the land and ensured growth and prosperity. Boys also carried the surname and, in this way, ensured the perpetuation of the clan (p.744).

Consequently, once can safely deduce that childbearing and procreation among Africans goes beyond social and religious purposes alone, it also reveals the economic worth and as well as social security children are capable of bringing to the parents and the community at large. Thus, the ardent need for childbearing, especially among Africans, necessitates the belief in and patronage of sacred spaces that are believed by the people to be spiritually capable of granting them such requests.

Not only are mountains regarded as sacred, other spaces such as forest, grooves, shrines and rivers are also designated as sacred in Africa. Different parts of Africa are physically endowed with various water sources such as lakes, ponds, streams, springs and rivers in Africa. Some of these water sources are of cultural and religious significance to the people in the community hence the reason for belief in and patronage of such water sources. For example, Mboweni and De Crom (2016: 2) found that the Basotho community in Southern Africa sees the river "not only as a source of drinking water but also as a spiritual sanctuary where one goes to communicate with the ancestors. Like other African communities, the description of the river as a 'spiritual sanctuary' reaffirms the sacredness of the river among the Basotho cultural group.

Eliade (1959) sees the sacred place as one where the three cosmic levels; earth, heaven and the underworld, at once encounter each other and are represented.

Furthermore, Enemmou (2014) opines that the earth inhabited by humans, the underworld by the ancestors and the world above by the Supreme God and gods (cited in Ezenagu, 2016: 2). Supporting this view, Okeke *et al* (2017: 2) remarks that “the High God is not represented in any carved or moulded form; He is not assigned a shrine. He is said to have his abode above the sky.” Arguably, the river can be classified as the third cosmic level (the underworld) identified by Eliade which Enemmou also described as occupied by the ancestors.

Aquatic environments are considered spiritually relevant not only in African culture but also in other parts of the world. According to Sharma (1997), “the Ganga has been India’s river of faith, devotion, and worship from ancient times and millions of Hindus accept its water as sacred. Even today, people carry treasured Ganga water all over India and abroad because it is ‘holy’ water and known for its ‘curative’ properties” (cited in Mboweni & De Crom, 2016: 2). The association of various water environments with holy beings in certain cultures is principally what results in the worship practices that are carried out at rivers. (Mboweni & De Crom, 2016). Àlàbí (2012: 132) points out that there are spirits and divinities, which are believed to inhabit these streams, rivers, and waters, hence the need for their worship by water cults.

Reasons for the belief in sacredness and potency of water spaces, rivers especially in Africa are that: firstly, because of its fertility power. Water is essential to the growth of plants. If water can fertilise the earth to produce plants, Africans believe that the worship and patronage of sacred rivers are capable of making them fruitful in terms of childbearing. Among the Yorùbá, *Òsun* the water goddess of the river is believed to be a fertility goddess. Hence, during the festival, barren women make supplication to her for the fruit of the womb. The fertility power vested on sacred water suggests that Africans see nature as a living entity and that it is capable of giving life. This foregoing corroborates the submission of DWAF (2005) that water animism is based on a belief that natural objects (such as river water, lakes and springs) are alive and possess souls (cited in Mboweni & De Crom, 2016: 3). Apart from this submission about the Yorùbá, Mboweni & De Crom (2016) highlight some of their respondents’ remarks on the cultural impressions on Vaal River in particular cultural group in South Africa thus:

Even with the river water that [is flowing all the time], you make someone bathe in that water, which has been prayed for, and they will be healed.’ ‘The river being alive depends on people’s faith. Culturally, we know and believe that there is life in the flowing river.’ ‘We have faith that when a person has been dipped in the water, the pain will leave them - the life in the water will take it up (Mboweni & De Crom, 2016: 3).

Secondly, rivers are considered as a source of wealth and prosperity in the sense that there are “lots of wealth inside the seas, oceans, and lagoons” (Àlàbí, 2012: 133) hence the need to believe in and the patronage of sacred rivers in Africa. Studies have revealed the religious and magical significance of water in a wide range of cultural and historical contexts, pointing to its use in baptisms, ablutions, blessings, healing rituals, to counteract misfortunes, to expel evil forces, or as part of purification rituals or fertility rites (Kosso & Scott 2009; Ivanits 1989; Evans-Pritchard 1976, p. 135, cited in Verouden & Meijman, 2010).

There is a significant body of research (Owusu-Ansah, 2005; Okyere, 2012; Àlàbí, 2012) on the significance of sacred spaces and sites in Africa, Ghana, and Nigeria specifically. Owusu-Ansah (2005), examines the spiritual roles sacred spaces play in African Christian milieu. His work, “Abasua Prayer Mountain in Ghanaian Christianity” (2005), reveals that sacred spaces function as a place for worship, prayers, and divine revelations. Okyere (2012), in a study on “Reconstructing Sacred Space: The Place and Relevance of Abusua Prayer Mountain in Contemporary Ghanaian Christianity”, challenges the notion and the spiritual relevance of sacred spaces as a place solely for worship, prayers and connecting with the supersensible as mentioned in the works of early writers on sacred space (Eliade, 1957; Owusu-Ansah, 2005). He expatiates on the other significant function(s) of sacred places in promoting or stifling human development. His work reveals that sacred places such as Abusua Prayer Mountain can improve or hinder, as the case may be, the economic, social, mental, and spiritual lives not only of those who patronize the mountain but also of that of the members of Abasua community at large.

In another study, Àlàbí (2012) investigates the significance of sacred places in Nigeria, with a focus on selected indigenous churches in Èkìtì land. Some of the findings in his work corroborate that of earlier works on the same subject especially on the spiritual and social developmental roles sacred places play in Èkìtì land. Àlàbí’s work did not only engage sacred spaces such as mountains only, but it also examined other sacred sites such as rivers and streams.

It should be noted that these studies have several things in common. First, these studies were all carried out in the African environment and they consistently reveal the homogenous but yet heterogeneous nature of African worldviews of sacred spaces in relation to their culture and religion. Secondly, the studies highlight the role of sacred spaces in enhancing or stifling human development spiritually, socially, mentally and economically. Thirdly, those sacred spaces are places for worship rituals- prayers, music (singing, dancing, and drumming), prophetic activities, and use of sacred text, spirit possessions, and encounter with the divine or incorporeal powers. Fourthly, these studies were conducted among the African indigenous/independent churches (AICs).

### **2.2.3 Prayer mountain (*Orí-Òkè*), African spirituality and AICs in Yorubaland**

Etymologically, *Orí-Òkè* is a combination of two Yoruba words: *orí* and *òkè*. *Orí-Òkè* is the Yorùbá description for mountains or hill-tops. In the Yorùbá lexicon, “*orí*” means the top, or an apex of a place, people or thing. It can be used as a prefix to a word, for example, *orí* (the head of a person), *olorí ilú* (head of a community), *olorí orílédè* (head of state), *olorí ilé isé* (head of an organisation or company). Hence, *orí* can be used as an adverb referring to a spot on a place or the top of a particular thing or space. On the other hand, in Yorùbá cosmology, *orí* also connotes the idea of the inner man, which is referred to as *orí-inú*. This is the personality head symbolized by the physical head (Olatunji & Ogunbiyi, 2018:269). The second word, *òkè* means a height, hill, or mountain thus making the combination of the two words to be used to describe a mountain-top.

Generally, in some part of Yorùbáland particularly in the mountainous areas in southwest Nigeria, the mountains are usually named after the location where they are found. For example, *Orí-Òkè Olorunkole*, *Orí-Òkè Akinkemi* and *Orí-Òkè Olorunkole* are all in Ibadan, Oyo State. Also, we have *Orí-Òkè Áánu* and *Orí-Òkè Awon Omo Woli* in Erio Ekiti, *Orí-Òkè Ikoyi* in Ikoyi area of Osun State. These mountains are cultural heritage or sites owned and venerated by the members of the community as the case may be. With the advent of Christianity in Yorùbáland and by extension the religious territorial re-designation and expansion by the AICs, many of these mountains were then used for various spiritual activities such as prayers, hence the

appellation given to the mountains as prayer mountains where all kind of prayer rituals take place. The *Orí-Òkè* phenomenon has a lot to reveal about African spirituality.

Spirituality is a term that means different things to different people depending on the context of usage. It deals with the way man connects with the divine. According to Krentzman (2016), spirituality includes a sense of connection to something larger than we are, and it typically involves a search for larger meaning in life. This meaning in life has to do with improved lifestyle and wholeness of the human spirit, soul, and body. Spirituality is essentially the improvement of the human mind and soul by improving one's will power, an intimate relationship with the Supreme Being and the world at large. Conversely, Stein (cited in Olowonibi, 2018:337) believes that spirituality is all about people as well as beliefs and practices. In other words, spirituality does manifest itself in various means such as religious traditions and practices, ethics, perceptions and beliefs that are anchored on the worldview of the believer (Mbiti, 1969).

Therefore, African spirituality refers to the way and manner whereby Africans connect to the divine through religious traditions and beliefs based on the worldview, which implies that African spirituality is not devoid of certain cultural and social practices. Corroborating the nexus between spirituality and culture, Erasmus & Lombaard, (2017:1) remark, "Spirituality, however, also has a social and cultural aspect. If spirituality is about the big questions of life, it will also be found in the fabric of society. Spirituality informs the values of a society or a specific culture." From the foregoing, it is observed that African spirituality especially Christianity is a function of its immediate culture. This informs why some cultural practices are remarkably noticeable in the African indigenous churches because they are a product of their culture.

Culturally, in African societies, like most societies in the world, certain spaces are designated sacred. In Africa, Nigeria especially, certain grooves, rivers, hills and mountains are designated as sacred spaces and these spaces are venerated, believed, and patronized by members of the communities. It is a common practice in African traditional religion that the *babaláwo*, or *baba áwo* (priest), could spend days or months, depending on the nature and efficacy of the rite(s) he intends to perform in some sacred grove. While in the grove it is believed he would have communed with the supernatural beings and be empowered with the spiritual arsenal needed to combat the 'evil forces' that are responsible for bad events in the communities. In the

same vein, African not being aliens to their societies found this cultural practices germane to their newly found faith- Christianity, hence the justification for belief in and patronage of some sacred places such as Prayer Mountains (*Orí-Òkè*).

Historically, *Orí-Òkè* and its various expressions can be traced to the activities of the African Indigenous Churches (AICs) in Nigeria since the 1930s. These AICs developed their own unique characteristics of African Christianity as well as spirituality, they are pragmatic in contextualising Christianity in African culture (Aiyégbóyín, 2010), and their Christianity is influenced, largely, on African worldview. Amongst the AICs, there is a greater appreciation of African culture, values, and religion. Through their appreciation, they have managed to respond to the existential and spiritual needs of their followers in ways that are not alien to them (Masondo, 2014:2). Commenting on the distinctiveness of AICs, Ayegboyin observes that “...after examining their nomenclatures, characteristics, particularly their emphasis on the *pneuma* and belief in God it would be evident the AICs have made unique contributions to African Christian spiritualities in the spheres of contextualisation, inculturation and the incarnation of the scriptures into the African world view (2010: 1). The biblical notion of belief in and patronage of some sacred places as revealed in the Old Testament is not alien to Africans has earlier mentioned in this work. Corroborating the roles AICs played in the development of African Christianity, Peel (2016) submits:

The *Aládurà* are a cluster of churches founded by African religious innovators who triggered a series of revival- involving healing through sanctified water, witchcraft confession, mass destruction of idols, and some millennial preaching— between 1918 and the mid-1930s. Their basic aim was to make the power of prayer (*adura*: hence their name) more available than it was in the older Protestant missions for such this-worldly objectives as health, fertility, protection against witchcraft and danger, guidance, prosperity, and success—in sum, that state of all-round well-being that the Yorùbá call *Alafia* (79).

It is clear from the above submission that although African theology is Christian in its content; its mode of operation as portrayed through various sacred rituals has a cultural inclination (Kasomo, 2012).

Many of the theophanic and hierophanic experiences, as recorded in the bible, took places in some sacred sites, particularly on mountains. Some of these events include the

contestations between Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, the receiving of the ten commandments by Moses from God on Mount Sinai, and the transfiguration of Jesus on Mount Tabor, just to mention a few. In the quest of AICs to make Christianity relevant to the people, leaders of this movement – *Aládurà*, identified some sacred places such as hills, mountains, rivers, and lakes that are in their immediate environment, and consecrated them for Christian religious rites. These sacred places before the advent of the western missionaries were actively patronized by Africans for their traditional religion. Many of these spaces were venerated and patronized on regular bases, sometimes weekly, monthly or annually.

Because of the belief in and strong reliance on the powers of prayers and the Holy Spirit, many AICs who are also known as the *Aládurà* – praying people, frequently visit various prayer mountains where they believe they can encounter the Spirit in its fullness. Commenting on the vigorous praying nature of the AICs, Olowola (1984:34) aptly remarks that “...often they pray all night and some pray on the top of mountains, hills and by seashores. These prayer times are seen as a time of struggling and wrestling.”

Generally, mountains are sanctified places for receiving super sensible visions, dreams, prophecies, and revelation in antiquity. To this effect, religious mountaineering is considered spiritual, formidable, and capable of transforming the experience and facilitating spiritual encounters (Àlàbí, 2012:28). The mountain, as a sacred space, can be accessed physically, spiritually or imaginatively. Physically, mountains are naturally hilly and they can be found in almost all the parts of the world. They serve both social and religious purposes in places where they exist.

Socially, the mountain provides tourist opportunities and a means of defence to a society or community during wars as in the case of the *Égbá* people of Abeokuta and Òyò both of southwest Nigeria during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Parrinder, 1947:122). For religious function, it provides a secluded place considered higher and farther from distraction. The laborious nature of mountain climbing could the number of people seen at the top of the mountain as only being determined and resilient persons can attempt such a task.

Among Yorùbá Christians, ‘imaginative mountaineering’ is a spiritual exercise specially undertaken, not by many, but a few designated persons. An ‘imaginative mountain’ can be accessed by engaging in ‘fasting’, which is a period of abstaining from food or eating, for



specific hours, days, months or years as the case may be. When a Yorùbá Christian makes a remark such as “*Mo wà lóri òkè*” meaning, “I am on the mountain.” The expression could suggest various meanings; it could be that such a person was observing a fast at that moment, which is usually accompanied by around the clock prayers. Sometimes, sexual abstinence could be interpreted as being ‘on the mountain’. Bayewu (2011), captures the experience:

*Orí-Òkè* among the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC), does not only imply the physical use of a hilltop as a sacred space for special prayers. *Orí-Òkè* in the CCC implies a ‘spiritual state of a person in trance. The individual, though physically present in the terrestrial world, is spiritually present in the celestial world. While in the spiritual state, he/she abstains from food and drinks, fasting and praying.... (cited in Olaleye, 2018:172)

It, therefore, implies that the body of a religious man can be a sacred space if and whenever such body enters into imaginative mountaineering, given the tripartite nature of man, spirit, and soul. Hence, the religious man via his spirit, soul, and body are attuned to the divine realm where he pours out his petitions with the hope and trust for a favourable response from the divine.

Furthermore, the extant literature on sacred spaces, specifically, prayer mountains, reveals that these spaces function as a place for worship, prayers and divine revelation; it is evident that existing studies failed to investigate the various prayer rituals practices taking place in the prayer mountains. As earlier mentioned, prayer rituals in the context of this study include music (drumming, singing and dancing), prayers, fasting amongst others. Despite all these activities, the significance and role of music in prayer mountains have been obviously neglected in these studies. It is pertinent to note that prayer on mountain-tops is fully complimented by several musical activities, and this is usually ignored in the literature on the musical activities of sacred spaces in Africa, in this case, Nigeria.

#### **2.2.4 Prayer mountains and social change in Nigeria**

Prayer mountains have witnessed several changes socially, economically and politically to mention a few. In general, social change (or development) could be described as a significant change of structured social action or of the culture in a given society, community, or context (Serveas, 2011:1). In a similar manner, Greenwood and Gunner (2008:1) simply define it as shifts in the attitudes and behaviour that characterize a society. The foregoing definitions suggest that social change occurs as a response to an existing social norm in society. Social change implies adaption, modification, and blending of social actors to the prevalent circumstances. Social changes can be a response(s) to some factors such as technological, economic, political, and religious amongst others. Prayer mountains were usually located in rural areas without little or no social facilities for those who visit the mountains for prayers. This is no longer the case in many of the prayer mountains in Nigeria as they now have various facilities such as guesthouses, transport system, restaurant, and clinic in order to make the visitors very comfortable. This social change is necessary given the demography of those who patronise these mountains. In recent times, prayer mountains now attract politicians, captains of industries and seasoned professionals; hence the need to provide a convenient space of worship and accommodation for this category of visitors.

In time past, physical access to the locations of prayer mountains particularly the elevated mountains used to be a very laborious task for visitors due to the roughness of the mountain paths. Visitors to the mountains climb with so much caution for the fear of the slippery nature of the mountain. In response to the safety hazard that climbing such slippery mountains portends, founders and leaders of these prayer mountains now construct staircases from the base of the mountain to the top. In some cases, roads are even constructed to the top of the mountain. Commenting on sacred spaces and social change in Èkìtì, Àlàbí's (2012) study on infrastructural developments in some prayer mountains in Èkìtì land, southwest Nigeria reports:

A modern church auditorium of one thousand to two thousand capacities has been constructed. There are modern chalets being constructed there for accommodation purposes. There is another magnificent auditorium that is under construction on the Prayer Mountain at Èrìò Èkìtì. To climb the mount [Prayer Mountain] was a tedious task in the time past, there is now a flight of steps constructed...people now climb the mountain through stairs of over five hundred steps to the top of the mountain. During our visit

to the place [Orì-Ìségun at Efon Alaaye] the road had been bulldozed and motorists can now drive straight to the mountain top with ease (p. 204).

It can be seen that prayer mountains have witnessed, on a large scale, different infrastructural developments thus making them more conducive and user-friendly.

With reference to the ethnic or cultural mix, prayer mountains now witness a broad range of ethnic participation of worshippers. In southwestern Nigeria, prayer mountains were largely patronised by the Yorùbá Christians however, the situation is no longer the same as Christians from other ethnic extractions within the country are now seen to flock several prayer mountains in Southwest Nigeria. The Igbo Christians now patronise many prayer mountains in Yorubaland. This ethnic mix witnessed on prayer mountains n largely has also led to what is known as social interactions on the prayer mountains. People from different cultural backgrounds the opportunity to interact with each other during cooperative prayer sessions, conversations during non-religious activities such as early morning sanitation on the mountain and meal times. The foregoing corroborates the observation of Oyetade (2018:187) that prayer mountains not only provide a good environment for spiritual communication, they also have helped boost religious unity, because of their multi-religious nature. People from various religious affiliations converge on a mountain to pray, and this has helped in boosting unity, friendship, and interpersonal relationships among different religious denominations.

### **2.2.5 Music in Christian worship**

Worship is a vital element in religion. The notion of worship is a polymorphous one, thus, giving a broader meaning both in context and in content. In a religious context, Imasogie (1982) describes worship as the veneration ascribed to a supernatural being and the series of ritual actions associated with the exercise (cited in Loko, 2011:14). These series of ritual actions are articulated by Ajayi (2000:125) when he describes worship to involve cultic acts of all kinds, ritual, drama, prayers of many sorts, dancing, ecstatic utterances, veneration of various persons and objects, sermonizing, silent meditations and scared songs sometimes rendered in esoteric languages. Of all the aforementioned ritual actions, music is of greater significance in any religious worship whether in traditional or contemporary culture.

Music from earliest recorded time has always had a unique association with man's worship and has a great capacity for eliciting spiritual experiences. There is something in the nature of music that makes it an effective vehicle for the expression of spirituality (Atkins & Schubert, 2014: 77). Miller (cited in Loko, 2011:14) aptly observes that music is not merely preliminary to worship, but vital to a meaningful worship experience. Simply put, there is no meaningful worship without music. This is true of any Christian worship as it will be inconceivable to have a Christian worship service without music.

The role of music to aid or distort a relationship with the divine has also been a subject of debate among scholars. Saint Augustine, in his treatise, argues that since music has the power to distract one from the sacred and create obstacles to one's spiritual journey. There is need to justify the use of sacred music as it can help draw one closer to the presence of God, and to serve as a medium and mechanism of worship and praise (cited in Price, 2015: 54-55). In a study on music, spirituality, and wellbeing, Dawn and Petersen (2015) found music to be a platform to praise and worship God where their spirituality is not confined to the institution of the church or to religion. They further observed that music in worship could enrich and enhance one's connection with God and with others through music.

From time immemorial, music has played a very significant role in worship both in Jewish and Judeo-Christian religious practices respectively. Several references to the use of music can be found in both the Old and New Testaments of the bible. Such music could be vocal, instrumental in form, or a combination of both; and performed either individually or collectively. The Old Testament, in particular, is full of examples of individual and collectively (congregational) music-making. Exodus 15:1-18; Psalm 90; Deuteronomy 32:1-43 gave an account of the songs of Moses. 2 Samuel 1:19-27; 2 Samuel 22:2-51; Psalm 18; 1 Chronicles 16:8-13, 28-36 recorded musical performance of David while Isaiah 5:1-7, 12:1-6, 26, 35:1-10, 38:9-20, 40:1-31 mentioned the song of Isaiah. Judges 5:1-31, the singing of Deborah and Barak, 1 Samuel 2:1-10 that of Hannah, 1 Samuel 18:6-7, the Israelite women, 2 Chronicles 5:12-14, the Levitical choirs, Psalms 1-150, and all Israel (Price 2015: 50).

In explaining the importance of music in worship with reference to the Old Testament worship, Lockyear (2004) observes:

The emphasis on music in the Old Testament offers assurance that music played an important part in the Hebrews' worship of Yahweh. References to music, praise, and singing in the Bible outnumber references to prayer and praying almost 2 to 1; in other words, twice as many biblical passages mention music as do prayer (quoted in Price, 2015:50).

In the same manner, Routley (1978:6) remarks, "all we can gather from the Old Testament is that music was in very wide use in the culture of Israel. From the primitive triumph song of Miriam to the relatively sophisticated liturgical system of the Second Temple, and that this music was always sung and frequently accompanied by musical instruments." The foregoing underscores that fact that music was part of the religious worship of the people in biblical times especially before the birth of Jesus Christ.

The advent of a new era at the birth of Jesus Christ, a new spirit and a new motive, unknown to the earlier Egyptian, Greek, Roman or Hebrew cultures pervaded religious consciousness. No longer was worship confined to the temple or synagogue (Osbeck, 1961: 19). The New Testament provides valuable records on the singing activities that surrounds the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:46-55, 68-79; 2:10-14, 29-32) and in John's Revelation (Revelation 4:8-11; 5:9-14; 7:9-12, 11:15-18; 12:10-12; 15:3-4, 16:5-7; 19:1-8). The extensive use of music in the early church can be found in book Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, Acts 16:25, and James 5:13. These references suggest largely that music had been a major component of Christian worship. Although the music typology used in the early church has generated many debates, Apostle Paul's admonition to the Colossians may provide some guides. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord (Colossians 3:16). Expatriating on the music genre and Christian worship in the early church, Price captures it this way:

Paul offers insight not only on genre distinction but also on the role and function of musical creation and performance. Drawing on his years as a committed and learned Jew, Paul offers rare but important teaching on the critical role that music plays within Christian worship as a mechanism of praise and a medium to express gratitude (2015: 52)

The submission of Price above is in line with Mitchell's (1978) position on the contributions of music in Christian worship. Firstly, Mitchell posits that music brings to worship an opportunity for participation by commenting:

The primary instrument in worship music is the congregation. If your congregation spends more time in observation than it does in participation, then, your music program is falling short, whatever your preferred style of music. Participation in worship music offers opportunities for learning, remembering, and reinforcing gospel truth. Perhaps even more significant, participation in music offers the congregation a more direct opportunity for worship than does participation in any other aspect of the service. As worshipers lift their voices in praise *to* God (not *about* God, or *about* each other or each other's spiritual experiences), praise, prayer, and adoration all fuse together, and the worshipers experience intense intimacy with heaven. (p.82)

The submission, therefore, implies that music provides an opportunity for active participation for everyone involved in Christian worship. This collective participation is enacted through congregational singing. White (1980) identifies three categories of music that are likely to be encountered in Christian worship. These include congregational music that is chanted by everyone in worship service, choral music sung in the worship service, and instrumental music that may be accompanied by movement only (cited in Kibor, 2006: 132). Mitchell's remark above corresponds with the observation of Kibor that congregational music is best for it is participatory and interactive rather than passive. As identified by Mitchell above, not only does music give an opportunity for participation, it is also used to reinforce gospel truth (Kibor, 2006). Hence, music can serve as a means of communication in Christian worship.

Furthermore, choral music has been identified by Kibor (2006) as a musical typology that can be utilised in Christian worship. Choral music is a piece of music performed by a group of trained singers. In a Christian context, worship is essentially guided by liturgy depending on the Christian religious domain. For example, the mainstream churches which include: Anglican, Methodist, Catholic, and Baptist to mention a few have the liturgy that they observe during worship. It is pertinent to understand the concept of Christian worship to grasp fully the role of music in such worship.

### 2.2.6 Music and Prayer as social phenomena

Music and prayer have religious, social, and cultural dimensions in both theory and practice. Specifically, both prayer and music have social dimensions in their creation and performance. Music reveals largely the social identity of a people, their culture, belief, and myth. In the same way, prayer reveals to us what is negotiated in our social world (Bandak, 2017) and represents a fundamental aspect of religious life (Baker, 2008). The notion of prayer has received significant scholarly attention from sociologists and religion experts in recent time. Studies have examined the reasons why people pray, when they pray, where they pray, how they pray and what they pray about (Macquarrie, 1970; Lambert *et.al*, 2010; Sharp, 2010; Zondag, 2013; Bandak, 2017).

Music and prayer are humanly initiated. It is inconceivable to hear a piece of music or prayer without the human agency, hence the social interaction(s) witnessed whenever music and prayer are being performed or said as the case may be. These social acts may be engaged in by an individual or on a collective basis. In the case of music, vocal or instrumental music can be performed by one person – a soloist or by a group of persons. For prayers, an individual or a group of people may engage in prayers. Personal character traits have a significant influence on the dimension, style of and preference for prayers an individual engages Zondag (2013). In another study, Fuist (2015) demonstrates how the use of particular prayer languages or styles, or the topics discussed in collective prayer, serve as interactional cues that tell participants how the setting is religious, what behaviours are appropriate, and what constitutes adequate membership. He observed that

Collective prayers, as such, are both a way to delineate boundaries as well as to build group cultures and collective identities. Groups choose to use gender-inclusive language for prayer, use collective prayer to call out members of the community for their behaviour or pray about controversial political issues to intentionally delineate how the group is religious. As such, collective prayer locates groups both intentionally, through conscious identity work and boundary maintenance, but also as an unconscious consequence of specific prayer behaviours. In other words, while collective prayer typically has religious ends, it also has the effect of simultaneously locating groups in fields of meaning, whether consciously or unconsciously (p.526, 527).

Studies on faith groups find that the styles, emotions, languages, and actions involved in prayer are socially situated and learned, ultimately helping us understand the wider norms and

practices that shape the behaviour of praying groups and individuals (Griffith 1997; Patillo-McCoy 1998; Barnes and Sered 2005; Loveland *et al.* 2005; Sered 2005; Cerulo and Barra 2008; Tavory 2013). Suffice then to say that the practice of prayer is not necessarily limited to the discursive domain of religion/spirituality; they can also be explained in social discourse. The social identity of a cultural group can also be constructed and reconstructed through prayer in a given space. Prayers, in other words, reveal the hopes and desires not merely of individuals but of larger communities, too (Bandak, 2017: 5).

Spatial consideration is of substantial essence in the performance of prayer and music, hence, the need for a performative space, whether private or public, indoor or outdoor. It should be pointed out here that whilst prayer may be performed at any given space and time, socio-religious injunction subsists in some faith traditions as to where or not to pray. In Christian religious practice, Christians are warned not to pray in open places with ulterior intention. In the words of Jesus: “whenever you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by people. I assure you: They’ve got their reward!” (Mathew, 6: 5). This caution poses some questions as to the spatial and behavioural requirements for prayers; does it mean prayers made in public places such as school assemblies, parliament houses, public church crusades and so on are hypocritical? Coffman (1994) provides some commentaries:

Christ exposes the entire area of hypocritical and ostentatious prayers.... Improper place for prayer is indicated by “the street corners”, prayers may be offered anywhere at any time, from the belly of a whale, from the cross, in a storm, during battle, in a garden, anywhere! Yet, there are some places that do not fit the purpose of prayer....Whether or not, then, a Christian should offer thanks for meal in public places would have to be decided upon the basis of the particular time and space, sometimes yes, and sometimes, possibly, no. It is usually not very difficult for a person to know if he is in a street –corner situation or not ([www.studylight.org/commentaries/bbc/Mathew-6.html](http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bbc/Mathew-6.html)).

In African societies, the spatial and posture requisites for prayer are, to a large extent, culturally determined. This is because religion and culture are inseparable to Africans. Wherever an African is, his religion is there with him. The above commentary by Coffman may not find cultural relevance with African traditional religions because the of the Judeo-Christian religious



practices associated with spaces of worship. Meanwhile, the positional attitude for prayer as expressed in the phrase “praying and standing in the synagogues” should not be limited in its literary sense; rather it should be taken as the need for a sincere assessment of the praying heart as the case may be. Suffice to say that the notion of religion in the African context is largely experiential than abstract. To an African, there is practically no spatial distance between him and the divine. He believes he has uninterrupted access, if, when and where the need arises. Mbiti (1979) sees African as notoriously religious and argued that religion amongst Africans permeates into all departments of life so fully that it is not always easy or possible to isolate it. (Cited in Masondo, 2014: 3). Among the Yorúbà, Idowu (1962) offers insight into how spaces of and positions for prayers are culturally engaged:

Prayers offered, not only at worship but also at any time and any place as the worshipper feels or occasion demands. People often stop on their way at shrines to offer brief prayers; or they may speak their prayers in intimate ways to their divinity, whom they believe to be ever-present though unseen, as they walk along the road or as they are engaged in their work. Usually, women are the more religious ones who are more frequently caught in this practice by wayside shrines, sacred trees, sacred brooks, at cross-roads, or at any other places marked with some sacred signs, asking for a blessing on their journey, their work, their wares, their family, or their private undertakings. Ejaculatory prayers at all times form part and parcel of the common life of the Yorúbà (p.117).

As far as music is concerned space needed for musical performance is largely socially determined. In western cultures, some spaces such as concert halls, theatres, opera houses, churches amongst others are designated solely for musical performances. Like prayers in the Christian religion, certain behavioural rules known as concert etiquettes guide individuals who have gone to watch a performance in such places. For instance, members of the audience are not permitted to applaud until the end of the performance. No matter how intriguing the performance may be, the audience cannot join in the performance. In some cases, children below a specified age are not allowed into the concert hall. The foregoing reveals how the performance of prayer and music can be socially influenced by various socio-demographics especially in western communities.

In African societies, musical performance and practices can be engaged socially or religiously. For religious ceremony for specific ritual or the worship of certain deities or divinities, participation at such event is exclusively reserved for only initiates of such cult. However, for social performance, participation is open to everyone. Commenting about performance setting, Nketia (1992) submits that:

Since the traditional approach to music-making makes it a part of the institutional life of a community, the physical setting for performance can be any spot suitable for collective activity. It may be a public place, or a private area to which only those intimately concerned with the event are admitted; a regular place of worship...the courtyard of a house where the ceremony is taking place, or the area behind it; the scene of communal labour, ...a market place or dance plaza (p.31)

An in-depth examination of music and prayer portends that both are social commodities. Sociologists have identified diverse practices such as production, distribution and consumption of music (Green, 1999) as well as prayers (Baquedano-Lopez, 2000). With specific reference to music, Green raises some sociological questions:

...how is music composed, improvised, or performed; what other productive activities does music entails... is music produced by individuals working isolation, by groups, by professionals, amateurs, adults, children, or other categories; where is it produced- in a solitary room, a recording studio, the streets, or the neighbours' garage? (1999:160).

Arguably, prayer can entail some form of compositions whether scripted or recited. Scripted prayers follow a prescribed pattern in both text and delivery in the same way music can be guided by a set rule or principles. Improvisation, creating a musical idea on the moment, is not limited to musical practices alone, prayers too can be situational, a spontaneous experience. Music and prayer, as social commodities, can be produced or reproduced, requested and even exchanged. Economically, in terms of distribution, prayers just like music are now distributed through mass media. Recordings of assorted prayer points are available for sales even on the internet. Various prayer hotlines are created by different religious bodies through their television broadcast. This is what Baquedano-Lopez (2000: 198) refers to as “the popular dial-a-prayer telephonic services. In some poor resource communities, prayer services can be consulted

through some clergymen who parade themselves as ‘prayer vendors’. These prayer vendors are paid by clients who in most cases do not want to go through the rigour of praying for and by themselves. This is a common practice in some prayer mountains, especially in southwest Nigeria.

An examination of prayer and music reveals interesting relationships that exist between music and prayer both in religious and sociological discourse. Prayer, whether on an individual or collective level, can add meaning to music. Prayer can be song and music; particularly songs can be a prayer. It is pertinent to note that existing studies have examined the role of prayer and music in religious and medical practices. However, the interaction between music and prayer during prayer activities especially in sacred praying spaces, in this case, prayer mountain has not been investigated. This study aims to fill this gap in knowledge.

### **2.2.7 Structural and stylistic forms in Nigerian traditional music**

Music in Africa has received significant research both within and outside the continent. Scholars have explored the musical (sonic) and the cultural components of African music. The sonic component includes the forms and styles in music in Africa. Generally, the term ‘form’ has been used in different ways to describe the music of various cultures. In western music, a form is composed of definite specifications, taking into consideration rigid rules and principles of Western theory of music, nationalism, and capabilities of musical instruments. Scholes (1991: 218) defines form as an internal pattern of music organisation, from the putting together of musical phrases into sentences, up to putting together of themes and long sections into movements of various sorts and putting together of movements into such cyclic forms as suites, sonatas and symphonies. According to Emielu (2012: 61), a musical form is a basic plan or temporal structure of a piece of music. It describes the layout of a composition as divided into recognisable sections. For Lovelock (cited in Udoh, 2012:155) form in music means the way in which a composition is planned and designed – how it is shaped. It is simply the design or shape into which musical materials are moulded.

According to Nketia (1974), form and structure in African music involve solo, chorus, call, response, and canonic arrangements. Westrup and Harrison (in Akpabot, 1986: 101) define the basic elements in musical form are repetition, variation and contrast; these three elements

operating in the field of melody, harmony, rhythm and tone colour. As earlier mentioned, music in Africa is culturally produced. Hence, the concept of form in African music is dictated and developed by the demands and needs of the occasion and governed by behavioural concepts and patterns. This is manifested in rhythmic patterns, melodic contours, harmonic structures, instrumentation, and songtext (Forchu, 2012: 75). The notion of form has generated some arguments, owing to its various meanings, depending on whether it refers to “form in music” or “forms of music.” For Apel (1970) the former refers to the orderly organisation of the sounds of music with relationship to pitch, melody, rhythm, among others, while the latter refers to the existence of certain schemes that govern the overall structure of a composition. These were traditionally used in various periods of music history, for example, the fugue or the sonata. (cited in Idamoyibo, 2012: 123)

Style, as a character of the musical language of a period or of an individual composer (Oscar, 1975), serves as a distinctive way of identifying music from one another. According to Hickok (1993 cited in Emielu, 2012: 61), a musical style is a manner of expression, characteristic of an individual, a historical period, or an art school. In the same vein, Pascal (1992) defines style as manner, mode or expression and type of presentation. He further noted that style in music might be used to denote music characteristics of a geographical area, or a centre, or society or social function. Like Western music, African music also possesses some musical features that make it distinctive in manner or mode of presentation. The style of music could, therefore, be seen as a whole complex of features that people rely on to mark their identity (Emielu, 2012).

Structural and stylistic forms in African music can be examined vis-a-vis two broad media namely, vocal and instrumental. For the purpose of this study, the following elements of music will be used to discuss the structural and stylistic forms in African music: melody, rhythm, harmony, solo, chorus, call and response, strophic and canonic arrangements.

#### a. Melody

Melody, a series of pitches that forms a cohesive entity (Hoffer, 2010:17) is what people generally remember in music. In western music, a series of pitches can be arranged to make a melody without any constraints. The case is different in African music, given that music in Africa does not just contain the externally quantifiable properties of the music (scales and

modes, melodies, pitch ranges and contours, rhythm and metre, etc.), but the internal properties as well: the social function, value and significance of the music (Lewis, 2016, par.10). Thus, melody in African music is considered not musically but socially. Akpabot (1998) identified scale structure and range of instruments as major constraints in the conception of African melodies. He further states, “African melodies are either ritual or non-ritual in conception and are produced by singers or instrumentalists. These melodies are either word-born (logogenic) resulting in what is known as speech melody or emotion-born (pathogenic) where the musicians compose their own melodies” (p.26). For logogenic melodies, the meaning of the words will naturally follow a tone as well as speech pattern.

It is a common knowledge that African languages are tonal. Akpabot (1986:6) succinctly notes that: “African dialects are inflectional in character.” With specific reference to Yorùbá language, scholars including Vidal (1986), Euba (1992), Dosunmu (2005), and Samuel (2009) have observed that Yorùbá language is tonal; therefore, the meaning of a Yorùbá word depends on the pitch applied to each syllable in the word. Given the aforementioned constraints in the productions of melodies in African music, specifically scale structure, African music employ scale system that is not limited to the seven-note diatonic scale of Western music. Akpabot, (1986, 1998) highlighted the six scale structures in African music namely: diatonic, tritonic, tetratonic, pentatonic, hexatonic and heptatonic. Of all these scales, it is believed that the pentatonic scale is the most commonly used in very many African melodies. African melodies are usually short, repetitive and in unary, binary or ternary forms with no modulations from one key centre (or more correctly, tone centre) (Akpabot, 1986).

#### b. Rhythm

Generally, rhythm can be described as the movement of music. Hoffer (2010:10) defines it as “the orderly flow of music through time. It is a comprehensive word that includes beat, meter, and tempo.” For Akpabot (1998), trying to define rhythm is an almost hopeless task because of its complexity. However, he defines rhythm as

The organisation of music in respect to time. This can be expanded by adding that it is the regular or irregular recurrence of groups and motions in relation to each other; these relations being in respect of pulse, metre, stress, duration, accent, pitch, contour and design;

functioning within the architectural structure of the artistic whole.  
Rhythm can be free, flexible, measured, or metrical (p.47)

In African music, the rhythm of a song is largely determined by the inflexion of the words whose rise and fall supply both speech and melodic rhythm. Several rhythmic patterns found in African music can be classified under three headings: Percussive rhythm, melodic rhythm and speech rhythm. Akpabot (1998:52, 53) describes the percussive rhythm is that which is provided by idiophones and membranophones and melodic rhythm by aerophones, chordophones and tuned idiophones. Speech rhythm is provided by the syllabic cadences of human speech. From Akpabot's submission above, it can be observed that instrumental music is very germane in the production of rhythmic patterns in African music. Instrumentally, some instruments provide the basic pulse also known as the timeline in African music. Notable of such instruments are the gong and the rattle. These percussive instruments play a standard rhythmic pattern known as the bell rhythm.

Rhythm is the basis for all forms of African performances and arts. It is the root for accentuating the words of music, the vocal pattern or form to be used and the bodily expression in the dance within a performance (Rita & Rita, 2013). Previous studies in African music as described the following rhythmic features as:

1. Polyrhythm: polyrhythm is one of the prominent rhythmic techniques found in African music performance, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. This technique describes the use of independent contrasting rhythmic patterns within the same scheme of accents or metre where the main beat scheme cannot be separated from the secondary beat scheme rather; they play simultaneously to achieve harmonious performance.
2. Hemiola: This rhythmic technique is based on the asymmetric rhythm pattern. It involves an alteration of duple and triple times in varying forms; this implies the alternation of duple and triple times in varying forms; this implies the alternation of two musical notes in the place of three, or of three notes in place of two. This technique functions both in vocal and instrumental music performance.
3. Ostinato rhythms: This rhythmic technique is expressed when a rhythmic pattern is repeated repeatedly irrespective of changes in meter. (Rita & Rita, 2013:197)

### c. Harmony

It is an incontestable fact that the concept of harmony in African music cannot be fully understood using western harmony theories. Given the tonal character of African languages, the harmonic structure in African music is such that obeys the tonal curve of the words. Akpabot (1986:104) observes that “Nigerian speech patterns (like that of most Africans) is inflectional in character; and if the second voice part is to maintain the meaning of the words of a song, then it must imitate the melodic leaps of the first voice part strictly.” Unlike western music, harmonies in Nigeria music are usually in thirds, sixths, fourths, and fifths. The manner in which these parts form harmony in African music requires careful observation of cultural practices and not just with western music practices. For example, Akpabot (1986) observes that

In two parts sing, the accompanying singer may either anticipate the entry of the soloist by a few bars or improvise a fill-in for certain portions of the music where the soloist has nothing to sing. At other times, other members of the chorus may decide to hum an improvisatory portion as the soloist sings along; and since they are not actually singing the words of a song, they are not in danger of distorting its meaning. Sometimes a second singer takes the liberty of varying the strict two-part harmonic pattern in a style that produces involuntary counterpoint, as a result of the independent movement of the two voice parts (p.105)

The foregoing reveals the fact that while harmony in African music can be either homophonic or polyphonic depending on the relationship between the voices.

d. Call and response: This is a very prominent stylistic feature in vocal forms in African music. Call and Response involve alternation between two performers, especially between a solo singer and a group of singers. Udoh (2015:155) opines that in this form “the soloist intones the song and sings a phrase as a call, while the chorus or the choir responds (or provides the response) with another short musical phrase or sentence which differ in text and melody from the call”. In the same vein, Akpabot (1986:109) remarks, “the cantor improvises his song as he goes along and the chorus answers intermittently with an unvarying chorus line which can be an exact repetition of the solo, derived in part from it, or made up of entirely new material. Some scholars also see this style as “antiphonal whereby a leader commences an antecedent to which a larger chorus responds” (Faseun, 2005 cited in Loko, 2012:280).

Despite the historic emergence and proliferation of prayer mountains particularly in Southwestern Nigeria, studies have not examined the socio-dynamic nature of these prayer mountains in the light of social-cultural milieu and religious hybridity. Arguably, it is believed that Osun state has the largest concentration of prayer mountains in Southwestern Nigeria. Hence, the need to research into the socio-dynamic nature of prayer mountains in Osun state is germane to fill the gap in the literature. In addition, studies abound on the complementary role of prayer in different dimensions of the human life such as wellbeing, spirituality/religiosity, and emotion but none of them gave significant attention to the complementary role of prayer and music in worship especially in prayer mountains. Consequently, this study attempts to fill this gap in the literature by examining how musical performances and prayer implicate each other during prayer activities in the selected prayer mountains. In addition, this research will fully examine the forms of music and stylistic features used in the music performed on the prayer mountains.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research design**

This study adopted the ethnography research design, which allowed the researcher to immerse himself in the culture that was studied.

#### **3.2 Study area**

The area for the study is Òsun State located in southwestern Nigeria. Òsun State was created in 1991 from the old Óyò State. The state's name was derived from the River Òsun, the Yoruba pantheon female goddess of beauty, who is also believed to have the power to heal, give children, grant wealth, and protect. The 2006 census puts the population of the state at 3,423,535 with over 200 towns, villages and other settlements (Tabitha & Ezenagu, 2016: 8). It is bounded to the north by Kwara State, to the east partly by Ékítí State and partly by Ondó State; to the south by Ògùn State and to the West, Óyò State. Three major religions namely, Christianity, Islam and traditional religion are practised in the state.

#### **3.3 Study population**

For this study, two prayer mountains, specifically, Orí-òkè Ìkòyí in Ìkòyí, Isokan Local Government Area and Orí-òkè Bàbá Àbíyè in Ede, Egbedore Local Government Area, both in Òsun state, constituted the population for this study. In addition, leaders at these prayer mountains, including senior ministers, resident Pastor(s) hereafter referred to as mountain prophets, guest ministers (both preachers and musicians), and the participants on the prayer mountains also formed part of the study population. In the context of this study, participants refer to those visitors to the mountain solely to engage in various prayer activities for a period of time.

#### **3.4 Sampling procedure**

This study used the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique whereby the units of the sample are selected not by a random procedure but are intentionally picked for their characteristics or because they satisfy certain qualities that are not randomly distributed, (Kumekpor 1999 cited in Okyere 2012: 20). There are several prayer

mountains in Osun State, the popular ones include: Orí-òkè Ìkòyí, Orí-òkè Ede (aka Orí-òkè Bàbá Àbíyè), Orí-òkè Èrinmò and Orí-òkè Oníyò. However, the selected prayer mountains for this research were either owned by or affiliated to Christ Apostolic Church. In addition, these prayer mountains were notably established and consecrated for prayers by three foremost leaders of the Christ Apostolic Church: Late Joseph Ayo Babalola, Late David Babájídé (Orí-òkè Ìkòyí) and Late Prophet Samson Oladeji Akande (Orí-òkè Bàbá Àbíyè).

### **3.5 Method of data collection**

The study employed a qualitative method of data collection using both primary and secondary sources. An initial attempt to generate data for this study was during a reconnaissance visit to the selected mountains. During this visit, the researcher participated in small group prayer session during the day and later joined in an all-night prayer session to meet with some of the respondents. It was during the corporate prayer session that the researcher first observed the in-house or resident prayer leaders as well as musicians. In both prayer mountains, the first point of call was with the administrative pastors on the mountain and the aim of the meeting was to inform them of the research intention and seek necessary approval to record various prayer sessions using a video camera, and to get institutional backing to grant interviews with other participants on the mountains. Primary data were collected from the following sources; while secondary data was from books, journal articles and other archival materials.

#### **3.5.1 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**

Interviews were conducted with some key informants on the selected prayer mountains. These key informants included the presiding leader - *Bàbá Orí-Òkè*. Mountain prophets and administrative pastors were also part of the key informants. The key informants consist one presiding leader, two mountain prophets, and one administrative pastor from each of the two prayer mountains. They provided comprehensive information on the historical account of the establishments, ownership or affiliation and leadership, and other matters relating to the prayer mountains.

### **3.5.2 In-Depth Interviews (IDIs)**

In-depth interviews were conducted with the participants, males and females, adults and youths to ensure inclusiveness. Being an ethnomusicological study, special attention was given to in-house musicians, song leaders and instrumentalists who engage in the process of music-making on the selected prayer mountains. The interview questions that were open-ended and unstructured helped in creating an atmosphere for adequate interaction with the respondents in a relaxed manner. Content of the interview questions was based on the nature of worship and process of music-making with a view to investigating the techniques of compositions and musical styles employed during musical performances on the prayer mountains. Interviews were conducted based on the convenience and agreed time by the respondents during their stay on the mountain.

Similarly, guest preachers and mountain prophets who led prayer sessions were also interviewed. The interview elicited information and gave insight into the spontaneity of song compositions and its implication on prayer activities. Questions also bothered on their musical background and experience.

### **3.5.3 Participant Observation**

Participant observation method was used wherein prayer and musical activities were taken place. As a participant-observer, the researcher attended, observed, and participated in various congregational and small group prayer activities, especially in the singing and playing of musical instruments during prayer activities on the prayer mountains. This afforded the researcher the opportunity of gathering information about the musical activities on the prayer mountain.

Audio-visual data were captured with the aid of recording equipment such as a portable tape recorder and a camera for motion and still images. Notebooks were used to record and document various prayer activities and musical performances. The researcher sought and obtained approval from the leadership of the prayer mountains to use any recording facilities to capture data.

### **3.6 Secondary sources**

For secondary data, the autobiography of one of the founders of the prayer mountains written by the founder was consulted, to verify and support claims from key informants on the issue of historical accounts of the mountains. In addition, an edited book containing various articles on the subject of Ori-Oke was used to gather information on various themes that have been researched on the subject matter. In addition, the websites of the prayer mountains were explored for other relevant information.

### **3.7 Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected from the various sources were analyzed qualitatively. Data gathered from interviews and observation were content analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). With IPA, this study examined the participants' worldview and attempts were made to explore their personal experiences. Since IPA involves a number of processes including constructing of research questions, data collection such as interview, transcription, and analysis, using the later model of IPA, the audio extract of respondents were transcribed to text after which the transcripts were read repeatedly with the aim of highlighting and compiling emerging themes from them. Given the inadequacies of IPA, content analysis was employed for data gathered during participant observation.

Being an ethnomusicological study, the texts of the recorded songs were also transcribed under various themes and were duly analyzed. In addition, music data gathered from the recordings were transcribed, using music notation software, Sibelius 8, and were subjected to structural and stylistic analyses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### MAPPING THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF AND CULTURAL ENGAGEMENTS IN PRAYER MOUNTAINS IN OSUN STATE

#### 4.1 Emergence of prayer mountains (*Orí-Òkè*) in southwestern Nigeria

Historically, the emergence of prayer mountains in Southwestern Nigeria can be traced to the extended religious evangelistic activities of the African Indigenous Churches (AICs). These AICs namely: Christ Apostolic Church, Cherubim and Seraphim, Church of the Lord *Aládura* and Celestial Church of Christ were reported to have been established towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One striking feature of these churches is their ardent belief in prayers, hence their appellation- *Aladura*, meaning the praying ones. Scholars have observed that these AICs began as prayer groups within the historic churches from which they seceded. Various activities that characterise the AICs include prayer, emphasis on the spiritual, divine healing, veneration of an ancestor, mode of dressing, burning of incense, removal of shoes within sanctuary and belief in mountain or hill prayer meeting amongst others (Loko, 2011:47). Given the belief in mountain or hill prayer meetings among AICs, founders and leaders of these churches founded and patronised several prayer mountains especially in Southwestern part of Nigeria. This view is in line with the submission of Aina (2006) that prayer mountains have possibly emerged since the emergence of the syncretic church movement in Nigeria in 1915.

Consequently, the historic 1930 revivals largely contributed to the establishments of several prayer mountains in southwest Nigeria. During this era, many traditional sacred sites designated for the worship and veneration of certain deities and spirits in many Yorùbáland were re-designated and consecrated for prayers by some of the founders of the AICs. Notable among them are Late Joseph Ayo Babalolá and Late Prophet Samson Àkàndé who were reported to have entered into calves, forests, and mountains believed to possess dangerous malevolent beings to pray and came out unhurt.

Olukoya (2004:17) highlighted the activities of Joseph Ayo Babalola whom he referred to as Brother J.A., “Brother J.A and his team of aggressive evangelists and prayer warriors entered forbidden forests, silenced demons that demanded worship, paralysed deeply rooted anti-gospel activities, emptied hospitals by the healing power of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Olukoya stated further that Brother J.A “rendered witchdoctors jobless and started the first indigenous Holy-

Ghost-filled church in Nigeria.” On the re-designation of traditional sacred space for prayers, Àlàbí (2012) noted, “the Arámoko Prayer Mountain, belonging to Christ Apostolic Church now was formerly a shrine of a divinity in the town. Our visit to this mountain revealed the exact spot where the Arámoko people used to sacrifice to the divinity in the caves.”

Despite the biblical model of prayer mountaineering as witnessed in the ministry days of Jesus and in the early ministry of Apostle Ayo Babalolá, locating and establishing a mountain to be designated as prayer mountain which was a later development, is also based on divine directives given to mountain founders in Yorùbá land. Many of the founders of various prayer mountains both in time past and present alluded to the fact that they were given divine instruction to go to a mountain where they encountered the divine after several days of some prayer rituals such as fasting. A historic account was given concerning Late Prophet Samson Àkàndé on the founding of the popular Ede Prayer Mountain:

Shortly after the 16-month marathon prayer and fasting, God directed Prophet Àkàndé to go and locate a Prayer Mountain. In obedience to the directive, he went to a hill situated along Kuta-Ile-Ogbo Road, before River Osun. Prophet Àkàndé stopped there and began to pray, assuming that it was the God-appointed location. That day, there was a heavy downpour of rain... After the heavy rainfall, the voice of the Lord came to him as he continued in Prayer: “This is not where I have sent you. Go forward.” Prophet Akande and his escorts returned home that day. The following day, Prophet Akande again in search of the Mountain to which the Lord had directed him. After crossing Osun River and the railway line, Akande and his escorts came to a hill situated between Awo and Iwoye towns. There, God spoke to him again, assuring him that it was the appointed location where He, God, would establish for Àkàndé a spiritual “market” (Àkàndé, 2012:46).

The foregoing narratives corroborate the position of Eliade (1959) on sacred spaces as places with theophanic or hierophanic experiences as earlier noted in this work. In the case of Late Àkàndé mentioned above, the sacred revealed itself to a man (Àkàndé), using a physical object a media of revelation in the case of a mountain.

Despite the claim by the some of the founders of these prayer mountains to have established them based on divine guidance and prophetic order, it should be emphasised that the act of withdrawal to sacred space is not alien to African traditional religious practices. Sacred officials such as priests, priestesses and kings in African traditional religion often embark on

spiritual journeys, retreats and communion with gods, spirits and divinities and ancestors. This spiritual voyage into a solitary place is usually accompanied by fasting and abstinence from sexual intercourse or any human activity. While on a spiritual journey, it is believed that spiritual alertness and prowess is guaranteed thus making them very efficient afterwards in the discharge of their spiritual duties. It was and still a common practice among the founding leaders of the indigenous churches to engage in spiritual retreats in sacred spaces from time to time where they “believe that their spiritual powers, insight and performances would be renewed” (Àlàbí, 2012:144).

In their classification of *Ori-Òkè* (prayer mountains) around Yorùbáland including Ilorin, Nwosu et.al (2017:354), identified three types: church-based, community-based, and multireligious-based. These classifications explore the differences in mode of operation rather than in theology. In Òsun State, several prayer mountains can be said to be church-based either by ownership or affiliation. It is reported that many of the prayer mountains in Òsun State were founded or consecrated by founding fathers of the Christ Apostolic Church. Notable among them are Prophet Joseph Ayo Babalolá, Prophet Samson Oladeji Àkàndé aka Baba Abiye and Prophet David Olu Babajide.

#### **4.2 Ethnography of Ìkòyì in Ìsòkan Local Government Area, Òsun State**

Ìkòyì is one of the towns in Ìsòkan Local Government Area (LGA) in Òsun state, Southwest Nigeria and has its headquarters in the town of Apòmù. Ìsòkan LGA consists of several towns and villages such as Apòmù, Arònlá, Akoogun, Òdòfin, Ladaru, Alabamejo, Ajébámídelé, Oníléwò, and Sunbare. The estimated population of Ìsòkan LGA is 87,951 inhabitants with the area’s dwellers mostly comprised of members of the Yoruba ethnic group. Yorùbá language is commonly spoken in the area while Christianity and Islam are the religions widely practised in the area. Ìsòkan LGA has a number of prominent traditional rulers and these include the Olúkòyì of Ìkòyì and the Alapòmù of Apòmù. Festivals held in Ìsòkan LGA include the Òsun -Ikoyi festival. Ìsòkan LGA covers a total area of 179 square kilometres and witnesses two distinct seasons, which are dry, and the rainy seasons. The average humidity level of the area is 60 per cent while the average temperature of the LGA is 28 degrees centigrade. Farming is an important aspect of the economy of Isokan LGA with a variety of crops grown in the LGA. The area also

has a vibrant trade sector and hosts a number of markets where a wide variety of commodities are bought and sold. Other important economic activities in Isokan LGA include hunting, tailoring, and blacksmithing.

#### **4.3 History of Orí-Òkè Ìkòyí in Òsun State**

Orí-òkè Ìkòyí is located in a small community in Ìkòyí known as Ero-omo, Òsun State of Nigeria, which is about 2 km from the Ifè-Ìbàdàn express road. The prayer mountain is believed to have been founded and established in 1936 by the Late Apostle Joseph Ayò Babalolá together with the company of four other priests of God. However, during this research, there were conflicting accounts as regards the founder of this prayer mountain. In an interview with, Pastor Femi, the current pastor-in-charge of the prayer mountain, it was reported to the researcher that late Babalolá and his team were divinely instructed by God to travel from Ilesa to Ìkòyí town in order to locate a mountain. The mountain was said to be where God had deposited divine powers and that a sign will be given to identify and confirm the mountain. Apostle Babalolá and his team were said to have arrived at Christ Apostolic Church, Òkè-Alafia, in Ìkòyí where they met with one Bàbá Osuolale who was the *Bàbá Ìjo* -father of the church (a title assigned to a revered elder) and narrated their mission in Ìkòyí to him. Together with Bàbá Osuolale, the team went on the search for the divine mountain as instructed by God throughout the entire Ìkòyí village but they did not get confirmation of any sort as promised by God. After several searches, Bàbá Osuolale led them (Babalolá and his team) to a hamlet in Ero-omo Ìkòyí where the community elders in this settlement took Babalolá and his team to Ìkòyí Mountain in Ero-omo village. It was reported that while ascending the mountain, Late Apostle Babalolá and his team together with the elders from the village saw the footprint of an angel on the rock, a sign that was divinely promised to authenticate the divine choice and spiritual potency of the mountain. Upon sighting this sign, they rejoiced, praised and worship God on the top of the mountain and immediately consecrated the mountain as a place for prayers, a purpose the mountain still serves till date. Among those who journeyed to the mountain with Babalolá were the Late Prophet Babajide, Baba Ologiri, and Baba Abudaale.

A slightly different account on the establishment of Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain was presented by one Prophet/Evangelist Jeremiah Olútópé Adéyemo, an in-house prophet on the mountain and the General Evangelist in charge of Christ Apostolic Church under Ìkòyí District Coordinating



Council that includes Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain. According to Prophet Adéyemo, the mountain was not founded by Ayo Babalolá, although he corroborated the fact that a divine instruction was sent to those people earlier mentioned by Pastor Femi to locate a mountain where God had deposited His power. It was Babájídé Baba Abudaale and an unnamed person who located the mountain and invited Babalolá to come and see the mountain.

Pertinent to note that the two respondents earlier identified are indigenes of Ero-omo community where the prayer mountain is located and they both claimed to have the authentic oral history of the prayer mountain. Despite the conflicting narratives on who founded the mountain, it is apt to point out that the possibility of the mountain being jointly located by these men of God and that Ayò Babalolá might have been the person who consecrated the place as a prayer mountain. This possibility in the opinion of the researcher is hinged on the spiritual leadership role played by Babalolá and others by the inception of Christ Apostolic Church in Nigeria as the first General Evangelist of CAC. In addition, Babalola was noted to have founded and consecrated the highest number of prayer mountains across various villages in southwestern Nigeria. The late Ayò Babalolá and his team were said to have visited the mountain and stayed up to a month to pray. After praying at the end of each day, they usually descended to the hamlet at the basement of the mountain where they were given a room in Ero-omo community as shelter during rainfall and safety from dangerous and wild animals such as lion, snakes, and other fairy beings, which were initial habitants on the mountain. According to Pastor Femi, Babalolá physically saw some fairy beings such as *Iwin* (Yorùbá name for a fairy believed to live in the ground, rock, forest or hill) and that these fairy beings stood around Ayò Babalolá during his prayer sessions responding to “*Amín*” meaning Amen, to his prayers. For convenience, the Late Ayò Babalolá and his team saw the need to construct an accommodation on top of the mountain, hence the construction of the first building on the prayer mountain. Pastor Femi noted that the first building on the prayer mountain was built by eleven persons who were members of a prayer group known as prayer battalion. The building, which has existed over 50 years, was built with granite and in the words of Pastor Femi, “cannot collapse till the return of Christ.”



**Plate 1: First worship building on Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain (Source: Fieldwork, 2017)**

The Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain used to play host to all members of the Christ Apostolic Church in and around Ìkòyí community during “Galilee,” socio-religious gathering among Christians to celebrate Easter usually the Monday after Easter Sunday.

Historically, Easter Monday marks the day Jesus Christ physical showed Himself to His disciples at Galilee after His resurrection. This tradition is been celebrated by Christians all over the world. It is pertinent to note here that the significance of Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain at one point in time was not limited to sacred purposes only, in this case, prayer; it also provides social purpose such as recreation and relaxation space. Corroborating the varying significance of heritage religious spaces like Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain, Levi and Kocher (2012:917) observed:

Sacred places are used for more than religious activities. For example, Buddhist temple complexes are used for community functions such as educational and social services, religious functions such as meditation and religious ceremonies, and places where the Sangha (community of monks) live. The community members who use the temple sites, the monks who live there, and the tourists who visit participate in these activities.

In another vein, Aina (2006:4) gave a detailed geographical description of Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain below:

The prayer mountain is about 1.5km farther from the village. It is a large mass of solid rock about 250m above sea level with 420 constructed steps to ease climbing to the summit. The mountain top is flat with slight undulations in the immediate vicinity. Ìkòyí village and the surrounding settlements can be clearly viewed from the mountain top. Located on the mountain top are three church buildings adjacent to one another and constructed in the 1940s, 1974, and 1997, respectively. They have the capacity to sit 100, 300, and 1500 worshippers at once, respectively. Directly opposite these buildings is an expansive flat and open surface arena, which serves as the crusade ground on the mountain top with a capacity to accommodate over 3000 worshippers at once.



**Plate 2: Aerial view of the Ìkòyí Mountain top with people praying (Fieldwork, 2017)**

On Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain apart from the top of the mountain which provides space for various prayer activities, a modern and spacious church auditorium exists on top of the mountain. The church auditorium provides shelter and accommodation for participants on the mountain. For instance, when it's raining the prayer programme on the mountain can be moved to the church auditorium so that participants are not drenched by rain. During the day time when it's very sunny, prayer sessions are usually held within the church auditorium.



**Plate 3: Worship auditorium on Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain (Source: Fieldwork, 2017)**

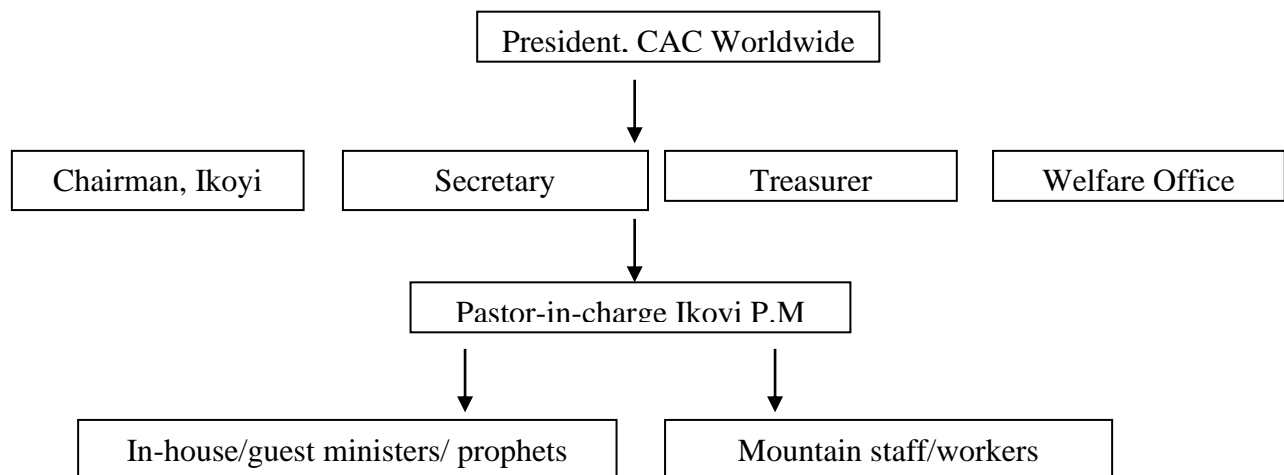
Likewise, social amenities such as electricity (via a generating set), water, and toilet facilities are available. This particular mountain is exclusively for male worshippers irrespective of age. Located about 600m away and separated by a deep valley is the twin prayer mountain for “female” worshippers, but a couple (i.e. a woman and her husband) can go there together, especially over problems common to them. The administration and control of these mountains are the responsibility of the Christ Apostolic Church (Aina, 2006).

#### **4.3.1 Administrative/Leadership structure of Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain**

Since most of these Prayer Mountains serve as extensions of religious activities of the AICs, in this case, Christ Apostolic Church, the leadership and administration are, determined largely by the church. After these prayer mountains have been founded and established by prophet/founders who most of the times are itinerant evangelist, the mountain is usually handed over to a spiritual personage endowed with the remarkable spiritual authority to manage the spiritual and administrative needs of the prayer mountains. These spiritual personages on the mountain are popularly referred to as “*Bàbá Ori-oke*” (mountain prophet). The mountain prophets are believed to reserve the rights to determine and dictate the spiritual happenings on the mountain. Until recently, Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain from inception used to be under the sole

leadership and administration of Bábá Orí-oke. Some past *Bábá Ori-oke* include Baba Oladosu, Baba Akinloye, Pastor Ola, Pastor Olatunji, and Pastor S.S Osuolale.

Due to various leadership crises that ensued and some administrative irregularities on the prayer mountain, the need to constitute an executive committee became imperative. This executive committee, which serves as governing board, provides oversight functions in the day-to-day activities for the prayer mountain. They are expected to appoint the spiritual head for the mountain. Currently, Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain is under the leadership of Christ Apostolic Church Òkè Òsun District Coordinating Council while the executive committee consists the chairman, secretary, treasurer, and welfare officer.



**Figure 1: Administrative organogram of CAC Ikoyi Prayer Mountain**



**Plate 4: current executive committee of Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain (Source: Fieldwork, 2018)**

#### 4.3.2 Programmes and activities in Orí-Òkè Ìkòyì

One of the notable features on this prayer mountain is the daily, round-the-clock prayer activities taking place in such prayer space thus making them a prayer hub. Participants were seen trooping in day and night from various parts of the country and even outside the country. Whilst participants on the mountain had the liberty to engage in private/personal prayer sessions there were expected to join cooperate prayer sessions. These cooperate sessions are mandatory for all participants to attend irrespective of their denominational affiliation, social status or age. During these general sessions, no individual or group is permitted to hold any separate prayer meeting outside the venue of the general prayer sessions. The leadership of the mountain frowns vehemently at any person(s) who violate this rule. To show the importance of this, it was one of the rules clearly printed on the signboard at the basement of the mountain.

Personal or group prayer sessions can be held anytime at any space on the prayer mountain. Many participants were seen to pray on some designated spots on the mountain such as the '*Ilé Agbára*' (house of power) or *Ilè Àánú* (mercy-land). These spots are believed to be supernatural places where connection with the divine is uninterrupted. This corroborates the notion by Eliade (1959) that space can be qualitatively different from each other. Little wonder why someplace(s) is/are designated differently even on the prayer mountain that is religiously perceived to be the meeting place of God. This kind of spatial differentiation was succinctly

captured by Idowu (1996), that the method of symbolizing the unseen began with some rough-and-ready objects.... to mark out sacred spots or to set places apart as evidences of the presence of the deity.

As observed during this study, prayer programmes and activities on Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain can be broadly categorized into two: daily and special periodic programmes. The daily programmes were conducted as a general prayer meeting with two sessions. The first, which was the morning session, held from 11 am until 4 pm while the night session started from 11 pm until 4 am inside the church auditorium or on the mountaintop. Both sessions were usually led by ministers who have been appointed and assigned by the leadership of the mountain to a particular day of the month. These ministers were drawn from various Christian denominations with the exception of those from the 'white garment' churches. Prophet Adéyemo, one of the mountain prophets, remarked on the reason for not appointing the ministers from the 'white garment' church to led prayer sessions on Ìkòyì Mountain:

Different ministers of God from various Christian denominations through divine leading are invited to minister on this mountain apart from white garment churches because some of their [white garment church] religious practices such as river bath, use of incense or perfumes and burning of candles as well as other strange practices that do not conform with our church [CAC] doctrines. (Personal communication, August 2018)

Special periodic programmes are held on monthly, quarterly, or annual basis on the prayer mountain as well. For instance, the last three days and the last Friday of the month are referred to as the mountain programme days. During these days, prayer sessions are exclusively reserved for the *Baba Ori-Oke*, Baba Alalaade, who also doubles as the Chairman of Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain. Special prayer programme for men, which is aimed at combating spiritual battles peculiar to men, are periodically held. Annual programme on Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain usually holds in August of each year and it is usually an elaborate one given the huge attendance during the programme. An array of ministers and gospel were invited to the kind of programme.



**Plate 5: Billboard for a special monthly programme on Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain (Source: Fieldwork, 2017)**

#### 4.4 History of *Orí-Òkè Àbìyè* in Ede, Òsun State

The *Orí-Òkè Bábá Àbìyè* in Ede, formally known as Ede Prayer Mountain was established in the year 1944 by Late Prophet Samson Àkàndé. He was an itinerant evangelist and church planter under the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC). Shortly after his call into ministry and his quest for divine guidance for a successful ministry, he had a divine directive to proceed to Òsogbo for a marathon prayer that was to last sixteen months. Late Prophet Àkàndé was directed to observe the prayer under one Prophet Kómoláfé in the house of Pastor Dúrósomó's father at Olóba Ìdó's compound in Òsogbo. The instruction given to him was that he must not leave the house for any reason until God appeared or spoke to him again. It was reported that "Akande took to the directive and remained isolated for sixteen months doing nothing else but praying and seeking to know God's perfect will for his life" (Àkàndé, 2012:46). The act of withdrawing to a solitary place for spiritual empowerment is not a practice peculiar to Christians alone as exemplified by Jesus Christ and His disciples.

In African societies, religious leaders such as priests and monarchs are known to engage in the similar practice of retrieving themselves into sacred places such as grooves, forests, and



caves to commune and contact the divine. Invariably, this experience has influenced some religious practices of the founders and leaders of the AICs such as the Aládùrà, a movement which Late Àkàndé belonged to. Alabi (2012:25) aptly remarked “the Aládùrà, engage in serious fasting and prayers for certain results and miracles. They believe that the sacred could be influenced when they are armed with prescribed verses of the psalms, fasting, abstinence from sex, food and other conventional routines, and go to sacred places and pray for certain things to come to pass and there would be results.”

As earlier reported, shortly after the 16 months marathon prayer and fasting, God directed Prophet Àkàndé to go and locate a prayer mountain. In obedience to the directive, he went to a hill situated along Kuta-Ile-Ogbo Road, before River Osun. The name of the hill is Gbajeero Hill. Prophet Àkàndé stopped there and began to pray, assuming that it was the God-appointed location. That day, there was a heavy downpour, which lasted for four hours from twelve noon to four o'clock, and there was no shelter around. After the heavy rainfall, the voice of the Lord came to him as he continued in prayer: “This is not where I have sent you. Go forward.” Prophet Àkàndé and his entourage returned home that day. The following day, with two young men, Ezekiel and Kómoláfé, who were trainee evangelists as his escorts, Prophet Àkàndé went again in search of the mountain to which the Lord had directed him. After crossing Osun River and the railway line, Àkàndé and his companions came to a hill situated between Awo and Ìwòyè towns. There, God spoke to him again, assuring him that it was the appointed location where a “spiritual market” would be established for Àkàndé.



**Plate 6: Late Prophet Samson Àkàndé (a.k.a. Baba Àbíyè) the Founding Prophet of Ede Prayer Mountain (Source: [www.babaabiyeprayermountain.com](http://www.babaabiyeprayermountain.com))**

Ede Prayer Mountain currently has two worship spaces apart from the mountain. There is a mini-church auditorium which can accommodate about 500 persons while the main auditorium can accommodate over 10,000 worshippers. The two buildings are very close to each other. The main auditorium also provides shelter and accommodation for participants, especially for women and children. There is another hostel-like auditorium built as accommodation space for men to sleep after prayer programmes.



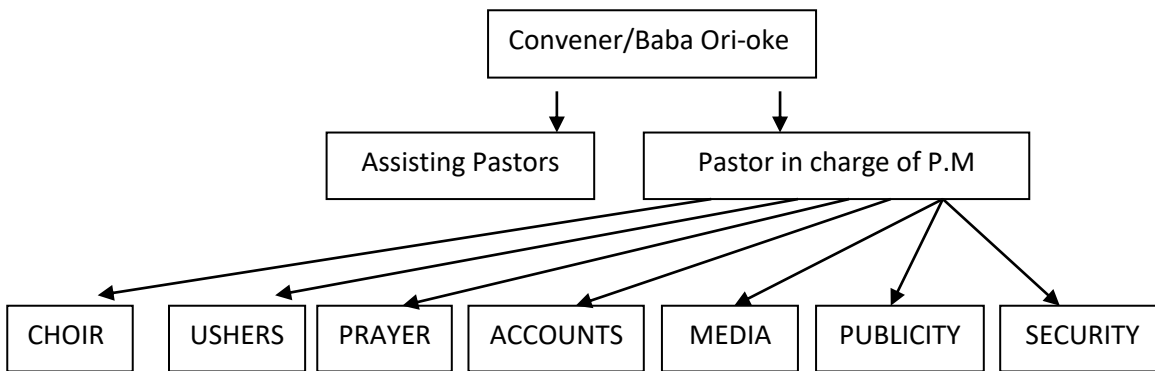
**Plate 7: Front view of the mini church and side view of the main auditorium in Ede Prayer Mountain(Source: Fieldwork, 2018)**

#### **4.4.1 Leadership/Administrative structure of Ede Prayer Mountain**

Administratively, this prayer mountain is not within the oversight control of the Christ Apostolic Church although the mountain has the appellation “Christ Apostolic Church, Orí-Òkè Bábá Àbìyè”, Ede. From the inception of this prayer mountain till the time of this study, the prayer mountain had been self-propagated, self-financed, and self-governed. In an interview with Pastor Boye, the administrative pastor of the prayer mountain, he reported that Late Samson Àkàndé established about fifty-two (52) CAC churches and a prayer mountain. He further explained that late Prophet Àkàndé before his demise handed over all the fifty-two churches to the CAC authorities except the prayer mountain, hence the leadership autonomy as witnessed in Orí-Òkè Bábá Àbìyè. The assertion by Aina (2006) that the administration and control of these mountains are the responsibility of the Christ Apostolic Church seems not to be the case with Ede Prayer Mountain now.

Since the demise of the late founder of the mountain, the leadership of the mountain has been under Pastor Fúnshó Timothy Àkàndé, the only surviving son of Late Prophet Samson Àkàndé under the ministry known as GOSPEL PROMOTION OUTREACH (GPO). Fúnshó Àkàndé is the convener of the outreach, which provides spiritual and administrative leadership for Ede Prayer Mountain. He is also referred to as “Bàbá Àbìyè,” an appellation he inherited from his late father. Apart from the organisational affiliation in terms of name that the mountain shares with CAC, there is no form of leadership interference from the authorities of CAC. The outreach through his convener determines who, what, when and how things happen on the mountain. Financially, GPO runs various accounts in up to seven banks where special donations, pledges and vows are domiciled.

Unlike Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain where the executive committee members are drawn from CAC churches, Ede Prayer Mountain is very autonomous in his administrative makeup. The organisational structure on this mountain seems very clear and functional. Apart from the convener, there are assisting pastors, heads of departments such as choir, ushers, prayer unit, accounts, technical, media, publicity, and security.



**Fig 2: Administrative organogram of Ede Prayer Mountain**

#### 4.4.2 Programmes and activities in Ede Prayer Mountain

Round the clock prayer sessions also characterises Ede Prayer Mountain just like Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain. Participants are free to hold their personal prayer or group prayer sessions but they must take part in the general prayer sessions, which are known as devotional services. Daily/weekly programmes on Ede Prayer Mountain vary slightly from that of Ìkòyì Mountain programme timing.

The programme timing on Ede Prayer Mountains allows participants ample time to engage in personal or group prayer time. It is also observed that the programme times changed during weekends differ from that of the midweek. This is designed in mind to accommodate participants who may be travelling to the mountain to be a part of the Miracle Hours and the vigil, which is about seven hours. It is believed that prayer mountains witness a high influx of people during weekends when many of the participants would be away from their various jobs and occupations. However, many clergymen who visited the mountain for prayers usually return to their destinations after the Friday vigil to attend to their various church programmes, especially for Sunday services. On Ede Prayer Mountain, a typical daily programme schedule is as follows:

DAY	TIME	PROGRAMME
<b>Monday &amp; Tuesday</b>		
Morning	5am-7am	} Devotional Service
Evening	7pm-10pm	
<b>Wednesday</b>		
Morning	5am-7am	Devotional service
Afternoon	2pm-4pm	Bible Studies
Evening	7pm-10pm	Devotional Service
<b>Thursday</b>		
Morning	5am-7am	} Devotional Service
Evening	7pm-10pm	
<b>Friday</b>		
Morning	9am-12noon	Miracle Hours
Night	11pm-6am	Night Vigil
<b>Saturday</b>		
(Evening)	7pm-10pm	Devotional Service
<b>Sunday</b>		
Morning	8am-1pm	Sunday Service
Evening	7pm-9am	Devotional Service

The aforementioned daily/weekly programmes particularly the devotional services are usually conducted on top of the mountain while Wednesday Bible study is held in a mini-church auditorium built at the base of the mountain. In addition, special periodic programmes are organised for different categories of participants with varying spiritual needs and challenges. Some of the programmes are quarterly, twice a year, and once a year. Let us look at some of the special programmes that hold on Ede Mountain.

- a. Power for Advancement: This programme holds every third Wednesday of February, May, and August from 12noon of Wednesday until 6 pm on Saturday. It is an interdenominational programme designed to break all fetters of stagnation and every barrier. It is mainly for professionals, traders, businessmen and women for a fresh anointing to advance in their undertakings,
- b. Ministers' Renewal Prayer Congress (MIREPCO): It is a quarterly meeting featuring teachings, seminars, prayer, and fasting sessions. It is designed for spiritual rejuvenation of all ministers of the Gospel in order to achieve the target for which the Lord has ordained them.
- c. Family Empowerment Programme/Covenant Day of Fruitfulness: This event holds in July and October of every year. The programme features marriage seminar, deliverance, counselling, prayer for the fruit of the womb, Divine provision for a life partner and solutions to diverse marital challenges.
- d. Adoption of Apostles: It is a divine mandate to continually raise and develop selfless and committed disciples for winning souls for Christ.
- e. Abiye Convention: This is the grand and mega annual programme on Ede Prayer Mountain. The programme derives its name from the prayer mountain – Ori-Oke Baba Abiye and it is celebrated every November. The aim of the programme is to help deliver people with various afflictions and challenges and to stimulate and direct them on their obligation towards the attainment of the heavenly standards which will ensure the salvation of their souls.

It can be deduced from the array of programmes organised on Ede Prayer Mountain that the sacred spaces such as this not just provides a meeting point with the divine but also provides a platform for social discourses such as marriage seminars.

#### 4.4.3 Social infrastructure on Ede Prayer Mountain

Unlike the other prayer mountains visited on Òsun State, *Orí-Òkè Bàbá Àbíyè*, Ede, appears to be quite different in its outlook in terms of both religious practices and infrastructural makeup. This prayer mountain not only serves as a place for spiritual renewal but also as a place for relaxation, therefore, making it a religious tourist site. *Orí-Òkè Bàbá Àbíyè*, Ede, now plays host to so many social amenities such as modern-day accommodation and guest house, restaurant, stores, bookshops, maternity clinic, two Police posts (old and new) and a security checkpoint.



**Plate 8: restaurant, tape ministry, and boutique shop in Ede Prayer Mountain (Source: Fieldwork, 2018)**

Initially, prayer mountains were founded and run by either poor or middle-class itinerant evangelists with little or no formal western education. From time immemorial, prayer mountains are found in very remote locations with very limited social amenities as observed earlier. For example, at the inception of Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain, people had to go through the strenuous exercise of crawling up to the top of the mountain those days but that has changed with the construction of 420 steps, which makes it more comfortable for participants to ascend the mountain.

In addition, this study was able to establish the notion that modernization, engendered by social change has contributed significantly to the physical outlook of the prayer mountains in African and specifically in Nigeria. This modernization can largely be attributed to the emergence of young and enterprising leaders of the prayer mountains, some of whom are very

educated and have acquired significant experiences in business and management. An example is the case of the present Presiding Prophet of Bábá Àbíyè Prayer Mountain in Ede, Prophet Funshó Àkàndè who was one time a banker and rose to the echelon of his career before he decided to respond divine call.

One thing that was observed during this research was the striking differences in the infrastructural outlook of Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain and that of Bábá Àbíyè Prayer Mountain. Although the formal is being run by a committee, the latter is managed by a sole proprietor. It can be deduced from the observations made in this study that the range of business activities on Bábá Àbíyè Prayer Mountain accounts for the high financial returns hence the huge investment in modern-facilities in the Prayer Mountain. As Odeigha (2018:255) observed “prayer mountains have also become a place of economic activities where Christians and other believers transact business around the mountain. This forecloses the spatial theoretical framework that spaces are meaningless without social actors hence the socio-dynamism of prayer mountains in order to accommodate the social needs of its actors and making it “humanised landscape” (Preucel and Meskell, 2004:215).



**Plate 9: New police post at the entrance of Ede Prayer Mountain (Source: Fieldwork, 2018)**



**Plate 10: Guesthouses on Orí-Òkè Bàbá Àbìyè, Ede (Fieldwork, 2017)**

Generally, religious sites usually attract a regular influx of visitors thus affecting the economy of the community. Studies have explored the commercial import of religious sites in different societies. For example, Levi and Kocher (2012:925) found that in Thailand, “it is a common practice for monks to sell religious objects within the temples, and souvenirs and refreshments are often sold inside the temple grounds.” Supporting the notion that sacred space fosters economic development in their host communities, Okyere (2012:115) observed that Abasua Prayer Mountain “substantially contributes to the economic development, that is, improvement in the material well-being of the people, especially, those from Abasua community and other adjoining or neighbouring communities.” In a similar study in Orí-Òkè Basin, Ilorin, north-central Nigeria, Odeigha (2018) remarked, “in recent years, Prayer Mountains have turned into business centres where shops are erected and items like water, anointing oil, among other items, are sold. Economic activities have become so prominent on contemporary prayer mountains like the selling of these items at Orí-Òkè Basin. Among all the items sold on many of the prayer mountains, water (bottled or sachet) and anointing oil were found to be regularly purchased by participants given the spiritual significance accorded these two elements. Firstly, the spiritual significance of water on the prayer mountain can be traced to the incessant use of water by Apostle Babalola who used water to perform so many miracles during his lifetime. It was reported that Babalola used water to cure various sickness and raised dead persons during his evangelistic tours. He was noted to have encouraged the use of water only by his followers



whenever they were in a difficult situation. Hence, individuals purchased water in sachets, some in large plastic or metal containers in order to meet their spiritual and physical needs. The belief in the efficacious power of water is commonly expressed in a song especially by members of the Christ Apostolic Church:

*Babalola Olomi iye re*  
*Omi iye*  
*Iye re oo*  
*Omi iyeee*

**Translation**

Babalola of living waters  
Living waters  
Full of life  
Living waters

Secondly, water was used to satisfy the natural thirst of the participants on the prayer mountains after several days of fasting hence the high patronage of water in various containers. Some participants bought packaged water (sachets or bottles) while some fetched from water other sources around like rivers, stream and tap water. Water from natural sources was believed to be consecrated by the founders/leaders of the mountain. For instance, there were many sacred rivers and streams consecrated for spiritual and therapeutic reasons by Ayo Babalola during his evangelistic tour in Southwestern Nigeria. In the words of Owoeye, Babalola has “penchant for consecrating any river of his choice for healing” (cited in Fabunmi & Ajayi, 2019:205). In order to make the water spiritually potent for the desired intention of the owners, the water containers were noticed to be kept in a designated spot on the prayer mountains for as long as the owner wanted them to remain. The waters were intended for various reasons and application differs depending on the spiritual directives given by the mountain prophets/leaders. An oral account on *Omi Òni*, sacred water at Efon Alaaye in Ekiti has it:

the water was sanctified for healings of various diseases like leprosy, on the on the leprous people, pregnancy for the barren, healing of curses, epilepsy, margarine, hunchback, hernia, lunacy, prolonged sores, prolonged pregnancies and so on (cited in Ajayi, 2012:165).

For some, the water should be taken orally while others will have to bath with the water and in some cases, the person will drink and use the water for a bath. The water can also be sprinkled in

homes, workplaces and market locations of participants to ward off evil forces capable of causing harm such as ill-luck, poor sales and career retrogression. Sick persons were told to apply the water on their bodies for healing. Despite the spiritual significance of water on prayer mountains especially among the participants, the health hazard resulting from the indiscriminate exposure of water containers to the sun for a very long period needs to be carefully examined. Simply put, what are the health implications of this water to the participants? In addition, these water containers particularly the plastic containers can pose environmental threat to the society.



**Plate 11: sacred spot with various water containers on *Orí-Òkè Ìkòyì* ( Fieldwork, 2017)**

#### **4.4.4 Water and plastic pollutions in prayer mountains**

The importance of clean water cannot be over-emphasized because we all need it for our survival, prosperity, and happiness. However, access to clean water for both human, plant and animals to survive are threatened daily by various human and industrial activities. Globally, water pollution is of great concern to various governments and societies, developed and under-developed. In the United States, for example, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that approximately one-third of all the waters in the United States are unsafe for swimming, fishing and drinking (cited in Vigil, 2003:3). Several factors have been identified to contribute to the unsafe status of waters in the world. First, industrial activities through the release of waste and wastewater into various natural sources reservoirs of water such as streams,

rivers, and lakes. In addition, activities from oil spillage have been discovered to find their way into these natural water sources and even penetrate the groundwater. Secondly, human activities such as the release of sewage into water, dumping of refuse indiscriminately on waterways, fumigation, and other activities are said to aid water pollution. Furthermore, environmental scientists have discovered that organic and inorganic substance can aid water pollution. These inorganic substances include rocks and minerals; metals such as gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc and chrome. Despite the health benefit of the presence of metals in water, the hazard of having metals in excess proportion in water has been observed too (Vigil, 2003; Malik & Khan, 2016). Metals dissolve when placed in water. According to Vigil (2003:34), these dissolved metals can be toxic to aquatic organisms if their concentrations get too high. Even in low concentrations, long-term exposure to metals can affect the health of aquatic organisms and humans. Metals that are contaminating in water are found to likely cause different health issues like kidney damage, cancer, and heart disease. As seen in plate 11 above, one will observe some metal buckets with water without lid cover; this portends serious health hazard to the people who will use this water. Apart from the metal container interaction with water, exposing of the water even in plastic containers is not healthy as “some heavy metals, such as mercury and lead, may also enter the atmosphere due to traffic pollution and industrial activities, which can be deposited in soils around the reservoir” ( Malik & Khan, 2016:1). Not only are metals part of the major sources of water pollution, but plastics have also been found to be water pollutant with its attendant harmful effect on both aquatic and human species hence contributing to environmental pollution.

Plastic comes in various shapes and sizes and is used for a different purpose. The production and the distribution of plastics continue to increase in both developed and developing countries. Plastics are lightweight, highly durable, strong, and cheap. They are used in a great number of applications, ranging from household and personal goods, clothing, and packaging to construction materials (Mrowiec, 2017:51). For example, plastics are commonly used to package water and other types of drinks, and due to their portability, durability, and affordability, they are disposable. These plastics, when disposed of, find their way does not matter how long to the rivers and oceans, hence contaminating the aquatic species. Wang et al. (2018) noted the transit pattern of these plastics into the ocean-ways thus:

Identified transmission pathways of the release of microplastics  
(both primary and secondary sources) into the marine environment

include riverine systems, coastlines, sewage outflow, urban and storm runoff, improper disposal and dumping, accident leakage from marine activities and even atmospheric outfall. As microplastics are difficult to biodegrade and once they enter the marine environment, they are impossible to remove, that is the main reason why they contribute to the accumulation and concentration of microplastics in the world's oceans (p.899).

Given the foregoing, plastic pollution is now a major threat to the environment, particularly in the marine space. Despite the neglect of the threat of plastic pollution by scholars in time past, recently microplastics have been recognized as an emerging threat, as well as ecotoxicological and ecological risk for water ecosystems (Avio et al., 2016). Therefore, the slow degradation process of plastics accounts for the threat they pose to water ecosystems as the degradation are aided by the action of a living organism, sunlight and reaction with water (Mrowiec, 2017:52; Roni et.al 2018; Wang et.al, 2018). Studies have shown that some microplastics, that is, the smallest forms of plastic given their durability can take up to 450 years to degrade. If sunlight/heat can cause speedy microplastic degradation and by extension microplastic pollution, the bottled waters seen in plate 11 are not healthy for the participants who own these plastics. While the scarcity of empirical evidence on the implication of plastic pollution on human health, scholars have called for more research on the health implication of plastic pollution on humans.

Therefore, participants on prayer mountains should be properly educated on the proper ways of disposing of these plastics after usage to help combat the indiscriminate flooding of the world's ocean with plastics. In addition, if plastics must be used by participants at the mountain, the participants should be encouraged not to expose those plastics too long to sunlight.

#### **4.5 Socio-cultural and religious features of the Yorùbá in the selected prayer mountains in Òsun State**

Spaces, sacred or mundane, are socially constructed and reconstructed. It, therefore, suggests that a space is meaningless without social actors. As earlier observed by Lefebvre (1991), space is not a container or a static setting inherited from nature but produced and reproduced by humans and their interests. Suffice to say that peoples' worldview and interests are continually expressed in any particular space and time. In southwest Nigeria, many of the prayer mountains were founded and patronized by the Yorùbá, therefore, revealing some of the

socio-cultural features of the Yorùbá in the religious expressions and dispositions in selected prayer mountains particularly in Òsun State.

In Africa societies, Yorùbá inclusive, religion permeates every aspect of its culture thus making religion inseparable from culture especially in various Yorùbá societies. Given the interrelatedness of culture and religion among Yorùbá, various socio-cultural features of the Yorùbá were evident on both prayer mountains. This is traceable to the fact that many of the prayer mountains in the state were founded by Yorùbá Christians and these prayer mountains are highly patronized by Yorùbá Christians. Some of the socio-cultural features of the Yorùbá observed on the prayer mountains for this study include ancestor reverence, spatial sacredness, and religious spatial-gender segregation.

#### **4.5.1 Ancestral reverence and appropriation of relics**

Ancestral reverence comprises a variety of religious practices and beliefs focussing on the spirits of ancestors. Many world cultures, folk and modern, where traditional belief exists, still practice ancestor worship thus making ancestor worship a widespread phenomenon. Citing examples of societies where ancestor worship is prevalent, Bae (2007) found out that ancestor worship is very much observed in Asia, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, and Africa. Although the conditions needed for admittance into the ancestral world differ from one society to another, there are, however, common qualities of an ancestor. Notable among these qualities: ancestors are, the dead, departed kin, remembered by those left behind, have lived and procreated, have had a significant social status while alive, and to be revered in specific places and ceremonies (p.23-26).

In African cosmology, ancestors are believed to possess benevolent qualities, which endeared them to the living in any given community. These qualities include exemplary, well-meaning, and beneficiary lifestyle (Bediako, 1990; Bae, 2007). Ancestors are believed to be capable of protecting members of a family, clan, or community as well as providing pieces of advice through dreams and trance (Odejobi, 2014:586).

In Yorùbáland ancestor worship is a common practice. It is believed that the deceased in the community has only departed bodily and that the spirit of the dead is still very much around in the community and at such should be acknowledged and revered among the living.

According to Mbiti, (1971:10) ancestors are referred to as the “living dead.” Mbiti expatiated “the living dead is a person who is physically dead but alive in the memory of those who knew him in his life, as well as being alive in the world of the spirits. The living dead are still part of the extended family and as such has a close relationship with the living” (Mbiti 1990:25).

Traditionally, ancestors are believed to be protectors of their descendants and are believed to be with God interceding on behalf of their relatives who are still living. Supporting this view, Bae (2007:28) remarked:

In the state in which ancestors exist as spirits, they are believed to be god-like and implicitly able to communicate with God. However, they are also essentially man-like, due to their origin and therefore believed to be able to communicate with humans. It is this status as well as their moral superiority that means that in most African societies ancestors serve as intermediaries to the Supreme Being...

Given the belief in the intercessory and mediatory functions of the ancestors in African societies, Yorùbá Christians on prayer mountains find it very germane to reverence and engage the name of notable leaders who are believed to have attained the socio-religious status of an ancestor during various prayer rituals and activities. Prayers, in traditional communities, are made to God through the ancestral spirits. The biblical notion of “no one comes to the Father except through me” finds cultural expressions among Yorùbá Christians particularly on the issue of praying through ancestors.

Some notable Yorùbá Christian leaders who were also founders of some AICs in Yorùbáland and are believed to have demonstrated high spiritual authority during their lifetime but are no longer living are still accorded reverence in same way ancestors are in the traditional Yorùbá setting. As a matter of fact, many of the prayer mountains are notable to have been established by these religious leaders in the AICs. Prominent among others are Apostle Joseph Ayo Babalola of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), Moses Orimolade of Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) church, J.B. Oshoffa of the Celestial Church of Christ (CCC) and J.O Oshitelu of the Church of the Lord Aladura.

In Nigeria, believe in and reverence of ancestors are still common phenomena among Yorùbá Christians particularly members of the indigenous churches. Some forms of ancestral reverence were observed in the prayer and music activities in the prayer mountains visited during

this study. The incessant calls by participants on the mountain on the God of the founders of the prayer mountains were repeatedly heard during prayer sessions. An example goes:

*Olorun Babalolá,  
Olorun Baba Àkàndé,  
Gbé agbára wo mí*

### **Translation**

Oh God of Babalola  
Oh God of Akande  
Endow me with your power

One of the things that was discovered on the prayer mountains during this research was the spiritual endorsement given to the mountain by the dead –ancestors, who were the founders of the prayer mountain (see plate 12). This endorsement was evident in the pictures of the founders of the mountain being copiously displayed everywhere around the mountain as well as prints such as billboard, handbills and souvenirs sold on the mountain. This portrait can be said to be a type of sacred relics, which mentally endorses the potency of the prayer mountains in the minds of the participants.

Relics are present in different religious spaces and are treated with utmost awe and reverence. A relic can be defined as a material object that relates to a particular individual and /or to events and places with which that individual was associated. Scholars have categorised relics as corporeal and non-corporeal (Walsham, 2010). In another classification with similar features to Walsham’s classes of relics, Hooper (2014) theorizes that relics may manifest in three forms in bodily, contact and image perspectives. In describing these three manifestations, Walsham (2010) commented that

Alongside these corporeal relics (skulls, bones, blood, teeth, hair, fingernails, and assorted lumps of flesh) are non-corporeal items that were possessed by or came into direct contact with the individual in question. These may be articles of clothing (hats, girdles, capes, smocks, shoes, and sandals) or pieces of personal property (cups, spectacles, handkerchiefs, weapons, staves, and bells). They can be printed books, written texts, letters, and scraps of paper bearing an autograph signature or graphic inscription. Or they might be rocks or stones upon which the impression of a foot, hand or limb has been left as an enduring testimony of the presence of a departed saint, martyr, deity, or secular hero (p.11).

From the foregoing, the significance of relics in endorsing and retaining the divine power in a mundane object is of great interest. Appropriation of relics on the mountain was observed during this research on both prayer mountains. As earlier mentioned, the portraits of the late founders of the two mountains were visually saturated on the mountains thus serving as the symbol or indicator of the divine presence. On Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain, participants believed that Late Joseph Ayò Babalolá concentrated and prayed very often on the mountain hence the contact with mountain makes the mountain a relic. This phenomenon was also observed by Okyere (2012:77) on Abasua Prayer Mountain when he noted, “the item believed to be relics and which were observed as vigorously patronised by some pilgrims at CT of APM included the portrait of the late Rev. Abraham Osei Asibey and the first chapel which was built at CT....”

On prayer mountain, the portraits can be seen as a material manifestation of the act of remembrance, which helps participants connect with the past. Relics, as Walsham (2010:13), puts it are “a kind of umbilical cord that connects the living and the celebrated dead, they carry messages from beyond the grave and provide a mnemonic ligature to a world that has been lost”. Although the founders of these prayer mountains were dead, their relics in the form of portraits connect them to the living. The supernatural embodiment of relics was articulated by Hooper (2014:179), that “relic is attributed with the life-giving and life-enhancing powers of the original special personage; they embody the exceptional, thaumaturgic and talented qualities of the prototype and provide a focus for human engagement with such sources of power.”

The foregoing foregrounds the notion of the spatial theory that space is not just physical but it can be perceived and then represented. For participants on both prayer mountains, the bodily space of the founders of the mountains as captured in their mental space is therefore represented through the visuals of these departed spiritual personages in the form of a portrait.





Plate 12: showing Late Babalolá (top right) as one of the executives of Ìkòyí Mountain (Fieldwork, 2017)

#### 4.5.2. Spatial sacredness

Culturally, space is heterogeneous in various societies whether folk or modern. Some spaces are qualitatively different from others hence the sacredness and the profanity of a space. For sacred space, man consecrates it for specific use and purpose such as an opening it up as a line of communication with the divine. Africans believe in the potency of sacred spaces with supersensible powers and residual powers there. Because of the supersensible powers residing in these sacred spaces, they are regarded as holy and sacred, where people meet with God. Consequently, these spaces are guided and protected from any form of sacrilege or misuse by users. It is believed that certain actions or inactions can aid or hinder the manifestations of the divine in any given sacred space. Some of these prohibitions are socially and culturally created while others are claimed to be divinely given. In Yorùbá cultural belief, sacred spots are to be approached and treated with awe and respect. Adherents of African traditional religion believe that violating the rules guiding any sacred space could attract or social or divine sanctions.

On both prayer mountains visited during this study, there were rules and regulations for participants who were users of the mountain. These rules and regulations were clearly printed on various boards in and around the prayer mountains. This code of conduct explains in details some activities that are prohibited in the sacred space. Of note is the high distaste for dirty and

unhygienic behaviour and attitude among participants on the prayer mountain. Almost all the rules in all the prayer mountains articulate the need to maintain a clean and tidy lifestyle, which is of necessary importance in securing and retaining the divine powers residual on the prayer space. Given the belief that these sacred places prayer mountains provide a meeting point between the divine and human, keeping a holy and unpolluted physical space was encouraged among participants on the mountain.

Footwear was highly prohibited in all the prayer mountains under study. Participants were admonished to take off their shoes at some notable areas particularly on the top of the mountains, in the case of Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain and Orí-Òkè Baba Abiye. On these two mountains, participants were prohibited from wearing shoes while climbing the mountain; they were expected to take off their shoes at the base of the steps leading to the mountain. The practice of removal of shoes in sacred spaces is a time honoured practice both in African societies and among the Judeo-Christians of the Old Testament.

In the Bible, God instructed Moses on Mount Horeb: “take your sandal off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.” (Bible, Exodus 3:5). Scholars have pointed out the social and religious significance of footwear among various societies. Religious scholars posit that removing one’s shoes or sandal is a form of respect in the East. In the Old Testament, the Levites and the priests were said to have performed their sacred duties of carrying the vessels of the Tabernacle barefooted. More than an item of dress footwear are very symbolic; they typify “supreme power and possession. The foot signifies domination” (Anioo, 2015:94). Hence, the removal of footwear in sacred places such as prayer mountains depicts respect and reverence for the holiness and sacredness of such space, which is considered the dwelling place of God. Since footwear also symbolizes supreme power and possession, the act of removing footwear at worship places denotes “a sign of total submission of your rights unto Him [God] and the willingness to do only that which He commands.” (Loko, 2012:53)

Shoes are capable of carrying with them filthy substance more often than not and thus desecrate the holy place of God if worn to the mountain. Anioo (2015:74-75) aptly remarked, “footwear carries dirt and may enhance unsanitary conditions as members kneel and prostrate during worship.” It, therefore, suggests that the prohibition of footwear in a sacred place is not only for religious purpose but also to provide hygienic surroundings for the comfort of

worshippers. In a contrary opinion, Hamilton (2017:44) submitted that one of the reasons why Moses was asked to remove his shoes is that “shoes are for protection from dust and injury and such is not in the holy presence of the Holy One.”

In traditional African communities, sacred spaces are approached with so much respect and awe. Certain sacred festivals, as well as spaces, do not encourage the wearing of shoes at such ceremonies or places as the case may be. For example during *Orò* cult festival among the Yorùbá, wearing of shoes during, in, and around the festival space is vehemently prohibited. Adherents of traditional religion when entering the shrine, a sacred place, to consult the religious functionaries, do so bare footed. This tradition has now been imported by AICs in their religious practices. As aptly observed by Eugene (cited in Anioo, 2015:95), “when a person adopts new religion they give meaning to old traits or they attach old meanings to new traits.”

No wonder why African indigenous churches must have been influenced by the biblical events in Exodus 3:1-6 as well as some cultural practices while mandating their members to remove their shoes “because their church is also a holy ground where Yahweh dwells.” (Adamo, 2017:7). Some AICs do not allow footwear into the worship areas within the church premises. Notable among these churches are Cherubim and Seraphim Church, Celestial Church of Christ and Church of the Lord Aladura. In her study, Loko (2012:52) noted that removal of shoes is one of the features of AICs. She observed, “footwears are not allowed into the praying ground and house of prayers. This is fundamental to Cherubim and Seraphim worship practice. Any violation of this practice is simply a desecration of the Holy land and an apparent unwillingness to humbly submit to God’s authority.” It is pertinent to note that the Christ Apostolic Church does not observe the practice of removal of footwear in worship areas, particularly in the church. However, footwear is not allowed on prayer mountains established by leaders of this church.



**Plate 13: A signboard showing the rules and regulations at Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain, Ede (Source: Fieldwork, 2017)**

The signboard above was seen to be strategically positioned at the base of the steps leading to the mountaintop so that participants can read. Take note of the first rule on the signboard: ‘you must put off shoes while on the mountain’. Although there are certain areas of on top of the mountain where wearing shoes are allowed such as the residential areas and toilets specifically. As earlier observed, the notion by Ainoo (2015) that the prohibition of footwear in sacred spaces does not only implicate spiritual filthiness but also sanitary conditions for worshippers during worship was also corroborated by one of the respondents on Orí-Òkè Bàbá Ábìyè in Ede. Pastor Boye, the administrative pastor remarked:

I believe the very reason is to have sanity, cleanness on the mountain. For example, if we allow people to be wearing shoes to the mountain the place will be dirty; there is no chair for seating on the mountain everyone sits on the rock [mountain]. To keep the place clean, that’s the main reason we have some rules.... (Fieldwork, 2018)

Similarly, Pastor Olusola Amole, one of the participants at Ede Prayer Mountain, Ede feels:

Given the influx of participants on the prayer mountain, if everyone is permitted to wear shoes on the mountain the whole place will be littered.... Since people are not allowed to bring in their mats [for sleeping] automatically they would want to sleep on the rock. Apart from honouring the Holy Spirit the interdict on footwear on the mountain is very good, it will promote “good health” among the people (Fieldwork, 2018).

Many of the participants at both prayer mountains alluded to the truth that each of the mountains were established by certain divine covenants and must be kept clean in order to retain God's presence and power on the mountain.

In addition, the sacredness of the prayer space was also maintained through the prohibition of food items on the prayer mountains. Participants were strictly warned not to eat on the mountain although fasting is one of the essential activities on the mountains. One of the respondents at Ede Mountain agreed that if people were allowed to bring food items or eat at the top of the mountain they might not concentrate on the prayer activities they came for. Furthermore, he added that crumbs of food on the mountain might attract some dangerous animals to the mountain, which could be harmful to participants on the prayer mountains. The issue of hygiene and cleanliness is articulated again. Therefore, the efforts of the leadership of the prayer mountains in ensuring and educating the participants on the need to keep their environs clean should be commended in this regard.

Another socio-cultural feature of the Yorùbá witnessed on prayer mountains in Òsun State was the stern prohibition against sexual activities on the mountain. In the traditional African setting, sexual intercourse on a sacred land is not only abominable, but it is also regarded as taboo. According to Yorùbá cultural belief, sexual activities can diminish the potency of a sacred space or object. Priests and priestesses in traditional African societies are mindful of this notion and do not engage in the action especially when they are engaged in a sacred assignment or location. It is believed that sexual intercourse could render their traditional medicine or cult impotent. Àlàbí narrated his experience with a particular priestess of Olókè cult in Ìkólé Èkìtì on the importance of sexual abstinence when engaging in sacred cult activities.

Madam Fèhìntolá Ìgè claimed that sex could be a barrier to the efficacy of the Olókè cult. That is why she abstains from sex with her husband from time to time in order to enhance the potency of the cult. In actual fact, she is not living any husband now. When asked why? She claimed that it would not prove the potency of the consultation and divination (Àlàbí, 2012:137).

As earlier noted that when a person adopts new religion they give meaning to old traits or they attach old meanings to new traits, founders and leaders of the prayer mountains visited during this study held this view and belief hence the strict prohibition on sexual activities on the mountains.

It is worthy of mention that the ban on sexual intercourse on the prayer mountain or its environs was also necessitated because of religious or moral factors. For instance, in Orí-Òkè Bábá Ábìyè in Ede, the researcher was told that married couples were not allowed to engage in sexual intercourse even in the guesthouse located in the same vicinity of prayer mountain. Beyond religious or divine injunction, the leadership and management of the prayer mountain predict that if couples were permitted sexual engagement in their private accommodation within the premises of the mountain, that such opportunity may also be abused by those who are not legally married. The question that readily comes to mind is how will the restrictions on sex between legally married couples be enforced or monitored by the leadership of the prayer mountain? Is this prohibition not humanly discerned and designed as taboo to monitor moral and social behaviour within a religious setting in this case prayer mountains? As pointed out by Odejobi (2013), the notion of taboos and superstitions has been a vital component of African religion and culture, especially among the Yorùbá of the Southwest of Nigeria. She expatiated: no

Within its historical context taboo was a sacred term for a set of cultic or religious prohibitions instituted by traditional religious authorities as instruments for moral motivation, guidance, and objectivity for protecting the sanctity of their shrines and the well-being of their worshipping communities. The term is also applicable to any sort of social prohibition imposed by the leadership of a community regarding certain times, places, actions, events, and peoples in order to regulate contacts between a particular circumstance but not exclusively, for religious reasons for the well-being of the society (p.222).

The claims by the founders and leaders of the prayer mountains that sexual intercourse on the prayer space can dissuade the presence of the divine thus making it some sort of religious prohibition serving as an instrument for guidance for protecting the sanctity of the prayer space. In the view of Àlàbì (2012), “all these religious instructions are in place in order to maintain the sanctity, sacredness and efficacy of the Orí Òkè Iyanu Prayer Mountain” (p.159).

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that some socio-cultural features of the Yorùbá are still prevalent and of great relevance in the religious practices witnessed on various prayer mountain in Southwestern Nigeria.

### 4.5.3 Religious spatial-gender segregation

Gender segregation was another observable practice among the prayer mountains during this study. For example, on Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain, there are two worship sites; one is strictly for men while another area in a distant location is for women, children, and men who may wish to pray there. This was also witnessed in Ede Prayer Mountain although not too noticeable especially during morning prayer meetings. Scholars have observed the prevalence of religious spatial-gender segregation both in secular and sacred institutions and how this experience is culturally and religiously sustained and negotiated (Mackrell, n.d; Pokharel, 2008; Buisson, 2013; Berger, 2015; Bawa, 2019).

Within the domain of Christian religion, liturgical historians have traced the notion of gender segregation or separation from the earliest Christian societies and traditions. For Berger (2015:3) the early church was receptive to all and did not segregate anyone based on gender differences. He asserted that both male and female, bond and free, children and eunuchs were all given access to baptism. While worshippers' access to the religious space was restricted, the way and manner worshippers' sit was of concern to early Christian worshippers. As Berger (2015:4) remarked that, the spatial separation of men and women in worship was of basic importance. Women were not allowed to sit loosely in worship spaces there were rules that informed their seating order. A description of the seating order in a Syrian church known as *Didascalia Apostolorum* is given: ...the liturgical assembly oriented eastward, toward the altar and the bishop's seat. Laymen were first in the nave; behind these men, toward the west and away from the altar and the bishop's seat, women had their place. The women were grouped according to marital status: young girls, married women with children, elderly women, and widows (Berger, 2015:4). This seating arrangement clearly suggests that women do not have the same vantage position as their male counterparts during religious worship thus creating a subtle but significant religious discrimination. According to Pokharel (2008:80), "discrimination is an unfavourable treatment to anyone based on sex, race and so on. It is considered as an obstacle for the achievement of the objectives of equality, development, and peace." Spatial restriction in the place of worship can, therefore, be seen as an act of inequality and hinders religious development.

In Islam, gender segregation is also a noticeable practice, as women are not given spatial premium during prayers in the mosques. Women and children either are at the rear section of the mosque area or kept in a different place not too distant from the mosque during prayers. However, there is a Quranic injunction, which admonishes the adherents of Islam to imbibe the ethics of equality regardless of age, race, or gender. In her article on “Gender Segregation in Islam: Protection or Destruction”, Bussion (2013) argued that gender segregation in Islam is a social construct presumably endorsed by religion and serves as a means for individual and societal protection. “Such ethics also teach believers to engage in social action, acquire the sense of community and human solidarity, and promote inclusion rather than exclusion. Based on such ethics, why would Islam demand of believers to create new artificial boundaries, borders and divides between people, while social and racial apartheid provide enough division already (p. 100)? Historically, gender segregation in Islam is reported not have existed initially. This is because the first mosque established by the Prophet Muhammad in Medina was alive with the presence of men and women, who both had equal access to space without any evidence of separation of genders within the mosque. As such, no separate entrance for women existed (Kahera, 2002; Reda, 2004; Woodlock, 2010). One can safely infer that beyond religious dictates, culture is also responsible for the prevalence of female gender segregation given the patriarchy nature of both many traditional societies. Supporting this view, Bawa (2019:56) noted that “various inimical socio-religious and cultural practices give an inkling to gender inequality and female subservience in some societies.”

In Africa, gender roles are culturally determined. In traditional African society, a woman is believed to be solely in charge of domestic chores and support the husband in his farming or other allied vocation. Religious roles are not often assigned to women in traditional African societies. More often than not, the man plays a mediatory role on behalf of his family in communicating with the sacred. The Yorùbá like other Africans believed that the presence and sighting of a woman in some exclusive cult can offend the presence of the divine and can, in turn, impede the potency of it. That is why some sacred spaces and cult strictly prohibits the participation of female gender in their ritual performances. Since an African cannot be divorced from his culture, the gender prohibition or segregation in some prayer mountains in Yorùbáland can be understood within the cultural milieu.



Several factors were identified as being responsible for gender segregation in the religious and cultural settings discussed above. These factors, religious and/or cultural, include ritual impurity such as bodily flow, menstruation and child in the case of a woman and male “nocturnal emission” (Berger, 2015:7), sexual enticement by women or commandment from the Holy Books. In Africa traditional culture, the monthly blood flow of a woman is considered filthy and capable of desecrating the sacred space. Male folks in Islam believe that praying with women in the same space can be distracting owing to the sexual enticement that women are capable of generating. Buisson (2013:105-106) captured it thus “they [women] are primarily viewed as a source of sexual temptation (*fitnah*) for men. This means that they are considered as sexed individuals, as females first, rather than as persons first.”

On the prayer mountains, the gender segregation was not associated with sexual enticement by the women rather the mountain prophets claim that it was solely based on divine directives. When asked why the restriction of women in the male section of Ìkòyí Mountain, one of the mountain prophets remarked:

At the inception of this mountain, women usually attend programmes here until the Lord spoke to our Father in the Lord that year after Galilee celebration that women should no longer be allowed to the mountain. The Lord said that He has sent some angels down to the mountain and that these angels cannot behold the filthiness of women.... and the Lord said that at the end of each Galilee celebration, it usually takes the angels of God about 21 days to clean up the mountain henceforth no woman should come to this mountain. You see that we are now free as men to pray and do what we want without being mindful of any woman... nobody is gossiping, nobody is menstruating....(personal communication with Prophet Odewole Olasile, January 2018)

For instance, scholars have extensively discussed the issue of gender segregation in the workplace, Arguably, this spatial separation is not unconnected with the notion of sexual distraction that the female gender is susceptible to in places of worship. Scholars have argued that the biological process of monthly cycle among female gender is one of the reasons why females especially women are more often than not excluded from sacred spaces (Buisson, 2013; Berger, 2015). In the case where they are eventually allowed access to the worship area, they are usually segregated. In Islam, women are segregated in mosques during prayer times. As Buisson (2013) noted that, this segregation is seen as a means of protection. The protection implies a

form of safety from immoral thoughts and actions especially incontinence. He further noted that gender segregation in Islam “aims to protect the chastity of both male and female believers, hence protecting them from the tyranny of desires and, ultimately, from committing such sins as adultery and, as a result of adultery, potentially destroying the balance and harmony of a whole family” (p.101). If the physical sighting of a male or female sex during worship could aid the desire to commit sins such as adultery and the likes, it is quite worrisome and very unimaginable. Ordinarily, one would have imagined that an individual who has come to encounter the divine is to be void of any form of pollution be it mental or physical.

In Christianity, gender segregation or separation has been a common practice from time immemorial. It is argued that this practice is culture-specific. The Jewish cultural inclination favours a patriarchal system where the male gender is seen as superior while the women and children as subjective (Berger, 2015: 10). In his article on Christian worship and gender practices, Berger (2015:3) aptly noted, “some churches rooted in more traditional contexts retain spatial arrangements in the sanctuary that separate women and men.”

In African indigenous churches especially among the Yoruba, separate spatial arrangements still subsist. This spatial and gender segregation as earlier noted is commonly noticed in the two prayer mountains visited during the study. For instance, in Orí-Òkè Ìkòyì, there are two physical separated prayer spaces one located on the mountain and the other at the valley of the mountain, the former is strictly for male and the latter for females and in most cases both for males and females especially couples. It was gathered that at the inception of the prayer mountain both male and female participants were allowed access to the mountain for prayers until when illicit sexual abuse cases were noticed on the mountain. Since sexual engagement could defile and impede the potency of such, sacred space hence the separation and banning of female worshippers on the mountain. In Ede Prayer Mountain, both women and men are permitted to congregate on the mountain but seated separately. It is worthy of note that during mega programmes on the mountain gender segregation is not strictly observed.

#### **4.6 Liturgy and mode of worship on the prayer mountains**

While prayer mountains are extensions of the religious activities of African indigenous churches, however, they are unique in the establishments, leadership, mode of worship and liturgical practices. The term liturgy is a term that stems from the Greek word *leitourgia*, meaning 'service'. Other expressions associated with the term liturgy include symbols, rites, order, or system. Generally, liturgy can be described as the customary public worship performed by a specific religious group, according to its particular belief, custom, and traditions. Liturgy can, therefore, be seen as a religious phenomenon among various world religions. In the Christian domain, liturgy can be described as an order of Christian rites and symbols or simply put: an order of Christian worship.

Essentially, the Christian liturgy is characterised by speech and music. The speech components include prayers, readings, sermons and Eucharistic celebrations amongst others while the music involves psalms, chants, hymns, choruses and canticles and responses to mention a few. Since the AICs once had their Christian exposure and liturgical training from the mainline or mission churches, some of these liturgical components were also imported and retained in the newly found brand of Christian. Loko (2012:17) observed the order of worship in the liturgy of Cherubim and Seraphim Movement (*Ayo ni o*) for a Sunday Service as follows:

1. Vestry Prayer
2. Processional Hymn
3. Introit
4. Ringing of Bell
5. Call to Worship
6. Opening Hymn
7. Prayer of Confession and Adoration
8. Opening Passage: Ps. 51, 19 & 24 with prayer
9. Thanksgiving Hymn
10. Congregational Thanksgiving Prayer
11. Bible Lesson
12. Gloria
13. The Apostle Creed

14. Intercession 3 people's prayer
15. Hymn before Sermon
16. Sermon/Revival
17. Hymn after sermon
18. Thanksgiving and Testimonies/payment of vows
19. Announcement
20. Prayer for visitors
21. Closing and offertory collection hymn
22. Closing prayer
23. Vesper
24. Benediction
25. Recessional Hymn

From the above order of worship liturgy, it is observed that the Cherubim and Seraphim Movement had imported some liturgical components from the mainline churches and included their own liturgical content to accommodate some cultural flavours.

Since some of the prayer mountains are an extension of some AICs, some of the liturgies of the church were also imported to the prayer mountain and in some cases were modified. It is worthy of note that the utilitarian function of a religious space such as a prayer mountain largely varies from that of the mainline churches. Most, if not all the people who visit the prayer mountain believe that they have visited the space for a spiritual chronic existential needs thus influencing their mode of worship as well as liturgy. During our visits to the selected prayer mountains, it was observed that liturgical order of worship varied from one mountain to the other. Even though these mountains were either owned or affiliated to Christ Apostolic Church, each had its own distinguishing feature as far as the liturgy is concerned. Despite the spontaneity in worship pattern of AICs and by extension prayer mountains, a similar and reoccurring liturgical pattern among the prayer mountains was observed as follows:

1. Opening Prayer
2. Prayer of thanksgiving
3. Praise and worship

4. Assorted Prayer Session I
5. Assorted Prayer II
6. Sermon
7. Assorted Prayer III
8. Offering/Fund Raising
9. Announcements
10. Closing Prayer.

From the foregoing, one can observe prayer activities form the kernel of the liturgy on prayer mountains in Southwest Nigeria. However, it should be remarked that music is highly utilised in connecting the different aspects of the programme, as it shall be discussed shortly. The opening prayer is usually short and it always commenced by shouts of numbered “hallelujah” as directed by the leader, most times participants are directed to shout seven times. The opening prayer is based on thanksgiving, confessions of sins and invitation of the divine to be present in the prayer session. A prayer of thanksgiving is lead after the opening prayer. This prayer session is focused on thanksgiving and appreciation to God for His blessings, protection and deliverance and is usually interspersed with short choruses of thanksgiving and some personal testimonies by the leader to as to encourage and motivate participants to thank God thoughtfully.

During the praise and worship session, assorted Christian hymn and choruses are performed by the participants with the direction of a worship leader. The praise and worship session dovetails into a time of assorted prayers. During this first assorted prayer sessions, vigorous invocatory prayers are made to invoke the presence of the Divine and the power of the Holy Spirit. Other assorted prayers follow immediately and then the sermon is delivered before the final assorted prayer sessions are led. More than often prayer sessions are concerned with victory over malevolent powers, spiritual empowerment for sacred and secular occupation, and a rewarding social mobility in life.

This above corroborates Aina’s (2006:7) observation that

...prayer sessions could be led by different appointed persons who would be dictating the prayer points for the congregation to pray along very loudly and vigorously. Most often, the prayers are centred on thanksgiving to God or “spiritual warfare” against enemies. These enemies are the devil, witches/wizards, perceived human enemies (known and/or unknown) to the individual

worshipper. In such “spiritual warfare,” the prayer points could be cursing the enemy or declaring destruction on them in a very thunderous congregational tone. Other prayer points include God’s blessings and promotion in life.

Suffice to say that some mainline church liturgical practices are also been practised in some of the prayer mountains particularly Orí-Òkè Bábà Àbíyè, Ede. In this prayer mountain, church services are held on Sunday in the mini-church auditorium. The pastor-in-charge reported that they run a full fledged service on Sunday with beginning with Sunday School, a group by group bible class, with a choir to provide music, hymns and choruses during service. It was also observed that Bible study holds every Wednesday between 12 -2 pm in the same mini church auditorium and attendance is mandatory for all participants on the mountain since it is taken as one of their cooperate programmes. During this bible study, an in-depth and expository study is given on any topical Christian issue and it is usually followed by a question and answer time. When asked why the need for a bible study programme on the prayer mountain, the pastor-in-charge remarked:

As we need prayers so also we need the word of God, so there is room for teaching, sound teaching and our daddy [the presiding prophet] discovered that Orí-Òkè is a ‘catchment area’ to win souls for Christ. Since those who come here for prayers want their problems solved, when you asked them to give their lives to Christ, they will not hesitate. So, that is why we give time to preaching, making altar calls and teaching. (Fieldwork, January 2018).

Mode of worship on the prayer mountains to some extent varies from that of a mainstream church setting. As earlier observed by scholars that mode of worship in AICs is free and lovelier (Ayegboyin & Ishola, 1997), hence the participation during prayer sessions is intense and active by all on the prayer mountain. The active participation in prayer mountain is a cultural carryover from African traditional societies where communal worship is engaged in by all and for all. Although in the mainstream church worship space there are designated group of singers and musicians who help to facilitate music during worship but in the case of prayer mountains, there are no designated singers, or instrumentalist to carry out such roles expect during special mega programmes on the mountain. However, there could be special

arrangements for musicians by the management of these prayer mountains whenever the need arises.

In the strict sense of formal mode of worship, prayer mountains tend not to follow a structured mode of worship. This is largely because Prophet Founder or leaders of these prayer mountains guided and led the operations of the prayer mountains by divine instructions and promptings and it is a common belief that any structured or rigid mode of worship could impede the working of the Spirit. Another way by which the mode of worship on the prayer mountain is different from that of the mainstream church setting is the round-the-clock prayer activities and engagement. Typically, the church has fixed days and time for regular church programmes which are assorted in nature such as prayer meetings, bible study, special group meetings – choir, men, women, special counselling sessions and weekly or monthly vigil as the case may be.

The socio-religious ideology that informs the establishments of Prayer Mountains is such that seeks a secluded place for worship and divine revelation hence the *modus operandi* that dictates the activities on prayer mountain. Participants on prayer mountains believed that it is a place of spiritual warfare, which the conventional church building may not encourage, however, this is not to say that spiritual warfare prayers are not engaged in a conventional church setting. In the words of one of my respondents at Ìkòyì Prayer Mountains: “*enití ará bátu kó lón wá sí Orí-Òkè wa gbàdúrà*” meaning “anyone who is comfortable does not come to the prayer mountain for prayers”. This expresses the notion that Prayer Mountains provides a place of succour for those who have been troubled by it physically or spiritually.

#### **4.7 Profiling participants on the prayer mountains**

An examination of the demography of participants at the prayer mountains visited during this study reveals a lot about the participants who patronise the prayer mountains. Age group, gender, social status, educational background, and political as well religious denomination of the participants on the mountains vary. In terms of the age group of participants at the visited prayer mountains, we observed that participants are within the average age bracket of 30-50 years. It should be mentioned that children were also seen on the mountains in the company of the mothers however, teenagers and youths were scarcely seen on the mountains. This age pattern on the mountains corroborates the findings of Olatunji and Ogunbiyi (2018), in their study on the dynamics of *Orí-Òkè* among indigenous churches in Ilorin. They found that out of the 76

respondents at the mountain, 25 (32.9%) were between the age of 21-40 while 38 (50%) were 40 years and above. Concerning gender, it was observed in mixed-gendered prayer mountain like Abiye Prayer Mountain that more women patronised the prayer mountains than men did. This is a common experience in many Christian religious gathering hence showing religion as a strong marker of the female gender. Olatunji and Oginbiyi (2018) also discovered that 55 (72.4%) out of the 76 respondents were females while just 21 (27.6%) were males. As rightly observed by Walter and Davies (1998) that “it has long been established that women are usually more religious than men and in settings where religious attendance is not restricted by gender women have higher levels of religious participation” (cited in Agadjanian & Yabiku, 2015:462). Furthermore, studies have shown that women pray more than men in various countries of the world do especially and many of these countries are reported to be of the Christian religion. According to the Pew Research Centre, In the United States, for example, women are more likely than men to say religion is “very important” in their lives (60% vs. 47%). American women also are more likely than American men to say they pray daily (64% vs. 47%) and attend religious services at least once a week (40% vs. 32%) (2016, pp.2).

On Ede Prayer Mountain, the narrative is not different as the majority of the participants on the mountain are women many of whom are married women with children. Many of the female respondents reported being self-employed, homemakers, and sometimes-religious workers such as pastor or prophet. The researcher also came across a few female professionals on Ede Prayer Mountain. For example, we meet a young woman who is a nurse by profession who came all the way from Port Harcourt in Rivers State to Osun State to the mountain to pray with her mother. Although her mother did not allow her to grant the interview with the researcher after introducing herself, it most likely that she must have visited the mountain in order to pray for a marriage partner. She remarked, “I have a problem which I think if I come to this prayer mountain, it shall be solved.” One woman named Mrs Motunrayo Isékólowó reported that she is married with three children and that she is a minister, prophet who does spiritual consultation for people. Given the number of days, these women spend on the mountain praying, it is necessary to examine some explanations for the high involvement of women on prayer mountains. It can be argued that the socio-economic status of many women can be largely responsible for their involvement in incessant prayer activities.



Scholars have argued that women are more religious than men because they do not work outside the home and, therefore, have more free time to pursue religious interests (Luckmann 1967; Martin 1967; Azzi and Ehrenberg 1975; Iannaccone 1990). Therefore, it can be argued that women who frequently visit prayer mountains may not be gainfully employed in any formal or informal job hence they have ample of time to attend various prayer programmes for several days in order to pursue their religious interests. It can also be concluded that there is a strong correlation between the labour force and religiosity. As suggested by Schnabel (2016) that women in the labour force, particularly those in high-paying, full-time jobs, are less religious because they receive less social validation and affirmation from religious congregations compared with women who follow more gender-typical roles and expectations.

Gender roles are distinct. Traditionally, the masculine gender is known for workplace duties while the feminine gender is assigned family duties such as home chores, childbearing, rearing, and caring. Little wonder why women visit prayer mountains to pray for their families, husband, and children in particular. This is not to say that well-meaning and high profile women do not visit Prayer Mountains to pray. For example, one of the respondents who pleaded anonymous on Ede Prayer Mountain travelled all the way from South Africa to pray. She claimed that none of her family members in Nigeria was aware of her visit to Nigeria and to the mountain. She said she flew into the country, found her way to the mountain, and will return to the airport after she has concluded her prayers on the mountain. She reported that she visits the mountain frequently. The numbers of socially upward women who visit the prayer mountains are certainly not very significant.



**Plate 14: Cross-section of women praying on Ede Prayer Mountain (Source: Fieldwork, 2019)**

Another explanation for the prevalence of women on the prayer mountains particularly where there is no gender restriction is the cultural and social marginalization of women hence their resorting to the divine intervention through religion. Simply put, existential needs are largely responsible for the gender gap between the female participants and their male counterparts in mixed audience prayer mountains.

In the male section on Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain, we observed the prevalence of youths and midlifers (40-50 years) with very few elderly men. A cursory look at the attendance register at the mountain reveals that many of the male participants are clergy who visit the mountain for spiritual renewal. For participants who are not clergy, they are either self-employed or unemployed. The self-employed are mostly artisans who have control over their work and could spare out time to visit the mountain for days, weeks, and even months depending on how critical participants desire divine intervention. We also found out that some of the clergies are also bi-vocational, that is combining the ministerial work with a secular job. For example, one of the respondents on Ede Prayer Mountain gives his profile below:

My name is Prophet Amos Tunbosun I am a bricklayer. I am Christ Apostolic Church, Ejigbo. I have been on this mountain close to 8 days. What brought me to this mountain is that I was retrenched at work and I know that if I come here to pray that I will witness the miraculous.

Another young man gave his account:

My name is Jesus Fiyinfoluwa Ogbaoluwa; I am a minister of God, an Apostle by calling. I am used to the mountain. I have been on this mountain since December 23, 2018, till now. I have only gone home for 7 days and I am back to the mountain.

The above ethnographical account raises some issues that bother on human capacity building and development. If the majority of those who go to the prayer mountains are largely unemployed or self-employed, and given the long hours, days, weeks, and month they spend on the mountain, wont their socio-economic productivity be largely affected? Consequently, in what ways can this religious phenomenon be detrimental to human development in Nigeria. Olupona (2009) noted that Nigeria may be a deeply religious country, but its religiosity is as it is based on spiritual growth at the detriment of other aspects of human development. While we people go to pray on the mountains, their spiritual lives are improved but what happens to their economic growth? The ample time involved in praying without recourse to productive economic engagement is a serious concern among scholars. In the opinion of Oke (2019):

In our discussion of the relationship of the church with poverty, attention is drawn to the fact that the poor have suffered due to the fact that pastors preach more on wealth, health and prosperity, but do not teach members how to make money and better their lots by engaging in genuine business ventures. Instead, they coerce members to donate and pay offerings out of their meagre resources. In line with this is the time spent on some religious gatherings which can be effectively used to enhanced productivity which will positively impact on the economic growth of the nation. While some people see such attendance as a spiritual rejuvenation, others see it as a form of laziness and time-wasting strategies (p.480)

The submission of Oke is apt for thoughtful consideration with the Orí-òkè spiritual practices particularly in Yorùbáland if the nation will be more productive in its economic activities. As seen above, the larger percentages of those who patronise these prayer mountains are still bodily fit and can be very effective if deployed to the labour workforce of the nation.

In the opinion of the researcher, the biblical instruction of “anyone who does not work should not eat” seems not to be immaterial to the participants on the prayer mountain given that the reasons for their visit to the mountain are, primarily amongst other things, to seek divine

intervention against warring enemies whether real or imaginary. The numbers of days people spend on the mountain without considering the implications for their work-life is quite worrisome. The worldview of those who patronise the prayer mountains is that there are some benevolent powers that are responsible for their unpleasant situation such as poverty, hunger, and social immobility hence the need to war against these powers in order to live a life of comfort, happiness and fulfilment. Therefore, it does not matter how long they abandon their work and workplace, what is paramount to them is the divine attention, which they believe, can in turn, improve their economic lots. In the opinion of the researcher, some people who perpetually visit the mountains can be said to be lazy and do not want to work thus relying on divine help. This escapist approach by some participants on the mountains seems more to be a product of the mind.

In a study by Adedeji (2017) among 200 participants in selected prayer mountains in Osun and Ekiti states, southwestern Nigeria, 170 persons (85%) agreed that rich people do not attend prayers, vigils, except when they have chronic problems while 28 (14%) disagreed and 2(1%) undecided. Furthermore, participants were asked if hard work is required to get out of poverty, 60 (30%) agreed while 130(65%) disagreed and 10(5%) undecided. It is worrisome from the findings of Adedeji that even those in the lower strata of the society largely agreed that the rich do not attend prayer gatherings except for reasons that defy human control yet the same people refused to believe that hard work is required as an antidote to poverty. What an irony! One of the tenets of prosperity and success in African culture is that of hard work. This is expressed in a saying among the Yorùbá: *isè lógùn isé* meaning hard work is the antidote to poverty. Despite this cultural inclination, many of the participants at the prayer mountains majority of whom are Yorùbá still do not see the need to be meaningfully productive in life.

In Adedeji's study above, it is interesting to know that religious leaders, pastors and prophets on the mountains desire upward mobility for their members. All of the 50 pastors (100%) respondents agreed that most pastors/prophets want their members to get out of poverty quickly. The way and manner by which the participants both pastors/prophets and members want to get out of poverty without diligence and hard work calls for deep reflection, more so that the mentality of the Ori-oke participants is that staying alone with God on the mountain until the situation is changed for the better is enough. The implication of the 'stay alone with God'

syndrome by participants on prayer mountains is pointedly expressed by Oke (2019:481), “those that are supposed to contribute to the economic growth of the country are always alone with God.... However, churches must be cautious of what the incessant “Alone with God” can cause the economic advancement of individuals and the country at large.” Therefore, it can be concluded that while prayer mountains can contribute to the spiritual effectiveness of their patrons, they can also adversely impair economic development particularly in terms of human capacity of their patrons as well. This resonates with the findings of Okyere (2012) in his study of Abusua Prayer Camp in Ghana where he found that the prayer camp did not only contribute to the spirituality of the people but in some cases stifled socio-economic development of the area. One may wonder why spirituality in African seems not to significantly enhance development like other developed countries in the West.

It is worthy to mention here that during this study, the leadership of the prayer mountains were very pragmatic in ensuring that participants did not tarry incessantly on their mountains whenever they came for prayer. Participants were encouraged to observe a few days of prayer retreat and return home in trust and belief that God had answered their requests. For example, in Ìkòyí Mountain, one of the rules and regulations is that nobody is allowed to stay on more than seven days without permission from the authority of the mountain. The situation is different on Ede Prayer Mountain. As a matter of emphasis, participants are constantly reminded of the need to stay on the mountain within a short time and return home to take necessary steps that are humanly possible while they await Divine response. During a prayer session witnessed in Ede Prayer Mountain, the prayer leader reiterated:

On this mountain, we do not encourage you to stay longer than necessary. Some of you will be praying for a marriage partner and God has provided one for you. Go back home and meet your wife or husband to be. Some of you God have prepared a job for you; do not wait here while your job is waiting for you.

The warning to the participants in the opinion of the researcher is apt. For instance, it is possible for someone who had applied for a job to go to the mountain for prayers for several days and given the locations of some of these mountains mostly away from the city, telecommunication and internet services not efficiently available, hence such a person stands the risk of being unreachable peradventure he or she has been shortlisted for an interview session. Therefore, the efforts of the leadership of the prayer mountains at discouraging incessant stay of participants on

their mountains are highly commendable. The efforts by the leadership of the prayer mountains as seen above seem to corroborate the position by scholars on the role of religion in alleviating poverty. Beyers (2014:6) is of the opinion that no matter how religious communities “may redirect attention to a higher, spiritual existence in future, devoid of material needs. It still does not change the existential effects of poverty.” A few observations can be made concerning the role of religious institutions, in this case, prayer mountains in the alleviating or aggravating poverty among those who patronise the prayer spaces.

Pointedly, there seems to be the consensus that majority of those who patronise the mountains are on the lower strata of the society and they are believed to be plagued with basic existential needs which were largely caused by poverty. Poverty is said to mean different thing to different people. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Poverty (n.d) stressed, “poverty entails more than the lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision-making.” According to Geremek, (1994:3) poverty is the point at which the survival of the individual and of the family is threatened. The definitions above by Geremek and United Nations seem not to consider the spiritual dimension in addressing the issue of poverty even though poverty can be manifested materialistically, culturally or spiritually (Du Toit 1996:17). For participants on the Prayer Mountains, it is believed that the spiritual world controls the physical, hence their survival threat in the spiritual world is implicated in the physical world. Therefore, spiritual poverty is tantamount to physical poverty, which can be made manifest as listed above. The notion of wellbeing among Africans implies that it is well with the tripartite component of the human being- spirit, soul, and body.

Generally, Africans often believe that the enemies are responsible for any mishap in the lives of an individual hence the need to constantly wage war with these entities whether real or imaginary. The “lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods” are owned largely to the evil works of the enemy and they should be dealt with. I recall in one of my fieldwork, that the prayer leader constantly provoked the participants to attack their enemies before their enemies attack them. “Kill them before they kill you.” “Stop them before they stop

you.” These words are continuously used to incite spiritual violence in the mind of the participants during prayer sessions.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### MUSICAL ENGAGEMENTS ON THE PRAYER MOUNTAINS

#### 5.1 Music making and musicians on the selected prayer mountains

Music-making on the prayer mountain is quite different from the mainstream church setting. In the mainstream church, music-making is prepared and rehearsed by all the musicians involved hence producing a much more organised performance. The vocal and instrumental ensemble in the church setting is somewhat structured and planned. The leadership hierarchy is also clearly communicated and visible in that there are a choir leader and other allied choir officers. Music rehearsal in the mainstream church setting is focused and coordinated. Participation is by choice but commitment is seen to be total by the music leadership team. On the prayer mountains, the case is quite different as music-making is largely based on volunteerism and spontaneity. Spontaneous music-making characterizes African and Nigeria music. In typical traditional music performance, music-making is participatory and improvisational. Members of the performance may feature as instrument players, singers or dancers as there are no onlookers in traditional musical performance. Nketia (1979:35) submitted that in African communities, “participation in music may be a voluntary activity or an obligation imposed by one’s membership in a social group. More often than not volunteerism characterizes music-making particularly instrumental music on prayer mountain however, some level of professionalism was observed especially during mega-events. During prayer sessions, it is common practice to see participants, mostly men, clustering around the area of the musical instrument waiting to take performance turns. Since there is no formal admission process such as audition for the volunteer musicians, it is very difficult to ascertain their competence before a performance. This kind of arrangement many times leads to disorganized musical performance. The researcher recalled a situation that happened during one of the prayer sessions on Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain when the prophet leading a song had to stop in the middle of the performance and instructed volunteer musicians who were playing saying: “please, let the person who can play the drum (trap drums) very well be allowed to play.” It was a very embarrassing moment for the prophet, the participants, as well as the musicians. The reason for this instruction is that the person playing the drum could not play to consistently to time for a longer period.



On Ede Prayer Mountain, music-making was observed to more organised and structured in comparison to Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain. On Ede Prayer Mountain, there is an organised structure for music-making. The musical activity on the mountain is coordinated by a woman known as Evangelist Mrs Aluko, (popularly referred to *màamá Ìgbèbí*) and various music ensembles such as praise team and the church choir were reported to be present in the mountain. The researcher did not witness the performance of the church choir but observed that of the praise team. It was reported that the church choir only performs during the Sunday church programme. The Praise Team is made up of music specialists who individually are bandleaders in their own right. Membership into Praise Team is voluntary but must be divinely sanctioned through the Mountain Prophet. According to one of the lead vocalists of the Praise Team, Segun Oluwatuñji, he reported that the Praise Team do organize rehearsals in preparation for any special programme or recording of an album.

Hence, the role of musicians, singer or instrument player, is a very significant one in any religious worship space. Musicians provide accompaniment and support for worshippers during singing and prayer sessions on the prayer mountains since music occupies the larger part of the prayer sessions on the mountain. Musicians on the prayer mountains can be categorised into two: volunteers and guest.

### **5.1.2 Volunteer musicians**

This category of musicians is commonly found in the prayer mountains during this study. These musicians are participants who have also come to the mountain for prayers. While some of them are skilled musicians, many are amateurs and they all provide the service free as volunteers. Interactions with these musicians revealed that many of them function as musicians in their various churches as drummers, keyboardists or singers. The men were seen to be largely involved in music-making in all the prayer mountains visited mostly as drummers while very few of them played other instruments such as the keyboard. In some cases, women serve as singers, especially where the mountain is not gender restricted like Ikoyi Prayer Mountain. Although in the female section of Ikoyi Prayer Mountain, we observed more of female involvement in music-making with the presence of very few men. In this female section, women served as song leaders and played all other available percussion instruments.

During a musical performance in prayer sessions, these volunteer musicians were seen taking turns to play the available instruments such as the drum set, conga, gangan, sekere, and bells. Apart from the lead singers who in most cases are appointed by the leadership of the mountain, the backup singers are more often than not volunteers. The motivation to serve as volunteer stems from the belief by the musicians that by providing their musical services on the mountain will attract the benevolence of the divine which will, in turn, guarantee a better life for them.



**Plate 15: Volunteer musicians in the female section in Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain**

One of the drummers at Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain remarked as follows:

Whatever one does, determination is very important. I have been on this mountain for almost five (5) days. As I play the drums during prayer session the spiritual battles in my life are conquered. For example, in another mountain in Ede where I have also played as a volunteer musician, I spoke to God concerning the education of my fiancée that God should grant her success and God did it. We are happily married now and we are doing fine. I believe because I played the drums on the mountain that is why I am victorious. (Personal communication, January 2017)

In another interview with the Pastor-in-charge of Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain, he explained that

On Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain we do not have paid musicians. During prayer programmes, we usually call on participants who can play any of the available musical instruments to come and assist in the work of the Lord. We believe that anyone who volunteers to play will be blessed by God. In fact, we know that it is in that duty he or she will receive his/her blessings. (Personal Communication, March 2018)

It is pertinent to mention that some musicians particularly singers, fall into this category of volunteers but they are in-house workers on the prayer mountains are mountain prophets, evangelists and prayer/song leaders. Almost all the prayer leaders on the prayer mountains are good song leaders. It is generally believed by the prayer leaders that one cannot be a good prayer leader without being a good singer. They claim that the gift of singing will greatly enhance prayer ministration on the mountain.



**Plate 16: Volunteer musicians at Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain**

It was observed on Ede Prayer Mountain that there seem to be more in-house musicians. At the commencement of each prayer session, a leader- male or female starts the prayer session with a short opening prayer and immediately leads participants in a long session of praise worship which then climax into an intense prayer session. Some of these singers are gospel artistes who have recorded one or two albums. For instance, one of the song leaders on Ede Prayer Mountain reported that she has recorded two albums personally and that she gets an invitation to perform as a guest artist outside the mountain.

### **5.1.3 Guest musicians or gospel artistes**

Apart from in-house musicians, guest musicians are invited especially during special programmes to provide or accompany the music on the prayer mountains. The guest musician could be a popular gospel musician or group of instrumentalists to complement the in-house musicians. In Ede Prayer Mountain, different popular gospel artistes, especially in Southwestern

Nigeria, have been invited such as Evang. Dr Bólá Àre, Tópé Àlàbí, Evang. Dùúní Olánrewájú (aka Òpelòpe Anointing), Esther Ìgbékèlé and Evang. Bùkólá Akinadé aka Senwele Jésù amongst others. Whilst these musicians are invited based on the ministerial relationship that exists between them and the presiding prophet, Prophet Funsó Àkàndé, they are also treated as professional gospel musicians. The professionalization of church or gospel music has been faced with so many controversies. While some people are of the opinion that gospel musician should not charge for religious performances, some people hold a contrary view. The former ideology is usually hinged on the biblical injunction of “freely you have received, freely give” (Mathew 10:8. NKJV). In his book titled “The Making of a Gospel Musician,” Adedeji (2015:126) submitted:

Charging for performances has been a controversial issue in gospel music practicing. While some believe there is nothing wrong in it, others believe it is not ideal. I myself used to belong to the category of people who feel a gospel musician should not charge for ministration/performance. To be honest, this attitude is responsible for the retarded achievements of many people in gospel music practicing... The truth is that there is nothing bad in charging for Christian social performance.

Adedeji’s submission above in the opinion of the researcher is worth considering for some reasons. For instance, how will a gospel musician transport his/her band members back and forth the venue of performance if he/she is not paid? How will the musician purchase the necessary musical instruments needed to enhance excellent performance? How will the musician fend for his/her family if all s/he lives on? In the age of highly competitive media promotion of musicians, can a gospel musician afford the fees required to promote his/her musical productions in both print and electronic media? An objective examination of the issues raised above will help in resolving the age-long debates on the professionalization of church/gospel music.

Nevertheless, certain factors are considered when guest musicians are invited to come and perform on the prayer mountains. Such factors include but not limited to holy living and unquestionable Christian life, integrity and societal fame.

Pastor Bóyè, the administrative pastor in-charge of Ede Prayer Mountain commented:

Popularity is not as important as holiness and integrity. What is the essence of a popular gospel musician who has a questionable lifestyle? I know our daddy-in-the Lord that he will only invite those he knows very well, those who have integrity and holiness. (Personal Communication, March 2018)



**Plate 17: Evang. Dr Bólá Àre ministering as a guest artist at Àbíyè Convention, 2017**

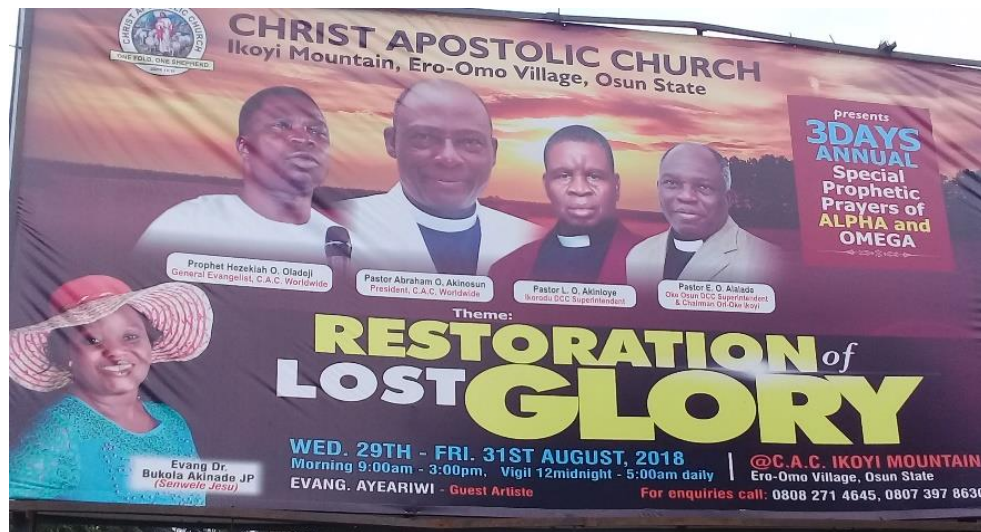
The societal fame of a gospel artist is of great significance even though the leadership of these mountains claim they do not consider this factor as paramount when inviting the gospel artistes. It was observed that these popular gospel artistes serve as ‘bait’ to bring people to attend various programmes on the prayer mountains. This is a common trend in many Christian programmes in Nigeria including crusades, street evangelism and musical concerts. It is almost impossible to see any Christian religious event adverts without a list of gospel musicians. As observed by Adedeji (2015:66), “it is the habit of Churches in their publicity bids to feature names of top/popular gospel artistes on their posters, handbills and various announcements in order to attract people. In addition, of a fact, many people attend such programmes just to listen to the invited gospel musician”. Therefore, within the Christian religious space in Nigeria, can we then say that the role of a gospel musician is that of a ‘marketer’ since they are used to market a product or a service? Besides the societal fame of the gospel artistes, the biblical account of the role music as played by David in restoring the mental health of King Saul was also considered as a viable reason for employing the services of various guest musicians. Little wonder why many church pastors would normally invite a singer or an instrument player to minister before or during their sermon.



**Plate 18: poster showing the gospel musicians during 2018 convention at Orí-Òke Baba Abiye (Source: [www.babaabiyeprayermountain.com/events/abiye-global-convention](http://www.babaabiyeprayermountain.com/events/abiye-global-convention))**

Despite the female gender segregation at the male section on Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain, it is interesting to point out that female musicians are not restricted in accessing the prayer space like every other female participant (see plate 19). This again articulates some of the socio-gender dynamics in a religious space like the prayer mountain. As we know that space is not absolute, hence it is flexibility. The involvement of a female musician in a sacred space exclusively for men demands some discussions. As earlier expounded in spatial theory by Lefebvre, that space is not a container or a static setting inherited from nature but produced and reproduced by humans and their interests. Gender space in this case female, in Ìkòyí Mountain is produced and reproduced based on the musical interests of the leadership of Ìkòyí Mountain thus engaging a female gospel musician in their programme despite extant rule banning women from the mountain. It, therefore, suggest that the utilitarian function of the musician is placed above the rule. The female gender utility in various religious spaces has been examined by scholars. Loko (2015) identified the changing role of a female musician in the liturgy of the Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) Church. She noted that women in C&S Church serve as prompters, lead vocalists, composers, and instrumentalists. Women now serve as choir directors and organists in a male-dominated space. An example is the former master of music at the Cathedral Church of Christ Marina, Lagos, Mrs Tolú Obajìmí who directed an all-male choir. Traditionally, the membership of top Cathedral choirs in the world is exclusively for boys and men. This is a

tradition the Church of Christ Marina had always kept. The contested leadership space reserved for the men by women confirms the fluidity of any space, gender-inclusive.



**Plate 19: A signpost showing Evang. Dr Bùkólá Akinadé aka Senwele Jésù as guest musicians in a special programme held at Ikoyi Prayer Mountain (Fieldwork, 2018)**

While traditional African societies remain largely patriarchy, gender roles are been negotiated and contested on a daily basis in response to social change. In *Orò* cult, a cult in Yorùbáland strictly for men is forbidden to be seen by a woman; as such, a transgressor will be severely dealt with me. However, *Orò* festival involves heavy feasting more so that the festival is usually celebrated around the harvest of new yam. Given the domestic gender role of women in the society, it is certain that the women must have been involved in preparing the meals, which will be served, to both initiates and non-initiates of the cult despite the exclusion of women in the *Orò* cult. Again, this brings to the fore that spaces are produced and reproduced to attend to human interest.

During the interviews with two respondents on Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain, they both claimed at separate interview sessions that female musicians were never allowed on the mountain but it was noticed on the billboard advertising a special programme that a female gospel musician was invited as seen above. The reason for this obvious denial is unknown. The silence of the authorities of Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain on the involvement of female gospel musician is not surprising as Samuel (2018:136) observed in his study on the involvement of female *dùndún* in

Yorùbáland that “many authorities have either relegated female involvement in drumming to the background or willfully ignored or denied its existence.” Samuel (2018) demonstrated how female *dùndún* drummers in contemporary Yorùbáland negotiated and contested the age-long traditional musical practice, which had been male, dominated. Despite the male dominance in the musical activities on Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain, female musicians are now seen to be gaining relevance in such space. Although there were no gender restriction on Ede Prayer Mountain, it was observed that more women were involved in music-making, prominently as singers, than the men on the mountain were.

## **5.2 Typologies of music used in the prayer mountains**

Prayer mountains are notable for varied prayer rituals such as praying, fasting, and music-making. The latter permeates, largely, the various praying activities on prayer mountains and this further supports the notion that music is the life wire of any prayer session on the mountain. This belief is commonly expressed among participants especially prophet founders and prayer leaders on various prayer mountains visited during this study thus: “*orin lèmi isin*” meaning songs are the lifeblood of a religious service. In other words, participants view songs as an inseparable component in the worship activities such as prayer activities on the prayer mountains. *Orin* (songs) in this context implies singing and drumming while religious service implies prayer session. Like any other religious service, music forms the basis of the liturgy. Since prayer mountains play host to wide demography of participants hence the assorted nature of music used in the prayer mountains. Music in African context implies singing, drumming, and dancing hence music or songs may be used interchangeably in this work. The music used on the selected prayer mountains can be broadly categorised into the followings:

- i. Hymns
- ii. Lyric airs (choruses)
- iii. Gospel music

### **5.2.1. Hymns**

The word ‘hymn’ is derived from the Greek word *Hymnos* which means a song in praise of gods or heroes. In the Christian context, it is a song in praise of God hence the regular use of hymn in many Christian services. Hymn as a genre of music in Christian worship is referenced in



the Bible, Colossians 3:16: “... teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs...” Participants on prayer mountains find this Christian musical style very appropriate for worship during prayer sessions. As an indigenous worship space, the reason for the use of hymns on prayer mountain is not far-fetched. Westernization through Christian mission activities is largely responsible for this, given that the Founders of the AICs were once members of the mainline or mission churches where hymn singing was a prominent music genre in worship. Owoaje (2014:1) noted that the major musical practice in the early Yorùbá churches was singing of Christian hymns because it involved congregational participation. Although this form of singing was alien to the Yorùbá Christians during worship the Yorùbá convert could not help the situation since their own traditional mode of worship had been banned by the missionaries.

On the prayer mountains, assorted hymns were sung during prayer sessions and more often than not during the commencement of prayer sessions. These hymns are based on different themes and topics and are used to enhance the mood of prayer as the need may be. Generally, hymns can be categorised as praise and thanksgiving, prayer, word of God, testimony, service and rapture amongst others. Hymns of praise and thanksgiving and prayers featured prominently during prayers sessions in both prayer mountains.

An example of a hymn used in one of the prayer meetings observed at Ìkòyì Prayer Mountain is “All hail the power of Jesus Name” sung to the tune “Diadem.”

### Gbogbo aiye gbe Jesu ga

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of three staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words underlined to indicate phrasing. The lyrics are: Gbo-gbo a - ye gbe Je su ga. An - geli e wo le fun An - ge - li e wo le fun. E mu a - de O - ba re wa Se l'O ba l'O-ba l'O-ba l'O-ba se l'O\_ ba a - won O - ba

**Musical example 1**

Gbogbo ayé gbé Jèsù ga  
 Ángèlì e wole fun  
 E mú adé Oba rè wá  
 Sé lÓba àwon Oba

Another hymn of worship is “O Worship the King” with the tune “Hanover”

## E wole f’Oba

E wo-le fO - ba, O - lo-go-ju - lo, e so ti i - pa a - ti i\_\_fe re. A-

8

la-bo wa ni a - t'e - ni i gba ni. On gbe nu o - go e - le - ru ni i - yin

### Musical example 2

E wólè f’Óba, Ológò julo  
 E korin ti pá àti ifé rè  
 Alábo wa ni àt’eni ìgbàani  
 Ón gbé ninu ógo elérù ní yìn

These hymns were sung in Yorùbá language because that is the primary language of communication on the visited prayer mountains. Loko (2012:79) classified such hymns as “translated European hymns that are translated into an indigenous language which still maintain the European melodies and texts.” According to Adedeji (2012:209), this type of hymn can be categorised as “vernacular translation.”

### 5.2.2 Lyric airs (choruses)

In Christian worship, contemporary gospel music, also known as praise and worship songs has emerged as a distinctive genre of music in Christian worship. Praise and worship songs are largely accepted in most Christian churches and have been integrated into corporate worship (Neto, 2010). This style of Christian music emerged at the wake of the new millennium and has grown in relevance and acceptance in various Christian worship spaces including prayer mountains. Beyond a style, praise and worship are also regarded as an item during worship in the

contemporary Christian liturgy. The praise and worship item comes immediately after the opening prayer in regular church worship services and on the prayer mountains too. The session of praise and worship features assorted popular Christian songs led by a song leader in sequential order with instrumental accompaniment. These assorted popular songs are generally referred to as choruses.

According to Hustad (1993) chorus is a short song, which expresses a single idea of praise, thanksgiving, doctrine and so on. This singular idea is expressed as a part of a song, which is repeated after each verse. Faseun (2005) defined choruses as spontaneous songs performed often in vernacular but sometimes in other languages. Similarly, Adedeji (2017:110) see choruses as lyrics air (short songs) and they are types of contemporary Christian songs and can be divided into various Christian themes. An example of a praise chorus in Yorùbá is:

Mo kan sára sí O  
 Mo kan sára sí O  
 Kìniún àyà Judah  
 Mo kan sára sí O

**Translation**

I hail You  
 I hail You  
 Lion of the tribe of Judah  
 I hail You

**Mo kan sara si O**

Mo kan sa ra si O mo kan sa ra si o Ki - ni - un

e - ya Ju - dah Mo kan sa ra si O

**Musical example 3**

Another example of a chorus of praise

## You are the Lord

You are the Lord\_\_ that is your name.\_\_ You will ne-ver share Your glo - ry

3  
with a - ny one,\_\_\_\_\_ You will ne - ver share Your glo - ry

5  
with a - ny bo - dy\_\_\_\_\_ Al-might - y God\_\_\_\_\_ that is your name\_\_

### Musical example 4

#### 5.2.3 Gospel music

Gospel music was another major type of music used on the prayer mountains. . Several attempts have been made by scholars to discuss the concept of gospel music both in style and form. Gold (1958) defined gospel music as a music that is written to express either personal, spiritual or a communal belief regarding the Christian life. As a musical genre in Nigeria, Adedeji (2015:2) defined gospel music as “one of the Christian musical genres, the contents of which are traditionally and theologically evangelistic, i.e. aimed at preaching the good news of Jesus Christ to others for the purpose of saving their souls.” In his categorisation of styles in Nigerian gospel music, Adedeji (2004) identified twelve different styles including spiritual, traditional ‘classical’, a cappella, native, gospel-reggae, native, gos-pop, gospel-highlife and gospel-waka. It should be pointed out that songs in this category are usually songs composed and performed by gospel artistes who were invited as guests to the prayer mountain. These kinds of songs are more often than not longer in compositional length than aforementioned music typologies used on the prayer mountain.

An example of gospel music in gospel highlife performed on the mountain is

**Irinse Esu**

♩ = 100

4 I - rin-se e - su\_ Ba-ba fi-na jo won run i- rin-se o - ta

o, Ba-ba fi-na jo\_\_da nu o-gun to\_\_nda mu i-gbe-si a-ye\_\_mi i- rin-se o

8

11 kun-kun to-nf'o-jo o-ri<sup>3</sup>mi\_\_so fo\_\_ da na si\_\_ won\_ Ba-ba fi na run

\_\_won jo won run\_\_ o ke mi le gbe gba o - pe

### Musical example 5

#### Translation

Weapon the devil  
 Father consume with fire  
 Weapon of the enemies  
 Father consume them with fire  
 That battle waging war against my life  
 Evil antics that is wasting my life  
 Father consume them with fire  
 Consume them so I can celebrate

As mentioned earlier that songs in this category were often performed or recorded by invited gospel artistes on the mountain hence making the style more elaborate than the hymns and lyric airs. For instance, the song above was recorded by Abiye Praise Team, a group of various gospel artistes and performed it during a special programme on Ede Prayer Mountain. These songs add to the existing repertoire of songs on the prayer mountain and participants find them as ‘takeaway’ to their respective homes or churches.

Another example in native style is

**Jeki majemu soro**

♩ = 100

Je ki ma-je-mu so ro\_\_ lo ri mi je ki ma-je-mu so ro\_\_ lo ri

mi O - lo - run Sa - am - so - ni ba - ba

A - bi - ye l'E - de Je ki ma - je-mu so-ro\_\_ lo ri mi\_\_

### Musical example 6

#### 5.3 Compositional techniques

The term composition can be defined in several ways. Generally, musical compositions could mean an original piece of music, the musical structure of a musical piece or the process of creating a new piece of music. According to Pratt, 1995 (cited in Udoh, 2018:388), composition refers to three levels of activity: spontaneous musical creation through improvising; refining, original ideas to a finished state; altering and adapting existing music by arranging it. A critical investigation of the music specifically songs used in the prayer mountains reveals the aforementioned levels of compositional activities highlighted by Pratt most especially spontaneous music creation and altering and adapting existing music by arranging it.

The notion of compositional techniques here does not necessarily represent the art of composition as in serious or art music where certain rules are adhered to. Given that songs on the prayer mountains were said to be spontaneously created especially during prayer sessions. In other words, the composers on the prayer mountains may not have any preconceived compositional technique such as motif, form and structure, which a composer with formal music training would have employed in his compositional craft. Speaking of spontaneous music composition, almost all the respondents on both prayer mountains emphasised the role of the

Divine in the process of song compositions before or during prayer sessions. Thus, the Divine is believed to be a very significant source of composition by the participants. This was repeatedly echoed among the respondents that the “Holy Spirit is the one who gives inspiration for songs composed and used during prayer sessions.” Concerning the role of inspiration in musical composition Brindle (1966:1), found that “in composition, our mental activity pursues two separate but interdependent lines of thought. One is creative and receives its import from fantasy, imagination, and inspiration.”

Although Brindle did not tell us whether this inspiration is spiritually or naturally influenced, it can be argued that composers on the mountain could have also been inspired by natural occurrences around them which they found very useful in song compositions. As observed by Forchu (2010:54), “composition at the spur of the moment is a technique used by gospel composers to express certain emotions, emphasize some points, and make compositions relevant to situations.” The expression of certain emotions and emphasizes on some points were also reported by respondents as the “making of the divine, the Holy Spirit.” In the words of Evangelist Gbenro Akinola on Ede Prayer Mountain: “when we compose songs, we are guided and inspired by the Holy Spirit. He is the only source of inspiration and He gives directions based on the spiritual happenings in the place of prayer”. Like Gbenro Akinola other mountain prophets also alluded to the fact that they composed songs in line with the needs or situation of the people based on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. One respondent remarked: “It is the work of the Holy Spirit to reveal what He intends to do in the lives of His people and He gives songs that relates to or addresses their needs”. Despite the several claims by participants on the mountain on the influence of the Divine in their compositional craft, the creative instincts of these composers coupled with their cultural musical background were amply observed. Two distinct compositional techniques were identified on the prayer mountains:

1. New texts set to Yoruba folk melodies
2. New text set to existing popular Christian tunes

### **5.3.1 New texts set to Yoruba folk melodies**

Some of the songs used on the prayer mountains are new song text set to some Yorùbá folk tunes. The adaption of folk melodies to new song text is a reflection of cultural immersion by the composers. It has been observed that everyone is a product of his or her culture, and as

Forchu (2010:54) observed: “music composers are controlled by creative impulse in the musical concepts and behavioural patterns within their society.” The composers, in this case, song leaders and prayer leaders, on prayer mountains find the folk tunes as readymade music materials to deplore in their creative process even though the claim is largely on the inspiration of the divine. This claim can be corroborated by the given or divine gift theory as propounded by Adedeji (2013). This theory is a school of thought that claims that musical compositions and abilities have divine roots. They are divinely bestowed, ‘given’, ‘revealed’ or ‘received’ (Adedeji, 2017:328).

Despite the divine endowment, music makers on the prayer mountains are also culturally equipped with some musical material such as folk melodies. It is, therefore, easier, for the music makers to adapt existing folk tunes to newly inspired text. An example of a new text set to Yoruba folk tune:

**Original Yoruba folk text**

*B’oko mi gbowo osu, emi ni yio fun  
B’oko mi gbowo osu, emi ni yio fun  
Ko di gba ti e ba nse amebo  
B’oko mi gbowo osu, emi ni yio fun*

**New text**

Ení pé un má dòkè  
Gbìgbe ni yío gbe kú  
Àse àkókó ni wón lò fun  
Igi òpòtó gbe dèlé oo  
Ení pé un má dòkè  
Gbìgbe ni yío gbe kú

**Translation**

Anyone who does not desire my progress  
Such a person will dry up  
I will use the first command of Jesus Christ  
That made the fig tree to wither  
Anyone who does not desire my progress  
Such person will dry up



## Eni pe un ma doke

E-ni pe un ma do ke gbi-gbe ni yo gbe ku. E-ni pe un ma do ke

4  
gbi-gbe ni yo gbe ku. A-se a-ko - ko\_\_ ni won lo fun\_\_ I-gi o-po - to\_\_

8  
gbe de le o\_\_\_\_ E-ni pe un ma do ke gbi-gbe ni yio gbe ku

### Musical example 7

#### 5.3.2 New text set to existing popular Christian tunes

Another method of song composition is the adaption of some popular Christian tunes to new song text. These popular Christian tunes are made popular through the media especially the electronic media. Adedeji (2015:49) referred to this type of composition as melogenic. This compositional style implies lifting a particular melody and a text is superimposed. The melody may belong to the sacred circle, especially hymn-tunes. The prayer mountaineers find these popular Christian tunes very easy to adopt spontaneously during prayer sessions. An example is:

Original tune:

E - mi Mi - mo e se o\_\_\_\_ E - mi a - won Wo -li\_\_\_\_

3  
I - wo ku ku l'a - gba - ra wa. E - mi Mi - mo e se\_\_\_\_

### Musical example 8

New text to the tune above:

## Emi ko ni mo pa

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 12/8 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics: 'E mi ko ni mo pa o\_\_\_ O - ta mi lo pa ra re\_\_\_'. The second staff contains the melody for the second line of lyrics: 'I - bi to tin ro jo ki ri l'E - mi Mi - mo ti pa\_\_\_'. A '3' is written above the first measure of the second staff, indicating a triplet. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing rests.

### Musical example 9

#### 5.4 Musical instruments

In any musical performance, musical instruments play prominent functions. These instruments serve as an accompaniment to any given musical performance. In African communities, music is considered a tripartite art, which involves singing, dancing, and drumming. Although the advent of early Christian missionaries witnessed the prohibition of African musical instruments during religious worship, various musical instruments both western and indigenous have been fully incorporated into Christian worship spaces in Africa, Nigeria inclusive.

The extensive use of indigenous musical instruments in worship in Africa Christian domain can be traced largely to the emergence of African indigenous churches who sort to Africanize the Christian faith. The prayer mountains as an extension of the AICs also employed the use of both western and traditional musical instruments in their worship and prayer sessions. Musical instruments can be categorized into four global 'taxonomic' categories. Sachs and Hornbostel (1914) classified musical instruments under four broad categories namely:

- a. idiophones
- b. membranophones
- c. chordophones
- d. aerophones

The musical instruments used on the prayer mountains studied can be classified in the four categories above.

### 5.4.1 Idiophones

Idiophones are self-sounding instruments. Nketia (1974:69) broadly defines idiophones “as any instrument upon which a sound may be produced without the addition of a stretched membrane or a vibrating string or reed.” These instruments can produce their sounds by being struck, stamped, scraped or shaken. Idiophones are notable in African societies and in Nigeria. Notable among the idiophones seen and used on the prayer mountains are agogo (bell) and sèkèrè. These instruments were seen to be extensively used on the various mountain visited.

#### *Agogo*

The *agogo* also known as bell functioned as a very significant musical instrument used on the Prayer Mountains. The *agogo* is a portable handbell with a cup-shaped metal resonator with a pivoted clapper hanging inside. The player holds the handle with the left hand and strikes the pivoted clapper against the metal resonator to produce its sound. These bells come in various sizes thus producing varied sonority. Beyond being a type of instruments, the *agogo* is also symbolic, especially in CAC related prayer mountains. It was reported one of the divine symbols Prophet Babalolá was given in a dream for his ministerial calling is the church bell together with a portable staff (a rod carried as a symbol) and the Bible. Hence the massive use of bells on the mountain. This research posits that the use of the handbell (*agogo*) is figurative in terms of its music as well as a sacred utility with the latter being the primary. As a sacred object notably in Christian worship particularly in Africa, the church handbell is used by members of the AICs to ward away evil presence whether in worship or residential spaces. For example, this belief is strongly held by members of the Celestial Church of Christ. During prayer sessions, the handbell was used for signalling the end of a prayer. In addition, it was used to announce the commencement of a prayer session to participants on the prayer mountains. As a musical instrument, the *agogo* provides rhythmic timeline during musical performance. It was observed on the various prayer mountains that there were sufficient *agogo* in circulation during singing and prayer sessions.



**Plate 20: Set of *agogo***

***Sèkèrè***

Nketia (1974:70) classified this type of idiophone as a shaken idiophone. It is made of gourd, which may appear as container rattles or as rattles surrounded, by nets of cowries, sea shells, pieces of bone, bamboo shoot, metal, or beads. He further noted, “a gourd rattle may be spherical, either without a handle or with the neck of the gourd or calabash serving as the handle.” As described by Loko (2012:90), the *Sèkèrè* is “played with either both hands placed below the instrument to beat the beads and the right hand placed around the neck of the calabash and strikes the base against the palm of the left hand. It produces sound when the brightly coloured beads create a loud sound as they strike the resonating hollow gourd.” The instrument is primarily a rhythmic instrument and it was foundly used on both prayer mountains.



**Plate 21: Set of *Sékéré* and a tambourine**

## 5.4.2 Membranophones

These instruments produce sound by beating membranes stretched over the wooden shell. Both the traditional and western types of membranophones were seen on the Prayer Mountains. The traditional drums include *gáangan*, *àkúbà*, and *samba* while the western drums include jazz drum set and conga.

### 5.4.2.1 *Gáangan*

It is made of a piece of carefully carved wood to form an hourglass-like frame with two ends covered with membranes of animal skin which are also carefully joined by some strings made of goatskin. It is usually beaten with the curved stick in one hand while the second hand is used to grip its leather strings so that by tightening or loosening the grip the pitch tone of the drumbeat can be heightened or lowered respectively. This will then produce different tones by which various messages can be communicated just as in Yoruba, which is a tonal language (Oluga & Babalola, 2012). It was observed that the *gáangan* was not regularly used on the prayer mountains except during special programmes where large music ensemble is engaged. Possible reasons for the occasional use of this drum on the prayer mountains could be the absence of skilled players, acoustic nature of the instrument, which more often than not requires amplification, and the cost of purchase and maintenance.



**Plate 22: Set of *gáangan* drums**

#### 5.4.2.2 *Àkùbà*

It is a set of single-headed cylindrical drums in different sizes. With the use of hands and fingers, variations in tones are explored by the player who usually sits to play. The *àkùbà* drums were prominently used on both prayer mountains.



**Plate 23: Set of Àkùbà drums on Ede Prayer Mountain**

#### 5.4.2.3 *Samba*

It is a single-headed square or rectangular shaped membrane drum made from wood. The membrane is stretched and nailed over the edge of the drum. A rectangular rim of wood is cut to fit the underside of the drum. This allows for an intersecting wooden mechanism used to increase tension on the membrane. The left fingers sometimes may be used to mute or change the pitch on the surface of the membrane.



**Plate 24: Samba drum**

#### 5.4.2.4 Conga

Conga drums are usually two drums in an upright position with varied pitches- high and low. It is a type of western drum although there are controversies as regards the origin of the drum. It usually plays a complementary role with the jazz drum set. Conga drums can be imported and can be locally fabricated.



**Plate 25: Set of Conga drums**

#### 5.4.2.5 Drum/trap set

A drum set also called trap set is a collection of drums and other percussion instruments, typically cymbals, which are set up on stands to be played by a single player, with drumsticks held in both hands, and the feet operating pedals that control the hi-hat cymbal and the beater for the bass drum. As noticed in all the prayer mountains, the drum set is found in the auditorium only. Unlike other percussion and membranophone which are found outside the auditorium.



**Plate 26: Drum set inside the Church auditorium on Ikoyi Prayer Mountain**

### 5.4.3 Chordophones

The only class of chordophones that was not frequently seen on the prayer mountains were the guitars. These instruments were only used during special programmes on the prayer mountains. The electric guitars used are lead and bass guitars, which provided harmonic and melodic support the vocalist.



**Plate 27: Guitars (Left: Lead- Right: Bass)**

### 5.4.4 Aerophones

The only aerophones instrument used on special occasions on the prayer mountains is the Alto Saxophone. They serve as a solo instrument in the music ensemble.



**Plate 28: Saxophone**



### 5.4.5 Electronic keyboards

This is a western electronic musical instrument, which is capable of reproducing a wide range of instrument sounds. There are sometimes referred synthesizers, digital pianos, stage pianos, electronic organs and digital audio workstations. Modern electronic keyboards have storage facilities and can communicate through a computer device thus allowing so much space for endless sound simulation. Electronic keyboards are commonly found in most worship spaces such as the prayer mountains and they can be used to accompany hymns and choruses.



**Plate 29: A Yamaha S770 Keyboard**

### 5.4.6 Other electronic instruments

Apart from the aforementioned categories of musical instruments, some other electronic instruments were used on the various prayer mountains. Notable of such instruments are the public address systems, which include microphones, loudspeakers, mixers, amplifiers, graphic equalizer, and microphone stands. These sound systems are used to amplify and enhance musical performances as well as preaching and praying on the mountain. The use and size of the public address systems vary from one prayer mountain to the other. A common practice among the prayer mountains is that they all have a sound system in the auditoriums on the mountain while they hire a sound system for special programmes due to large attendance.



**Plate 30: Set of speakers inside Ikoyi Prayer Mountain Auditorium**



**Plate 31: Set of speakers on top of Ede Prayer Mountain**

## 5.5 Hybridity of musical instruments on prayer mountains

Hybridity refers to the mixture. In cultural studies, it refers to the synthesis that takes place in any encounter between distinct cultures. Hybridity can also be attributed to acculturation. A critical examination into the music on prayer mountains reveals a great deal of hybridization of various musical traditions. With respect to instrumental music resources on the prayer mountains, it will be needful to explore possible reasons for hybridization. Firstly, founders of these prayer mountains were products of African culture, precisely of the Yorùbá extraction. They found their traditional musical instruments very handy and useful in the newly established sacred space hence the extensive use of some musical instruments found in Yorùbáland. As previously mentioned, to an African there is a blur line of demarcation between religion and culture. The examples shown in plates 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 are instruments predominantly used in many Yoruba communities during religious and social functions. However, some instruments, like the *gangàn* was reported to have found its way into Yorùbáland from the Northern part of the country. In addition, the *agogo* shown above is a prototype of the church bell, which suggests the influence of Christianity in Yorùbáland. In the West, church bells were very large and were usually hung on a tower within the church premises. These bells are swung at specific times to signal worshippers for prayers. In churches today, the portable bell is common and it is very symbolic in African indigenous churches particularly in Christ Apostolic Church. History has it that when God called late Joseph Ayò Babalolá, he was divinely given a bell, a staff (rod) and a bottle of water as symbols of divine empowerment in a dream. No wonder the massive use of bells on the prayer mountains. The bell (*agogo*) functions not just to call participants for prayers on the mountain, it also plays a significant musical role in the musical performance on the prayer mountain, that is providing the rhythmic timeline.

The use of some musical instruments like keyboard, guitar, saxophone and Hawaii guitar to mention can be traced to the influence of western popular music, which was made possible through media especially electronic. With the growth of Pentecostalism in Nigeria, certain musical styles and instrumentations started creeping into the Nigeria church music scene. This was made popular by contemporary Christian music, the modern genre of Christian music. The effects of Pentecostalism have also necessitated hybridization of musical instruments on the prayer mountains. The need for this hybridity is understandable given the denominational mix of

the participants who go these prayer mountains and the need to satisfy as much as possible the musical taste of every participant on the mountain.



**Plate 32: Musicians playing during Àbíyé Convention at Ede (Fieldwork, 2018)**

### **5.6 Extra musical activities on Ede Prayer Mountain**

During the course of the work, it was observed that Ede Prayer Mountain was engaged in some other extra-musical activities, which is not directly part of the liturgy on the mountain. Notable of such activity was the recording and production of musical albums. The mountain has a recording studio which as at the time of the study was not fully equipped but had basic recording facilities like a vocal and instrumental booth, an engineering suite with recording mixer and a computer system. According to one of the respondents, he reported that the studio was built to help upcoming gospel musicians who were members of the music team on the mountain. The studio is not free but anyone interested is asked to pay a token for usage of the studio. It should be noted that there were no full-time personnel whether as musicians or recording engineer in the studio. They were usually employed on a part-time basis to render their services. The studio is a subsidiary of Gospel Promotion Outreach, which is the administrative umbrella for other ventures on Ede Prayer Mountain.



**Plate 33: Recording studio on Ede Prayer Mountain (fieldwork, 2018)**

Besides providing recording opportunities for upcoming gospel musicians the provision of a recording studio is largely hinged on the keen interest of the presiding prophet/pastor of the mountain in music and music-making, hence his massive investment in music-making. The Prophet Akande in conjunction with members of the mountain praise team have recorded about three (3) different albums. Prophet Funsho Akande is the executive producer of the recorded albums.

## **5.6 Social dynamics on prayer mountains in Òsun State**

Change is the only inevitable phenomenon in any human society. It is common knowledge that culture is dynamic and labile. Similarly, space whether social or religious is dynamic as it can be constructed and reconstructed, negotiated and renegotiated at any given time. Scholars have identified Christianity as a religious and social organization (Njoku, 2010; Akanbi and Beyers, 2017) and that, according to Ajani cited in Akanbi and Beyers (2017:4), religion remains one of the oldest, yet the most dynamic social institutions.

In a religious space like the prayer mountain, several social changes were noticed during the course of study. Historically, prayer mountains used to be and are still located in remote environments far from the urban communities and they provide the serenity needed for spiritual retreats. The frequency of visits to prayer mountain used to be rare and participants were very few. However, the situation has changed tremendously as one will observe a high influx of participants on the prayer mountains particularly in the southwestern part of the country. The

demography of participants at the prayer mountain is also worth noting. It is believed that those who visit prayer mountains are those at the lower strata of the society that is, the poor, miserable, and wretched. They are also considered as illiterate with meagre social exposure. This is no longer the trend. Prayer mountains now attract people from various occupations, including young and old, rich and poor, literate and non-literate. People travel from outside the country to attend programmes on prayer mountain today. For instance, during one of the mega programmes of Àbíyè Convention organised by Ede Prayer Mountain, an European guest preacher was invited to minister at the programme.

Before now, in terms of infrastructure, prayer mountains were known to have no housing facilities for visitors and modest space for cooperate worship now have state of the art facilities such as a guest house, resorts centres, spacious worship auditorium and shopping malls. In time past, these luxurious facilities would have been considered as sacrilegious on prayer mountains because of the traditional notion of the solemnity of the space. Since social change is about responding to change or development, the high influx of visitors has now necessitated the several infrastructural developments on the prayer mountains. In addition, the social status of the people who now patronise these mountains also necessitated the social changes observed on prayer mountains. As earlier mentioned, men and women of high social status who are top government functionaries, prominent politicians, high-class traditional rulers, academicians as well as captains of industries were reported and seen to visit both prayer mountains. Although some of them came very unnoticed and unannounced. In an interview session with Pastor Boye, of Ede Prayer Mountain, he narrated the story of a man who came to the mountain from outside the country just to write a book. According to Pastor Boye, the visitor told him that he was not on the mountain to pray but to have some serence moment and atmosphere that will aid his book-writing project.

Some class of visitors to the mountain may find it very uncomfortable to use the ‘traditional’ facilities on the mountain like sleeping on the rock after the prayer session, inelegant eatery and meal usually administered by old women around the mountains and cruddy toilet facilities to mention a few. Hence the need to erect elegant guest houses of different grades, restaurants, shopping malls in order for the participants at the mountain to be able to cater for themselves for the period of time they will spend on the mountain. The remote location of the

prayer mountains as well as climbing of the mountains, if hilly, makes it extremely laborious for participants to access these facilities if they are provided around the mountain area.

Security of participants, irrespective of their social class, was of marked interest to administrators of the prayer mountains. Two police posts, old and new, were seen at the entrance to Ede Prayer Mountain. Although one would have wondered why two police posts were located on the sacred mountain given the belief in the protective power of the divine and the hermeneutic explanation of the bible verse which says “behold, he that keepeth Israel does not sleep nor slumber” (Psalm 121:4, KJV). In the opinion of the researcher, the rampant nature of insecurity in the country as seen in the recent attack on religious institutions would have necessitated the security facility on the mountain. On the other hand, among Christians, it is taken that where the children of God gather, the children of the devil are also present. Therefore, it is not impossible to have a large gathering of people on the prayer mountain with some miscreants whose intent is to perpetuate treacherous acts. Of the two prayer mountains used for this research, Ede Prayer Mountain was noticed to have adequate and stately facilities.

The ethnic mix witnessed on the prayer mountains is another socio-cultural dynamics evident these days. Ethnically, in southwest Nigeria, prayer mountains used to be largely patronized by the Yorùbá Christians. A critical review of literature may categorically support this submission; however, the historic appellation “*Alàdùrà*” given to these African indigenous churches can substantiate the argument that the Yorùbá Christians patronized the various Prayer Mountains in the region. Turner (1967:33) remarked “... the *Alàdùrà* churches believe in the power of prayers to cure sickness. The churches have a Yoruba flavour and style that has been incorporated into their worship.” This account by Turner implies that the *Alàdùrà* churches and by extension their prayer mountains, operated primarily among the Yorùbá people. Furthermore, all of the four *Alàdùrà* churches in were founded in South-western Nigeria, with the exception of the Celestial Church of Christ which started from Porto Novo, the Republic of Benin (2011:152-153).

Today, non-Yorùbá speaking people from other ethnic configurations in Nigeria frequent the prayer mountains. Some of these ethnicities include Igbo, Benin, Edo, and Ijaw to mention a few. In fact, during this research, we were told of a particular prayer mountain known as Deborah Mountain in Ìkòyí community that has very high patronage of the Igbo Christians.

While this mountain is not within the scope of this research, future studies can be carried out on the mountain. It will suffice to know how these non- Yorùbá speakers are carried along during prayer session on the prayer mountains.

Language aids communication particularly verbal language. More so, the Christian liturgy is primarily based on music and speech (Owoaje, 2014). In order to carry along non-Yorùbá speakers on the prayer mountains the service of an interpreter was frequently employed during corporate prayer sessions. This practice was noticed consistently throughout the fieldwork. More often than not, the first speaker communicates in Yorùbá language while the interpreter interprets to the English language. The general assumption is that those participants who do not understand Yorùbá language will certainly comprehend the English language, which is the *Lingua Franca* in the country. The proficiency of the interpreter determines whether the intended message is passed across to the listener. In the opinion of the researcher, the non-Yorùbá participants on the mountain seem to comprehend the messages and prayers as put forward to them by the interpreter. However, some deep Yorùbá expressions were very difficult for some of the interpreters to interpret particularly during prayer sessions. Whether or not did interpretation aided or distorted the prayers of these non- Yorùbá speakers is a suggestion for further for researchers in the field of communication.

Technology is rapidly driving every sector of human development. Technological advancement is another change witnessed on prayer mountains. Like other mainstream churches, prayer mountains have a strong presence online via their websites and other social media platforms where details of the forthcoming programme can be viewed and live or past programmes can be streamed to a wider audience. Furthermore, the use of hi-tech multimedia equipment during mega-events such huge LCD screens, crane cameras and sound system are now common on prayer mountains. This technological development can be traced to modernization and religious innovation. This trend on the prayer mountains aligns with the submission of Akanbi and Beyers (2017:6) that “the Pentecostal churches have also contributed immensely to the development of media and internet facilities in Nigeria, especially during the 20th and 21st centuries”.





**Plate 34: A LCD digital screen on Ede Prayer Mountain**

In a similar thought, Adedibu (2018:118) remarked that “there is now the use of social media to advertise the programmes of some Orí-Òkè, as in the case of Orí -Òkè Àbíyè, Ede”. These innovations are various responses to modernity. In the words of Adedibu, “what dominates the landscape is the positive adjustment of these sacred sites to modernity. Nevertheless, the response to modernity is now influencing the Orí-Òkè phenomenon via the interface of modern and local forces in host communities (p.118)

## CHAPTER SIX

### TEXTUAL AND MUSICAL ANALYSES

#### 6.1 Textual analysis

##### 6.1.1 Textual form/structure

A detailed examination of the songs used on the prayer mountains shows that song text were either in short-verse or long-verse form (Vidal, 2004). According to Vidal, the short-verse forms in Yorùbá songs make use of various constructions of different linear units such as binary, ternary, quaternary, quintenary, hexanary, septenary, octenary, and nonenary structures. Many of the songs used on collected during this study employed short-verse forms. Below are examples of the various forms and their variants:

##### 6.1.1.1 Binary (2 lexical units with two variants)

Gbogbo ìdè Bàbá máa ja - A  
Gbogbo ìdè Bàbá máa ja - A

##### Translation

Father break every chain  
Father break every chain

Another example:

A ti kó p'ádára fún mi - A  
Èmí yíó mà mìlègbè nínú ògo ò - B

##### Translation

It is written: it shall be well with me  
I shall rejoice in glory

##### 6.1.1.2 Ternary (3 lexical units)

*Olorun Babalolá,* - A  
*Olorun Baba Àkàndé,* - A<sub>1</sub>  
*Gbé agbára wo mí* - B

##### Translation

O God of Babalola  
O God of Baba Akande  
Fill me with your power

Another example:

Iná wonú milo	-	A
Iná nlá wonú milo	-	B
Iná nlá	-	C

**Translation**

Fire fill me  
Great fire fill me  
Great fire

**6.1.1.3 Quartenary** (4 lexical units with variants)

A total of 17 out of 35 songs collected during this study fall under quaternary textual form. This is in tandem with Vidal (2004) and Adedeji (2004) submissions that quaternary structures are more predominant in Yorùbá music. Examples include:

<i>Èmí mí mó ja</i>	-	A
<i>Èmí mí mó ja</i>	-	A
<i>Ìdè t'áyé fì dè mí o</i>	-	B
<i>Èmí mí mó ja</i>	-	A

**Translation**

Holy Spirit, break it!  
Holy Spirit, break it!  
The chain with which the world has tied me  
Holy Spirit, break it!

Another example:

Olùwa mo gbé o ga ò	-	A
Olùwa mo gbé o ga ò	-	A
Àwon òrun bámi yìn ọ pé o sé	-	B
Àwon òrun bámi yìn ọ pé o sé	-	B

**Translation**

Lord, I exalt you  
Lord, I exalt you  
The heavenly hosts join me to say, 'thank you'  
The heavenly hosts join me to say, 'thank you'

Another example is

<i>Ìyà yí tó</i>	-	A
<i>Ìyà yí tó o</i>	-	A <sub>1</sub>
<i>Ìyà yí tó Jèsù</i>	-	B
<i>Kò bámi láramu</i>	-	C

**Translation**

This suffering is enough  
This suffering is enough  
This suffering is enough, Jesus  
I am no longer comfortable

Another example:

<i>Olórun Bàbá Àbíyè</i>	-	A
<i>Olórun Bàbá Àbíyè</i>	-	A
<i>Bámi setèmi</i>	-	B
<i>K'ójú má tìmí o</i>	-	C

**Translation**

O God of Baba Abiye  
O God of Baba Abiye  
Please help me!  
So that I will not be put to shame

Another example:

<i>Èmi kó ni mo pá o</i>	-	A
<i>Òtá mi ló para rẹ̀</i>	-	B
<i>Ibi tó t́n rojó kiri</i>	-	C
<i>L'Èmí-Mímó ti pá</i>	-	D

**Translation**

I am not the one that killed her  
My enemy killed herself  
While discussing my matter here and there  
That was when the Holy Spirit killed her

#### 6.1.1.4 Quintenary (5 lexical units).

Example of quintenary structure is:

Jésù mbe kò ma sófo ò	-	A
Jésù mbe kò ma sófo ò	-	A
Àsetì kò sí ò e	-	B
Àsetì kò sí f'òmo 'lórùn	-	B <sub>1</sub>
Jésù mbe kò ma sófo ò	-	A

Another example is

Fire for fire là mà fì sè	-	A
Fire for fire là mà fì sè	-	A
<i>B'ògun aiyé mi gbé ná karí</i>	-	B
<i>Ogun òrun e síná bole</i>	-	C
Fire for fire là mà fì sè	-	A

#### 6.1.1.5 Hexanary (6 lexical units)

<i>Agbára máa bò</i>	-	A
<i>Agbára máa bò wá</i>	-	A <sub>1</sub>
<i>Agbára bí iná</i>	-	B
<i>Agbára bí àrà</i>	-	B <sub>1</sub>
<i>Agbára tóju agbára lo</i>	-	C
<i>Agbára máa bò</i>	-	A

#### Translation

Power come

Power come

Power like fire

Power like thunder

The power that supersedes other power

Power comes

#### 6.1.1.6 Long-verse or additive form

As noted by Adedeji (2010:119-110) this form is purely additive and has two types: solo and chorus alternate or solo as stanza. He also noted that they differ in length with the shortest containing at least nine lines. This kind of form was used only by the gospel artiste whenever they are invited for special ministration. An example is seen below:

Ibi mo gbà kojá  
Tògun fi wo nu ayé mi  
Baba la bè kojá  
M’ogún kùró nínú ayé  
Olúwa mo fèrù jéwó  
P’èni rere a má a subú  
Iyò lé so adùn re nù  
Kó má sì níyì mò tíí ayé  
K’órò mì máse rí bè  
Oba mí mó so okàn mi pòmó tìre  
Tómi s’òr’òkè lòrun  
Láforífojì ifé è Re

### **6.1.2 Textual style**

Generally, textual style refers to how an author of a text uses words to describe events, objects and ideas. Similarly, song texts are arranged in a certain manner so to achieve structural aesthetics. These arrangements come in separate but measured lines which in turn create strophes. In some cases, the song text may not adhere to any arrangement both in rhythm and meter. In his textual analysis of Nigerian gospel music, Adedeji (2010) highlighted three major textual styles: poetic, prose and prose-prose-poetry.

#### **6.1.2.1 Poetry**

Poetry is simply defined the art of rhythmical composition, written or spoken, for exciting pleasure by beautiful, imaginative, or elevated thoughts. Composers of songs used on the prayer mountains, whether consciously or unconsciously, employ poetic devices in their song compositions.

Example of poetic songs used on the prayer mountains include:

*Ángéì tón pín 're*  
*Ángéì tón pín 're*  
*èmi ni 'yánú kàn*  
*Ángéì tón pín 're*

**Translation**

Thou Angel distributing blessings  
 Thou Angel distributing blessings  
 I am next on the line  
 Thou Angel distributing blessings

Another example of poetic style is:

Fire for fire *là mà fì sè*  
 Fire for fire *là mà fì sè*  
*B'ògun aiyé mi gbé ná kari*  
*Ogun òrun e síná bole*  
 Fire for fire *là mà fì sè*

**Translation**

It shall be fire for fire  
 It shall be fire for fire  
 No matter how intense the spiritual war may be  
 The hosts of heaven are combat-ready  
 It shall be fire for fire

**6.1.2.2 Prose**

Prose is a form of language that has no formal metrical structure. It applies a natural flow of speech, and ordinary grammatical structure, rather than rhythmic structure, such as in the case of traditional poetry. Therefore, prosodic texts do not observe any special arrangement, rhythmic structure or meters (Adedeji, 2010:103). Many of the songs used on the prayer mountains are in this category. An example:

*Irinsé Èsù, Baba finá jó*  
*Irinsé òtá o, Baba finá jó dànù*  
*Ogun tón dàmú igbèsè ayé mi*  
*Irinse òkùnkùn tón f'ojó orí mi sòfò*  
*Dánásun wón, Baba finá jó won run o*  
*Kémi lè gbé gbá opé*

**Translation**

Father, consume Satan's weapon  
 Father, consume Satan's weapon totally  
 Problems confronting my life

Satanic devices that are wasting my life  
Consume them, Father consume them with your fire  
So I can celebrate

### **6.1.3 Language**

The commonly used language of communication on the prayer mountains was Yorùbá hence many of the songs were in Yorùbá language. However, there were sparing usage of other languages including English, Pidgin English and Igbo. The use of multilingual songs was also noticed on the mountains. The English songs were more often than not songs from popular gospel artistes and are commonly performed in various churches where participants came from. An example is refrain section of ‘You are Great’ by Steve Crown, a renowned Nigerian gospel musician:

You are great  
You are great  
You are great  
Everything written about You is great

Another example is :

You are the Lord  
That is your name  
You will never share Your glory  
With anyone  
You will never share Your glory  
With anybody  
Almighty God  
That is Your name

It should be pointed out that English songs were prominently featured during the praise and worship section which featured assorted popular Christian songs.

Multilingual songs were commonly used during prayers on the mountain. According to Liadi and Omobowale (2011), music multilingualism is a creative appropriation of multiple languages in existence in Nigerian society to create a hybridized musical form. Wider audience coverage, compositional aesthetic and commercial success amongst others are believed to be factors that have necessitated multilingual approach in Nigerian popular music space (Adedeji, 2010, Liadi & Omobowale, 2011). Multilingual approach may be manifested in the use of code



switching/mixing in a discourse or communication. Codeswitching, the alternate use of two or more languages in the same utterance, conversation or writing, can be used to encode social meanings. The example below switches between English and Yoruba languages:

My problem is a nylon bag  
 My problem is a nylon bag  
*Mo gbe dání mo gbe jù sonù*  
 Is a nylon bag  
*Oríbukúró mo gbe jú sonù*  
 Is a nylon bag

**Translation**

My problem is a nylon bag  
 I carry and dump it  
 I dump ill luck

Another example is:

Fire for fire *là mà fi sè*  
*B'ógun aiyé mi gbé ná kari*  
*Ogun òrun e síná bole*  
 Fire for fire *là mà fi sè*

**Translation**

It shall be fire for fire  
 No matter how intense the spiritual war may be  
 The hosts of heaven are combat-ready  
 It shall be fire for fire

**6.1.4 Text setting**

Song text can be set to syllabic, nuematic or melismatic setting. All the songs analysed in this work are syllabic in text setting, i.e each syllable in the text are assigned to a note. See example below:

♩.=200 **Olowo nla**

O - lo - wo nla o - lo - wo

4  
 nla, Ba - ba n'o - wo re o, o - lo - wo nla

**Musical example 10**

## 6.2 Content analysis

Song texts are an integral part of music and are considered one of the significant sources for the understanding of human behaviour (Loko, 2011:128) in any society. Meanings of songs, largely, are embedded in the lyrics of the songs. No wonder Danaher (cited in Nduka, 2017:37) posited, “song lyrics are important in capturing the feelings and reactions of singers to the world around them and can contribute to social change.” It, therefore, suggests that song text can express various discourses as well as the identity of both the performer and that of the audience. From the lyrics of a song, listeners can deduce the origin of the song, who it speaks to, and what it seeks to address (Nduka, 2017:37). According to Nketia (1974) the treatment of a song as a form of speech utterance arises not only from stylistic consideration or from consciousness of the analogous features of speech and music but is also inspired by its importance as an avenue of verbal communication, a medium for creative verbal expressions which can reflect both personal and social experiences. The themes of songs highlight the events and matters of common interest and concern to the members of the community or the social groups within it. They also deal with everyday life or traditions, beliefs, and customs of society.

Adedeji (2018:56) asserted that song text constitutes a key aspect of ethnomusicology, African musicology, and sacred musicology. In sacred musicology, the import of songtext in religious/spiritual music is of utmost concern as these song texts are considered as one of the best means of educating the Christian worshippers hence the need to the appropriateness of song-texts in the expression of the spiritual experience of worshippers (Loko, 2011). In her study on the liturgical music in Cherubim and Seraphim, Loko (2011:128), observed that composers in the church use their songs to preach biblical messages. Their song texts cover the entire Christian doctrine while others incorporate issues of common interest and concern to members of the church and the Christian community at large. In a similar thought, Adedeji (2001), believed that song text in Nigerian gospel music composition is mainly gospel and didactic. In order to sufficiently capture the various issues embedded in the song text, the songs collected during this study were grouped into four broad themes:

- i. Praise, adoration and thanksgiving
- ii. Prayer

iii. Confession of faith and testimonies

iv. Religious satire and relaxation

### 6.2.1 Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving

Praise and thanksgiving can be used synonymously. In Yorùbá language, *ìyìn* (praise) and thanksgiving (*opé*) are used interchangeably. To praise means to express one's respect and gratitude towards someone or something especially in song. Similarly, Owóajé (2014:125) opined that song of thanksgiving “reflects the heart of devotion, praise, and thanksgiving with which the worshipers approach God and the people’s readiness to receive from Him.” On the prayer mountains, both the participants, song and prayer leaders believe strongly in approaching God with the heart of praise and gratitude for who He is and what for He has done. This belief is substantiated by David in the Holy Bible when He said; “enter His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise” (Psalm 100:4, KJV). An example is:

*Tiyìn tiyìn, tiyìn tiyìn,  
Tiyìn tiyìn mowá s'ódè re  
Olórun Oba*

#### Translation

With praise, I come to you,  
With praise, I come to you,  
O God

**Tiyin tiyin mo wa s'odo re**

The musical notation is written on two staves. The first staff is in treble clef, key of D major (one sharp), and 12/8 time. It contains two measures of music. The first measure has a triplet of eighth notes (Ti - yin) followed by a dotted quarter note (ti - yin) with a long horizontal line underneath. The second measure has a dotted quarter note (ti - yin) followed by a dotted quarter note (ti - yin) with a long horizontal line underneath. The second staff is also in treble clef, key of D major, and 12/8 time. It starts with a triplet of eighth notes (ti - yin) followed by a dotted quarter note (ti - yin), then a dotted quarter note (mo), a dotted quarter note (wa), a dotted quarter note (s'o - do), a dotted quarter note (re,). The final measure contains a dotted quarter note (O - lo - run) and a dotted quarter note (O - ba). The piece ends with a double bar line.

#### Musical example 11

Participants on the prayer mountains understand that God is not only to be praised but to be adored. An example of a song of adoration describing the greatness of God in the lives of the participants is seen below:

*Oba t'ólá re n mi lègbè lègbè*  
*Oba t'ola re n mi rie rie*  
*Gbogbo èniyàn e bàmi gb'ólúwa ga*

**Translation**

To the king whose royal apparel sways powerfully  
 To the king whose royal apparel sways majestically  
 Everyone, please join me to exalt this Lord

**Oba t'ola re**

The musical notation is written on two staves in a 6/8 time signature with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff contains the lyrics: "O - ba t'o-la re n mi len-gbe, len - gbe\_\_\_ O - ba t'o-la re n". The second staff contains the lyrics: "mi ri - e, ri - e\_\_\_ gbo- gbo'e-ni - yan e - ba mi gb'O - lu-wa ga\_\_\_".

**Musical example 12**

The song above shows how participants on prayer mountains see and describe God. God is seen as a king who is dressed in royal apparel with a powerful and majestic gesture hence the need to be worshipped and exalted. The song is also anchored in the Bible: “The LORD is king! He is robed in majesty. Indeed, the LORD is robed in majesty and armed with strength....” (Psalm 93:1, NLT). Figuratively, this song expresses the notion of elaborate royal apparel in many African traditional societies including the Yorùbá.

In Yorùbá communities, the king’s apparel is one of the significant markers of his royal identity hence the reason for their gorgeous outfit with adorning paraphernalia. As Ademuleya (2002) observed that Yorùbá clothing and textiles fulfil a variety of social and symbolic purposes. He further stressed that clothing among the Yorùbá does not only reveal their aesthetics functions but also it shows the authority and power of royal usage. Using the spatial theory, the study contends that the composer of this song and the users by extension used the physical royal spatial experience to reconstruct the spiritual space in their perceived expression of the God us a royal king whose appearance typifies that of the worldly king.

Another song of praise is

*Olúwa, mo gbé o ga ò*

*Olúwa, mo gbé o ga ò*

*Àwon orùn bámi yin o pé o sé*

*Àwon orùn bámi yin o pé o sé*

### Translation

Lord, I exalt you

Lord, I exalt you

The heavenly hosts join me to say, 'thank you'

The heavenly hosts join me to say, 'thank you'

## Oluwa mo gbe o ga o

O - lu - wa mo gbe o ga o O - lu - wa mo gbe o ga o

4 o a - won o - run ba - mi yin o o, pe o

6 se a-won o-run ba-mi yin o o pe o se

### Musical example 13

It is a common practice for people to come and give testimonies in appreciation of God's faithfulness in their lives because of answered prayers. An example is

*Osé, mo rí àánú gbà*

*Modúpé, mo rí àánú gbà*

*Nítorí kǐ se gbogbo ènìyàn lóri àánú gbà*

### Translation

I thank You Lord, for the mercy received

I thank You, Lord, for the mercy received

Because not everyone receives mercy from You

**Ese, mori aanu gba**

♩.=120

E - se\_\_\_ mo ri aa - nu gba\_\_\_\_\_ mo - du - pe\_\_\_ mo ri aa - nu

4  
gba\_\_\_ ni - to - ri ki\_\_\_ se gbo - gboe - ni - yan lo - ri aa - nu gba\_\_\_\_\_

### Musical example 14

#### 6.2.2. Songs of Prayer

Songs under this category form the larger repertoires used on prayer mountains. The reason is not far-fetched because prayer takes the larger part of the activity on prayer mountains. Songs under this section were further classified as invocation, warfare, imprecatory, supplication/petition, protest, and deliverance.

##### 6.2.2.1 Invocation

Invocation implies invoking someone or something. During worship, Christians invoke the presence of God to take absolute control of the worship. Participants on the prayer mountains believe that whenever and wherever the presence of God is, wonders abound. The presence of God when invoked could manifest in so many ways and through different agencies such as fire, thunder, and lightning. The contestation between Elijah and the Prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel was characterised by the manifestation of fire, which consumed all the sacrificial elements of the Prophets of Baal. The song text above reveals the representation of the Holy Spirit through some elements such as *iná* (fire) and *ará* (thunder). Biblically, the Holy Spirit is represented by a dove, water, and fire. These symbols are not alien to Africans, especially the Yorùbá, as they representative elements are known to be destructive in nature and manifestations. The participants on the prayer mountains believed that upon receiving the power of the Holy Spirit, they can spiritually combat the unforeseen powers that they came to ‘fight’. One of the participants at Ìkòyí Prayer Mountain remarked, “we have come to the mountain to fight and we need the power of the Holy Spirit” (Fieldwork, January 2017)

Agbára máa bò  
 Agbára máa bò wá  
 Agbára bí iná  
 Agbára bí àrá  
 Agbára tóju agbára lo  
 Agbára máa bò

**Translation**

Power come  
 Power come  
 Power like fire  
 Power like thunder  
 The power that supersedes other power  
 Power comes

**Agbara ma bo**

A-gba-ra ma\_ bo\_\_\_ A-gba-ra ma\_ bo wa\_\_\_ A-gba-ra ma\_ bo\_\_\_  
 7  
 A-gba - ra ma\_ bo wa\_\_\_ A-gba - ra bi i - na A-gba - ra bi a -  
 12  
 ra A-gba - ra to j'a-gba ra lo o A-gba - ra ma\_ bo\_\_\_

**Musical example 15**

Another song that was used to invoke the presence of God among participants at the prayer mountain is:

Wòlé wá,  
 Wòlé wá o,  
 Èmí òrun o  
 Wòlé wá o,

**Translation**

Come in  
 Come in  
 Spirit of heaven  
 Come in

**Wole wa, Emi Olorun**

♩. = 180

Wo - le wa      wo - le wa o      E - mi O - lo - run      wo - le wa o

**Musical example 16**

See Appendix I for more examples of songs of invocation.

**6.2.2.2. Imprecatory prayer-songs**

Generally, imprecatory prayers are believed to be anchored to imprecatory psalms in the Bible. However, this notion has met with several scholarly reactions and interpretation. According to Laney (1994:30), imprecatory psalms are defined as an invocation of judgement, calamity, or curse uttered against one’s enemies, or the enemies of God. Consequently, imprecatory prayer songs are songs of invocation of judgement, or curse sung against one’s enemies or the enemies of God. This form of prayer songs were massively used in the prayer mountains by participants and the reasons are discussed below.

In African epistemology, the physical world is controlled by the spiritual world and malevolent powers abound hence the need for a higher power to combat these powers. Oduro (2019:142-143) submitted, “spiritual entities are perceived to be able to manipulate the environment to cause havoc against other human beings.” The havoc includes sickness, ill-luck, failure, disappointment, and ultimately, untimely or tragic death. In Yorùbá epistemology, these malicious personae are popularly referred to as *òtá* (enemies) and they are categorised as *òtá ilé* (enemies within) or *òtá òde* (enemies without). Both classes of enemies could work hand in hand to unleash evil on an individual. The *òtá ilé* can be a close relative such as father, mother, cousins and aunties to mention a few, while the *òtá òde* can be colleagues at work, business associates and neighbours. Furthermore, these enemies can be visible or invisible, known and unknown. Africans protect themselves from these spiritual and physical powers with charms, amulets, sacrifices, prayers and divination (Oduro, 2019). It is a common notion among Yorùbá Christians that any of the earlier categorised enemies are largely responsible for any evil occurrence in their lives. This idea is further strengthened by the expression of the Yorùbá people when they say ‘*ogun layé*’ (the world is full of battles). This worldview was repeatedly



heard among the participants especially the mountain prophets on the mountains: *'ijà lawá jà ní Orí-Òkè yi'* (we have come to this mountain to fight).

The notion that the enemy is everywhere and does what he/she likes has encouraged not only participants at the mountain but also many Christians in Yorubaland to employ imprecatory prayers or songs when negotiating the intervention of the supernatural in attending to their spiritual needs. As previously mentioned imprecatory prayer songs express the desire of the song user by invoking judgement, or wishing calamity or raining curses on his/her enemies. An example is:

Ení pé un má dòkè  
 Gbìgbe ni yío gbe kú  
 Àse àkókó ni wón lò fun  
 Igi òpòtó gbe dèlé oo  
 Ení pé un má dòkè  
 Gbìgbe ni yío gbe kú

**Translation**

Anyone who does not desire my progress  
 Such person will dry up  
 I will use the first command of Jesus Christ  
 That made the fig tree to wither  
 Anyone who does not desire my progress  
 Such person will dry up

**Eni pe kin ma doke**

E-ni pe kin ma do ke gbi-gbe ni yo gbe ku. E-ni pe kin ma do ke  
 4 gbi-gbe ni yo gbe ku. A-se a-ko - ko\_\_ ni won lo fun\_\_ I-gi o-po - to\_\_  
 8 gbe de le o\_\_ E-ni pe kin ma do ke gbi-gbe ni yio gbe ku

**Musical example 17**

The song above echoes the experience of Jesus with the fig tree in Mark 11:12-25. It is believed that the first authority Jesus exercised during his ministry life was the cursing of the fig tree, which later withered. Figuratively, participants on the prayer mountains see their enemies as a fig tree that is good for nothing but to wither away. The enemy is seen as someone who does not wish them progress in every area of their lives. To ‘wither’ in the context of this song is for the enemy to die a gradual or slow death through sickness usually an incurable one.

Another example of imprecatory song is:

*Yio s'agolo de Po-ta*  
*Yio s'agolo de Po-ta*  
*Eni ba bi 'nu mi*  
*Yio s'agolo de Po-ta*

**Translation**

He will display insanity to Port-Harcourt  
 He will display insanity all the way to Port-Harcourt  
 Whosoever takes displeasure in my success  
 He will display insanity to Port-Harcourt

Yio s'a-go-lo de Port-Har yio s'a-go-lo-de Port-Har  
 o e-ni ba bi-nu mi yio  
 s'a-go-lo de Port-Har

**Musical example 18**

The song above reveals the nature of calamity or judgement the composer and by extension the users of the song wish to befall on their enemies. They desire their enemies to go into a state of lunacy by displaying senseless and foolish behaviour including scavenging for tin cans and other waste items on waste sites. Again, in this song, the imprecation is towards the enemy who is not pleased by the success of the author. Africans believed that their enemies may not be happy with their success or that of their children and can attack them with sickness, failure, or premature death.

Scholars have expressed divergent views on the way and manner by which imprecatory psalms or prayers are employed among Christians. On the one hand, some see it as an expression of personal sentiment and not divine. Semango and Kruger (2016), remark that “one may regard the curses directed at enemies as an outpouring of personal resentment and a means of destroying the enemies.” This personal resentment can be seen clearly in the songs above as the authors desire to destroy their enemies through mental illness or death. On the other hand, some scholars see imprecatory psalms or prayers as prophetic utterances and not a mere expression of personal opinion. For Locker (1993), curses should not be viewed as imprecations but predictions of the wicked. The view that imprecatory prayers are a form of prophetic predictions or announcements also finds backing in the Bible book of Isaiah 3:11 that “woe unto the wicked! It shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given to him.”

Because of the level of spiritual, physical, economic and social discomfort experienced by many of the participants on the mountain who also believed that the enemies are responsible for their discomforts, hence they are compelled to rain curses and divine wrath on these enemies whether real or imaginary.

### 6.2.2.3 Warfare

For participants on prayer mountains, the mountain is a place to engage in spiritual warfare. It is believed that a prayer mountain is a place to ‘fight’. The combat is not physical but spiritual in nature. Christians were charged in the bible that “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly place (Ephesians 6:12, NKJV). In a similar manner, African worldview holds that ‘what happens in the seen world is formed and directed from the unseen world’ (Masondo, 2014, p.8). Hence, the need to combat the benevolent powers that are capable and responsible for human misfortune is of serious concern to those who visit the mountain to pray and music and songs in particular is considered a very potent weapon of war. A song that implies spiritual combat is ‘Fire for fire’:

Fire for fire *là mà fì sè*  
*B’ògun aiyé mi gbé ná kari*  
*Ogun òrun e síná bole*  
 Fire for fire *là mà fì sè*

### Translation

It shall be fire for fire  
No matter how intense the spiritual war may be  
The hosts of heaven are combat-ready  
It shall be fire for fire

♩.=200 **Fire for Fire**

5 Fi-re for fi - re la ma\_ fi se\_ fi-re for fi - re la ma\_ fi se\_

8 B'o gun a - ye mi gbe 'na\_ ka rin\_ o-gun o - run e

si 'na\_ bo le\_ fi - re for fi - re la ma\_ fi se\_

### Musical example 19

The song further stresses the Yorùbá worldview that the world is of dual cosmos and that the heaven (òrun) and earth (ayé) are polarized spaces, which are controlled by both spiritual and human entities. The song text above, therefore, foregrounds spatial theory in the sense that the mountain as a physical space is reconstructed and conceived mentally as a war site where two opposing forces combat hence the lived experience in the composition of songs as well as prayers on the mountain. In any warfare, there are various weapons required to fight. One of such is a gun. A gun can be used as both an offensive and defensive weapon. Participants on the prayer mountains believe that in spiritual warfare that at the sound of gunshot of the Almighty God every evil force will tremble. The expression *kèwù* is imitative of the sound of a gun when shot. See an example below:

*Ínró kèwù kèwù kèwù ínró*  
*Ínró kèwù kèwù kèwù ínró*  
*Ìbón Elúdùmarè*  
*Ínró kewu kewu kewu ínró*

### Translation

It sounds very loud  
It sounds very loud  
The gun of the Almighty God  
It sounds very loud

♩.=180

## Intro kewu, kewu

In -ro kewu kewu kewu, in -ro\_\_\_\_\_ In -ro kewu kewu kewu, in -ro,

4  
i - bon E - le - du - ma - re, in - ro kewu kewu kewu, in - ro

6  
i-bon E - le-du-ma-re, in -ro kewu kewu kewu, in -ro\_\_\_\_\_

### Musical example 20

The reference to elements such as fire during spiritual warfare is common among participants on the prayer mountain. Generally, fire can be seen to be refining and destructive. The Bible described God as a “consuming fire” (Hebrews 12:9, NKJV). However, the refining character of fire is also craved for when people pray to request for their spiritual fire to be rekindled. Fire in this context denotes the power of God. It is believed that a Christian without the fire of God is a powerless person.

*Iná wonú mì lò*  
*Iná nlá,*  
*wonú mì lò*  
*Iná nlá*

### Transcription

Fire come inside of me  
 Great fire  
 come inside of me  
 Great fire

**Ina wonu mi lo**

♩.=200 Furiously

Call

I - na wo\_\_ nu\_\_ mi lo\_\_

Response

I - na nla\_\_

6

Call

Response

wo nu\_\_ mi lo\_\_ i - na nla

### Musical example 21

#### 6.2.2.4 Supplication/petition

On the prayer mountains, people do not only ‘fight’ but they also go there to make a request from God for prosperity, healing, and spiritual empowerment. Song texts in this category express how participants seek the mercy and favour of God in different situations of life. For instance:

*Olúwa sàánú mì o*  
*Jékí gbogbo èniyàn bámi gbé ‘gbá opé*

#### Translation

O Lord, have mercy on me  
 Let everyone join in my celebration

People also go to prayer mountains to seek divine interventions and redress on various matters of life. They take their complaints to God who they consider as a righteous judge not only in prayers but also in songs. An example is:

*Awòn t’ón yomí lénu Bàbá*  
*Yo wón lénu o*  
*Awòn t’ón yomí lénu Bàbá*  
*Yo wón lénu o*

#### Translation

All those troubling me, Oh Lord  
 Trouble them  
 All those troubling me, Oh Lord  
 Trouble them

The need for a divine touch for healing and sound mind is also craved for by participants on prayer mountains. Christians believe healing is the “children’s bread” and that only God has the capacity to heal whatever ailment or sickness they have and that a one-touch from the Lord will make a difference.

*Olówó nlá*  
*Olówó nlá*  
*Bàbá na ’wó re o*  
*Olówó nlá*

**Translation**

The One with a mighty hand  
The One with a mighty hand  
Stretch forth your mighty hand  
The One with a mighty hand

Supplication or petition can also be seen in the form of a protest. As observed by Adedeji (2017) that prayer songs can be categorised as protest songs. People can make a petition and at the same time protest.

Example of protest songs is:

*Ìyà yí tó*  
*Ìyà yí tó o*  
*Ìyà yí tó Jésù*  
*Kò bámi láramu*

**Translation**

This suffering is enough  
This suffering is enough  
This suffering is enough, Jesus  
I am no longer comfortable

Christians are admonished to desire the power of God in order to be victorious as they journey through life. Many of those who visit prayer mountains are pastors and prophets who reported that one of the main reasons why they visit the mountain is to seek the power of the Holy Spirit.

The incessant request for the power of the Holy Spirit is seen in the songs below:

*Mofé gbagbára ò*  
*Agbagbára Olórun ò*

**Translation**

I want to receive power  
I want to receive the power of God

Another example is:

Father send your power  
In my spirit, in my soul  
In my life

Given the socio-economic challenges faced by the majority of those who visit the mountain, the search for economic prosperity and breakthrough is expressed in the songs below:

*Gbémi sókè, gbémi dide*  
*Fàmi lówó sókè, kín ga ju ayé lo*  
*Ògo ayé mi, jé kó yo jáde*  
*Fàmi lówó sókè, mama jé kópé*

**Translation**

Lord, lift me up  
Lift my hands up above the world  
Let the glory of my life manifest  
Lift my hands up before it is too late

The quest for social, economic and spiritual mobility among people who go to pray at the mountains can be captured in the song below:

*Súnmi síwájú*  
*Má nje d'èro èyìn*  
*Olórun orí-òkè yí o*  
*Súnmi síwájú*

**Translation**

Move me forward  
Never to be backward  
O God of this mountain  
Move me forward

**6.3.2.5 Deliverance**

Christians believe that sin has its own consequences and of one such consequence is being in spiritual bondage. However, not only is sin capable of keeping one in bondage, but also some evil powers. The bondage can be of sickness, witchcraft, ill-luck, delay, and disappointment. Therefore, visitors to prayer mountains see God as the only person who is capable of delivering



them from the shackles of the enemy irrespective of how long they have been in bondage. Figuratively bondage is referred to as ‘chains’ in the song texts below:

*Èmí mímó ja*  
*Èmí mímó ja*  
*Ìdè t'áyé fì dè mí o*  
*Èmí mímó ja*

**Translation**

Holy Spirit, break it!  
 Holy Spirit, break it!  
 The chain with which the world has tied me  
 Holy Spirit, break it!

♩.=200 **Emi mimo ja**

E - mi Mi - mo ja E - mi Mi - mo  
 ja i - de t'a - ye fi de mi o E - mi Mi - mo ja

**Musical example 22**

Yoke and chain are used interchangeably in matters of deliverance on prayer mountains. In animal husbandry, the yoke is a stable gear that joins two draft animals at the neck so they can work together as a team. Whilst the yoke is a useful tool for animal managers, it is certainly a very uncomfortable device for animals. In the same manner, African Christians particularly those who visit the prayer mountains were very much aware of the possibility of the evil yokes placed over their lives, families and careers. An example is:

*Àjàgà Bábílónì wó*  
*Àjàgà Bábílónì wó o*  
*Àjàgà Bábílónì wó lulè*  
*Àjàgà Bábílónì wó o láíláí*

**Translation**

Babylon’s yoke is broken  
 Babylon’s yoke is broken  
 Babylon’s yoke is broken down  
 Babylon’s yoke is broken forever

## Ajaga Babiloni wo

♩.=160

A-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo \_\_\_\_\_ a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo \_\_\_\_\_

5  
a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo lu-le \_\_\_\_\_ a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo \_\_\_\_\_ lai lai \_\_\_\_\_

### Musical example 23

#### 6.2.3 Faith and Testimonies

Faith is one of the essential requirements for participants at the prayer mountain. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrew 1:1). Faith confessions are not the only exercise in prayer but also in songs by participants on prayer mountains.

*Ati kó,  
P’ádára fún ni  
Èmi yío maa mì lègbè nínu ògo*

#### Translation

It is written:  
“It shall be well with me”  
And I shall rejoice gloriously

One of the songs recorded by the praise team of CAC Ori-Oke Ede, and it is commonly used during prayer meetings as a song of confession for those who usually experience stillbirth or who are fertility-challenged (‘expecting the fruit of the word’ in Christian parlance) is “Àbíyè ni mí”

*Àbíyè ni mí  
Àbíyè l’orúko mi  
Èmi ni Jèsù pe l’àbíyé  
Awá bámi jo  
Awá bámi yo*

#### Translation

I am a living child  
Living child is my name  
Jesus calls me a living child  
Come and dance with me  
Come and rejoice with me

In Yoruba traditional society before the advent of medical sciences, stillbirth (*Àbíkú*) used to be a major challenge among pregnant women. In response to this unpleasant experience, Yorùbá indigenous churches started organising faith-based maternity homes for women where prayer is solely administered although the period of pregnancy till delivery. The women are encouraged to confess that they will not experience stillbirth but rather live birth (*Àbíyè*).

Songs of testimonies were commonly rendered on the mountain especially during testimony time. This time afforded participants to publicly give account of the blessings and miracles they have witnessed in their lives. Leaders on the mountains see and take this aspect of their liturgy very seriously because it validates spiritual endorsement and increases high patronage of the mountain. More often than not when someone is happy, such person can burst into singing. The same was experienced during this study. During the course of sharing testimonies, testifiers were seen to suddenly burst into a song either at the beginning, during or at the end of the testimony. The content of the songs, in most cases, articulates the experience of the testifier and some of these songs were believed to be spontaneously composed.

An example is:

*Óti sé o, kòtún gbéí mó*  
*Óti sé o, kòtún gbéí mó*  
*Ogun t'áyé fì pèmi lórúko*  
*Óti sé*

**Translation**

The battle is over never to return  
The battle is over never to return  
The battle with which I have been named  
Is over

Another popular example is:

*Òti múmu gbàgbé*  
*Ìbànújé igbàkan*  
*Àsé wéré nisé Olúwa*  
*Oba tí mo pè tón jé*

**Translation**

You (Lord) have made me forget  
Sorrows of the past  
Your works are effortless  
I call and You answered me

#### 6.2.4 Relaxing/humorous

During prayer sessions on prayer mountains some songs are used for relaxation and to create some humorous atmosphere. Given that prayer is hard work, song leaders and prayer leaders occasionally inject these humorous songs to keep participants enliven or awaken if the programme is an all-night prayer meeting. Almost all the prayer leaders and song leaders interviewed during this study remarked that these songs were used to “ginger” the audience.

Ginger in this context implies liveliness and energy. For example in this call and response song:

Call	Response
My problem is a nylon bag	it’s a nylon bag x2ce
<i>Mo gbe dani, mo gbe ju sile</i>	it’s a nylon bag
<i>Ori buruku mo gbe ju sonu o</i>	it’s a nylon bag
<i>Ibanuje mo gbe ju sonu o</i>	it’s a nylon bag

#### Translation

My problem is a nylon bag	it’s a nylon bag x2ce
I carried and dump it	it’s a nylon bag
I dumped ill-luck and misfortune	it’s a nylon bag
I dumped sorrow and tears	it’s a nylon bag

In local parlance, the term ‘nylon bag’ refers to a polythene bag. In terms of its utility, the nylon bag can be used to pack items for storage and, more often than not, it is used to collect waste and dump it into the waste bin. The composer, and by extension, the users of the songs, perceived their problems, spiritual or social, as something to be packed into a nylon bag and dumped. Within a socio-environmental context, polythene bags are usually disposable no matter how long they may be used. Hence, the above song text underscores the fact that the composer sees his problem as something temporary, which will eventually be over. The song serves as an encouragement for participants at the Ede Prayer Mountain not to be bothered with their problem, which is just as a ‘nylon bag’, and it is good for nothing other than to be dumped. If participants at the prayer mountain see their problems as ‘nylon bags’, the question that comes to mind is, where will these nylon bags be dumped?

If it is true that people are inspired based on their social inclinations, we can then argue that the waste management and environmental health education of the composer and by extension the users of the song is limited. The foregoing corroborates existing studies on faith groups that the styles, emotions, languages, and actions involved in prayer are socially situated

and learned, ultimately helping us understand the wider norms and practises that shape the behaviour of praying groups and individuals.

### My problem is a nylon bag

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three systems of Call and Response.

**System 1:**  
 Call: My pro-blem is a ny-lon bag. My pro-blem is a ny-lon bag.  
 Response: is a ny-lon bag\_ is a

**System 2:**  
 Call: Mo gbe da-ni mo gbe ju so nu o-ri bu-ru-ku  
 Response: ny-lon bag\_ is a ny-lon bag\_

**System 3:**  
 Call: mo gbe ju so nu i-ba-nu-je mo gbe ju so nu  
 Response: is a ny-lon bag\_ is a ny-lon bag\_

### Musical example 24

Another song of humour:

*Èmi kó ni mo pá o*  
*Òtá mi ló para rẹ*  
*Ibi tó t́n rojó kiri*  
*L'Èmí-Mímó ti pá*

### Translation

I am not the one that killed her  
 My enemy killed herself  
 While discussing my matter here and there  
 That was when the Holy Spirit killed her

This song is very comical. In the worldview of participants on the prayer mountains, the enemy's major business is moving back and forth like the Satan in the Bible accusing the brethren. It is in this movement up and down that the enemy is been crushed by the Holy Spirit.

### 6.3 Musical analysis

This section analysed the structure of songs used in the selected prayer mountains based on tonality, style, form, scale pattern, melodic organization, melodic contours, melodic ranges, tempo and harmonic techniques.

#### 6.3.1 Tonality

Tonality is the principle of organizing a musical composition around a central note, which is known as the tonic. According to Randel (1999:674), tonality is “the organized relationships of tones with reference to a definite centre, the pitch classes, called a scale, of which the tonic is the principal tone...” In the songs collected on the prayer mountains, the tonality of the songs varies from one to another due to various factors such vocal range of the singer, gender and performance setting among others. For transcribing the songs into music notation, one or two keys were used to capture the sing-able range of the songs with the exception of songs that were transcribed from a recorded album.

#### 6.3.2 Style

Generally, style may be used to denote music characteristic of an individual composer, of a period, of a geographical area or centre, or of a society or social function. (Randel, 1999; Pascall, 2001). As observed in this study various musical styles were employed in the music used in the Prayer Mountains. These styles include indigenous Yoruba *wórò* and other popular styles such as highlife, juju, reggae and blues amongst others.

**6.3.2.1 *Wórò* style:** this style was conspicuously used during regular prayer sessions on the mountain while other popular styles are employed during special programmes, particularly by guest music ministers. The *wórò*, largely a Yoruba style, is essentially based on the rhythmic timeline pattern popular known as *kònkòlò*, a “term which was used by Anthony King” (Dada, 2017:103). This *wórò* style can be performed in a moderate, fast, or very fast tempo depending on the mood of the programme. For a better understanding of the *wórò* style, it will be pertinent to musically highlight the timeline pattern on which *wórò* style is anchored.



We shall now consider one or two songs in *wórò* style as follow:

**Ese, mori aanu gba**

♩.=120

E - se\_\_\_ mo ri aa - nu gba\_\_\_\_\_ mo - du - pe\_\_\_ mo ri aa - nu

4  
gba\_\_\_ ni - to - ri ki\_\_\_ se gbo - gboe - ni - yan lo - ri aa - nu gba\_\_\_\_\_

### Musical example 25

Another example of a song in *wórò* style is:

**Fire for Fire**

♩.=200

Fi-re for fi - re la ma\_ fi se\_\_\_ fi-re for fi - re la ma\_ fi se\_\_\_

5  
B'o gun a - ye mi gbe 'na\_ ka rin\_\_\_ o-gun o - run e

8  
si 'na\_ bo le\_\_\_ fi - re for fi - re la ma\_ fi se\_\_\_

### Musical example 26

**6.3.2.2 Popular styles:** These styles include highlife and pop-gospel.

**6.3.2.2.1** Highlife style is a type of Nigerian urban popular music with its origin from Ghana and still subsists in largely in West Africa. Several scholars have traced the origin, development, and emerging trajectories of highlife music (Collins, 1976; Vidal, 1977; Akpabot, 1986; Ogisi, 2005; Kehinde, 2010; Okoro & Amaegbe; 2014). In his definition of highlife, Vidal (1977:85) defines it as “an instrumentally oriented type of music.” Highlife has also been described as an amalgam of African traditional music with the influence of regimental bands and church hymns. Stylistically, the rhythm is very syncopating in nature while the use of the Western musical scale, harmony and musical instruments. Its rhythmic structure is a combination

of local and indigenous cross-rhythm and syncopation. An excerpt of a song in highlife style is given below:

**Irinse Esu**

♩ = 100

5 I - rin-se e - su\_ Ba-ba fi-na jo won run i rin-se o-ta o, Ba-ba fi-na jo

8 \_ da nu o-gun to\_nda mu\_ i-gbe-si a - ye\_ mi i- rin - se o-

11 kun-kun to-nf'o-jo o-ri<sup>3</sup> mi\_ so fo\_ da na si\_ won\_ Ba-ba fi na run

\_won jo won run\_ o ke mi le gbe gba o - pe\_\_\_\_\_

**Musical example 27**

**6.3.2.2.2 Pop-gospel**

Adedeji (2012) refer to this kind of style as gospel music forms that are a fusion of gospel and various Western pop forms. The use of Western popular gospel (pop-gospel) songs was observed in both prayer mountains. In this work, western pop-gospel songs are Christian songs which were composed, performed and recorded from the Western world, Europe and America notably, and were made popular in Nigeria through the mass media, specifically, electronic. Such songs include “Thanks” and “Blessed be the name of the Lord” by Don Moen, “Trading my sorrows” by Darrell Evans, to mention a few. An excerpt of “Trading my sorrows” is seen below:



## Trading my sorrows

I'm trad-in' my sor- rows I'm trad- ding my shame

I'm lay-in' them down for the joy of the Lord. Yes, Lord, yes, Lord,

Yes, yes, Lord. Yes, Lord, yes, Lord. Yes, yes, Lord

Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, Yes, yes, Lord, A - men

### Musical example 28

Other popular music-derived forms, which are hybrids of Church and popular music styles (Adedeji, 2012:214), were also used even though not too often in the prayer mountains. The hybridity of church and popular music styles can be explained in some ways.

First, the demography of worshippers provides for such a potpourri of church and popular music styles. Given that both young and old patronise the mountains, it is expected that there will be a cultural mix in terms of music styles. The older worshippers will naturally tend towards the use of hymns and some other indigenous tunes while the younger ones will prefer popular music styles. However, this bi-polar stance in Christian worship has resulted in what some scholars refer to as a “worship war” (Terri et al. 2010; Lester, 2017). This war has been described to ensue from musical preferences as well as worship styles among Christian worshippers. Lester (2017:3) remarked that “the most obvious front line of combat in the wars was music. Fighting occurred over instrumentation (guitar vs. organ was a common conflict), song repertoires (hymns vs. choruses), and even the role of song in corporate worship.” Since music reveals the social identity of a people, it became significant for worshippers to maintain the type of music that they think best represents their social identity. As earlier mentioned that young worshippers will opt for popular music forms that characterize their social taste and in a similar manner, the older worshipper will tend towards music that will highlight their social inclinations too. For example,

the researcher recall in one of the plenary sessions in Abiye Convention 2018 at Ede Prayer Mountain during the praise and worship time led by one of the worship leaders at Ede Prayer Mountain praise team. The introductory section of his praise worship song lists was slow RnB like popular Christian choruses, which were trendy on the electronic and social media. Such songs include “You are great” by Steve Crown, a song that was on the top 10 charts from its official release in 2015. Since the release of the video of this song, YouTube records that the music of the song has been viewed by over 45 million viewers.

Second, the ecumenical outlook of the mountains requires that participants be given varied representation, as musical styles are a concern. Participants at the mountains are drawn from various Christian denominations with diverse musical taste, which must be catered for by the music/worship teams on the mountain.

### **6.3.3 Form**

Generally, form in music is simply the design or shape into which musical materials are moulded. In addition, the term ‘form’ has been used in different ways to describe the music of various cultures. In African music, various musical forms have been identified by different scholars (Nketia, 1974; Akpabot, 1986; Agu, 1999, Vidal 2004). Akpabot and Vidal identified four types of musical forms in African music as 1. call and response antiphonal form with its variants, 2. Through-composed form, 3. Strophic or verse form, 4. Strophic responsorial form. Almost all the songs used in the prayer mountains particularly the indigenous-based songs employed almost all of the forms identified above.

**6.3.3.1 Call and response:** This is an antiphonal singing where a leader commences a song and it is been responded by a larger chorus. This type of form w very interactive in performance. In Prayer Mountains, this call and response form was mostly employed at the concluding part of a song. An example below:

**Ase Oba Olugbala**

♩ = 180

Call

A - se o, O-ba O-lu-gba-la A - se o, O-ba O-lu-gba-la

Response

5

Call

ti - re la\_\_\_ se o

Response

a - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la

7

Call

ti - re la\_\_\_ se o

Response

a - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la

**Musical example 29**

A variation of call and response, which is known as call and refrain, is also used below. As noted by Agu (1999), call and refrain differ slightly from call and response in that the refrain of the former is enlarged. That is it consists of short solo (call) and long response (refrain). See example below:

**Ina wonu mi lo**

♩ = 200 Furiously

Call

I - na wo\_\_\_ nu\_\_\_ mi lo\_\_\_

Response

I - na nla\_\_\_

6

Call

Response

wo nu\_\_\_ mi lo\_\_\_ i - na nla

**Musical example 30**

**6.3.3.2 Through composed:** This is a form of music in which the music for each stanza or section differs. As observed by Akpabot (1998), the thorough-composed melody starts with a short theme, which is expanded by means of improvisation by a solo singer or instrumentalist. Through composed melodies, tend to be longer and more elaborate than strophic melodies, with contrasting rhythmic changes. This vocal form is scarcely used in the songs used in Prayer Mountains excerpt for recorded songs. By recorded songs, it means songs that were recorded in a studio space with the purpose of distributing them through the aid of CDs and DVDs. Largely, the reason for the scarcity of through-composed songs on the prayer mountain was that song/prayer leaders find songs with short melodies, which can be easily remembered by participants very useful during prayers. Hence, through-composed songs may defeat this purpose. See the example below as recorded by the Praise Team of CAC Ori-oke Baba Abiye, Ede. One practice that we observed on the prayer mountains was that whenever a ‘prayer song’ is been sung, participants were seen to hurriedly write down the text of the songs in order not to forget. Whether or not the participants can remember the written song text is another thing entirely. Although with the help of recording facilities such as digital recording midget and mobile phones, participants could adequately capture and retrieve the songs at their convenience. See the example below as recorded by the Praise Team of CAC Ori-oke Baba Abiye, Ede:

**Se oti mura tan**

♩ = 100

So ti mu ra tan\_\_ o\_\_ a-ra mi\_\_ye so ti mu ra tan\_\_ la - ti si - se fun Je

5  
su So ti mu ra tan\_\_ o\_\_ a-ra mi\_\_ye so ti mu ra tan\_\_ la - ti si - se fun Je

9  
su ni gba to wo ni ta bi ni gba ti ko woo ni nu o-kun-kun ta - bi ni i-nu i-mo-le

13  
— ni gba gbo - gbo\_\_ t'O - lo - run\_\_ ba npe e

15  
o so ti mu ra tan\_\_ o la ti si - se fun Je - su.

**Musical example 31**

**6.3.3.3 Strophic or verse form:** This form is characterized by the repetition of the same melody for all the stanzas of the song with or without refrain. One of the ways by which prayer/song leaders used this form is by establishing a melody, which serves as the chorus and the same time as the first stanza and then creates the subsequent stanzas as an *extempore*. See an example below:

**Ibi Mo Gba Koja**

♩ = 140

I - bi mo gba ko ja\_\_\_t'o-gun fi wo nu a-ye mi Ba -ba la be ko

6  
ja\_\_\_m'o-gun ku \_ro ninu a-ye mi Ba -ba la be ko ja\_\_\_m'o-gun ku

11  
Stanza 1

ro ninu a-ye mi O-lu-wa mo fe-ru je -wo pe e-ni i - re a ma, su

16

21  
bu, i-yo\_ si le so a-dun re nu ko ma si ni-yin mo ti - ti\_ a - ye

k'o-ro mi ma se ri be o O-ba mi-mo so o-kan mi po mo ti re

25

to mi s'o-r'o- ke\_ lo un l'a-fo -ri-fo - ji i - fe\_ Re

**Musical example 32**

**6.3.4 Scale system**

The songs documented in this study employed different scales. Some of the songs were based on scales such as tetratonic (4 notes), pentatonic (5 notes), hexatonic (6 notes), and heptatonic (7 notes). As seen in Table 1, out of the total of thirty-five (35) songs analysed making 100%, only five songs (14.3%) were based on tetratonic scale, twelve songs (34.3%) on pentatonic scale, eleven songs (31.4%) on hexatonic, and seven songs (20%) on heptatonic scale.

SCALE	SONG NUMBERS	TOTAL NO. OF SONGS	PERCENTAGE %
Tetratonic	3, 11, 17, 31, 34	5	14.3
Pentatonic	1,5,9,10,14,.16,18,20,21,25,30,33	12	34.3
Hexatonic	2.4.6.7.8.19.23.26.27.28.29	11	31.4
Heptatonic	12,13,15,22,24,32,35	7	20
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 1: showing the scales used in the songs analysed (See appendices for song numbers)**

The extensive use of the pentatonic scale as seen in table 1 is significant in some ways. The researcher posits that the participants especially composers of the songs have been able to sustain one of the prominent features of African music and notably with pentatonic scale whether consciously or otherwise. The reason for the frequent use and retention of pentatonic scale pattern in many of the songs is not far-fetched. Notably, the composers of these songs must have lived in a cultural space where folksongs which largely employ pentatonic scales were sung hence influencing their choice of pentatonic in the composition. Furthermore, the conscious efforts to retain to tonal inflexions of the words used in the composed songs could have possible help in shaping the melodic contours of the songs and consequently producing pentatonic scales. The influence of the divine has been highlighted in the creative process of song compositions by composers of songs on the mountain however the cultural (physical) sound space of the individual composers is being reinforced by his/her spiritual (mental) sound space which is now lived in form of musical composition is another significant manner in which pentatonic scale is more frequently used in the songs on the prayer mountains.

### **6.3.5 Melodic organisation**

Generally, melody is defined as the succession of tones perceived as a coherent line. It is also referred to a 'tune'. Melodies have various features and dimensions which make them distinct from one other. These features include: length, movement, range and contour. Hence, this section will be discussed within the four identified framework. It is worthy to note that concept of a melody in African music is somewhat subjective given some cultural underpinning. It is an established knowledge that African melodies are tonal, short and fragmentary. In terms of length, African melodies are very short and repetitive. This position is hinged on the fact that repetition suggests emphasis thus making the communicated idea grounded. The Yoruba

worldview captures it: “gbomogbomo làán rófá àdìtì” meaning “Ifa corpus must be cited repeatedly to a deaf person”. Some of the songs, especially the indigenous-derived, used on prayer mountains with short and repetitive melodic phrases include:

**Ina wonu mi lo**

♩=200 Furiously

The musical score for 'Ina wonu mi lo' is written in 6/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of two systems of Call and Response. The first system has a 'Call' line with the lyrics 'I - na wo\_ nu\_ mi lo\_' and a 'Response' line with the lyrics 'I - na nla\_'. The second system has a 'Call' line with a rest and a 'Response' line with the lyrics 'wo nu\_ mi lo\_ i - na nla'. The tempo is marked as 'Furiously' with a quarter note equal to 200 beats.

**Musical example 33**

Another example is:

**Jesu maa bo wa**

♩=120

The musical score for 'Jesu maa bo wa' is written in 12/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as 120 beats per minute. The melody is a single line with the lyrics 'Je - su ma bo wa' written below it.

**Musical example 34**

It was observed during prayer sessions on both mountains, these short songs are performed repeatedly amidst ‘hot’ tempo characterised by handclapping, vigorous dancing and ecstatic gestures. Many of the songs were less than twelve bars in length, which makes the songs to be easily remembered by the participants as they return to home or teach their church members as the case may be. See Appendix II for more examples.

African melodies are tonal, that is they conform to the speech-tone pattern of the words so as to retain their intelligibility. As observed by Akpabot (1998:26), “African melodies are

either word word-born (logogenic) resulting in what is known as speech melody or emotion-born (pathogenic) where musicians compose their own melodies. An indepth examination of the songs collected during this work shows that considerable attention was given to the song text which significantly retain their original meaning. However, there are also instances where the tonal patterns of the words were obviously, though sparingly ignored. See an excerpt from “*Irin isé Èsù*” a song recorded by one of the musical groups on the prayer mountain:

**Irinse Esu**

♩ = 100

4 I - rin-se e - su\_ Ba-ba fi-na jo won run i- rin-se o - ta

8 o, Ba-ba fi-na jo\_\_da nu o-gun to\_\_nda mu i-gbe-si a-ye\_\_mi i- rin-se o

**Musical example 36**

The word ‘*irinse*’ in bars 1 and 3 would have complied tonally in the Yoruba language if sung as *irinsé* (mid-mid-high) as against the high low high used in the excerpt above.

**6.3.5.1 Melodic motion or contour**

Melodic shapes are determined by the movement of the notes. Melodies can be conjunct or disjunct. Conjunct simply describes a melody that moves in distinct steps or intervals, smoothly, and in a connected way. These steps are small, whole or half steps moving connectedly up or down the scale. On the other hand, a melody that rises and falls quickly, with large intervals between one note and the next, is a disjunct melody. In some instances, a melody may combine features of both conjunct and disjunct melody. As earlier observed, melodies in African societies are carefully constructed in order retain the pristine tonality of the text hence the tones used normally in speech are reflected in the contour of the melody. Several songs used on the prayer mountain are started in an upward direction. An example of a song that employed both conjunct and disjunct melodic structure is:



## Oba t'onile

O - ba to\_ n'i - le\_\_\_\_ wa\_ la i - le mi\_ ko ja      O - ba to\_ n'i

6  
le\_\_\_\_ wa\_ la i - le mi\_ ko ja      la i-le mi\_ ko ja\_\_\_\_ k'a-ye mi ko lo\_ ju

12  
o      la i - le mi\_ ko ja\_\_\_\_ k'a - ye mi ko ni\_ tun - mo

17  
O - ba to\_ n'i - le\_\_\_\_ wa\_ la i - le mi\_ ko ja

### Musical example 37

Note the skipwise movement in bars 1 and 2 and then the leap on in bars 7 and 8. It was also noticed that songs composed and performed by the gospel musicians have melodies with wide leaps.

### 6.3.6 Melodic ranges

The melodic range of the songs used in this work varies from one song to another. Many of the songs employed simple intervals and some songs used compound intervals. As observed in this study, the use of perfect 5ths, Major, and minor 6ths, minor 7ths, and Octaves intervals were significantly noticed in the analysed songs. However, the use of compound intervals was noticed, although very few.

RANGES	SONG NUMBERS	TOTAL NO. OF SONGS	PERCENTAGE %
Perfect 5 <sup>th</sup>	11,17,	2	5.7
Major 6 <sup>th</sup>	4,5,13,20,32,33,34,	7	20
minor 6 <sup>th</sup>	6,19,25,	3	8.5
minor 7 <sup>th</sup>	9,10,15,28,29,30,35	7	20
Perfect 8ve	3,8,16,21,22,23,24,26,27,31,	10	28.5
Compound 2 <sup>nd</sup>	1,2,12	3	8.5
Compound 3 <sup>rd</sup>	14,18,	2	5.7
Compound 4 <sup>th</sup>	7,	1	2.8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2: showing the melodic ranges of the songs**

### 6.3.7 Rhythmic organisation

One notable observation is the rhythmic pattern used in many of the songs used on the prayer mountain. This is due to the heavy use of the *wóró* style, which explores a duple and quadruple rhythmic pattern. The former is subdivided into 2s while the latter is into 4s. Using western musical parameter, these patterns will be referred to as compound duple and compound quadruple respectively. A critical examination of many of the songs revealed the incessant use of 12/8 time with short-long rhythmic fragments as shown in the examples below:

**Ajaga Babiloni wo**

♩.=160

A-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo \_\_\_\_\_ a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo \_\_\_\_\_

5  
a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo lu-le \_\_\_\_\_ a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo \_\_\_ lai lai \_\_\_

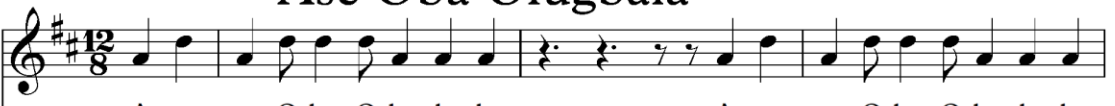
### Musical example 38

This rhythmic timeline is conspicuously reinforced during singing by the *agogo àdùrà* (church bell) which commonly found on all of the prayer mountains visited.

### 6.2.8 Harmonic pattern

Whilst singing was largely monophonic on prayer mountains, there were few occasions where harmonic singing was observed especially during special programmes where guest musicians were invited. This reason for the sparing use of harmony during the regular prayer programmes was that singers were mostly volunteers with little or no training in music. Hence, harmony during singing is purely based on volunteers' intuition and experience. On the prayer mountain, songs with incidental and improvised harmony which employed polarity and homophonic parallelism were commonly used. Nketia (1979:160-165) defined polarity as a duplication of melodies in octaves and that homophonic parallel harmony may be in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> intervals. An example of song which employed parallel homophonic is:


♩.=180 **Ase Oba Olugbala**

Call 


A - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la

Response 

5

Call 

ti - re la\_\_\_ se o


Response 

a - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la

7

Call 

ti - re la\_\_\_ se o


Response 


a - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la

**Musical example 39**

A song that employed polarity is:

# Eero kewu! kewu!

Call   
Ee -ro kewu kewu! kewu!,ee - ro \_\_\_\_\_ Ee -ro kewu! kewu!

Response 

Call <sup>3</sup>  
kewu, ee - ro, i - bon E - le - du - ma - re, ee - ro kewu! kewu!

Response   
re, ee - ro kewu! kewu!

Call <sup>5</sup>  
kewu,!ee -ro i bon E-le-du-ma - re, ee -ro kewu kewu kewu, ee -ro \_\_\_\_\_

Response   
kewu,!ee -ro re, ee -ro kewu! kewu! kewu, ee -ro \_\_\_\_\_

## Musical example 40

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 7.1 Summary

The entire body of this work has been discussed in seven chapters. In chapter one as the background to the study, it discussed the communicative role of music and prayers in religious worship and how they both engaged in sacred spaces. The notion of sacred spaces as in different world religion and culture were also discussed with particular reference to African societies. The study concluded that extant literature, although scarce, on prayer mountain have largely approached their discourses from the religious and sociological dimension. Given the incessant use of music especially songs during prayer activities on the prayer mountains, there is the need for an ethnomusicological investigation on the musical tradition in the prayer mountains. This is a pioneer work in documenting the musical tradition as practised on selected prayer mountains in southwestern Nigeria. In order to meet the set objectives of the study, research questions were designed to provide direction, also the scope of the study was limited to prayer mountains in Osun State, Nigeria.

Chapter two of this work discussed the theoretical framework to which the study was anchored. The study was hinged on two theories namely, Spatial Theory and Ethnomusicological Theory. It examined how a prayer mountain as a religious space can be physical, mental, and representational: while explaining the musical activities in prayer mountains using the ethnomusicological theory such categorisation of music typologies, musical instruments, textual interpretation as well as analysis of the music used on the selected prayer mountains. In addition, the chapter also discussed a range of related themes to the study through the review of relevant literature on the subject matter.

Chapter three highlighted the various methods for gathering data used in the study. It stated in details the systematic process employed during the research in order to achieve the set objectives.

Chapter four discussed the emergence of prayer mountains in Osun State, Nigeria. In addition, the chapter in presenting the historical account of the selected prayer mountains discussed the ethnography of the host communities. The administrative leadership structure, as well as programmes and activities on the prayer mountains, were also highlighted. It was

discovered during fieldwork that the mode of operations on the prayer mountains were largely determined and influenced by various factors including the educational background, ministerial exposure and training, musical interest and the divine call or mandate of the *Baba Orí-Òkè* (founder or presiding prophet) of each mountain. Furthermore, the chapter highlighted some socio-cultural and religious features of the Yorùbá on prayer mountains. Finally, the chapter examined the liturgy and mode of worship on the selected prayer mountains.

Chapter five was devoted to teasing out the musical typologies and the compositional styles used on the prayer mountains. It identified the use of European translated hymns, Western derived Christian pop-songs and indigenous lyric airs or choruses as types of music used on the prayer mountains with the latter being most frequently used. Although almost all the respondents claimed that music, specifically songs were divinely inspired, Yorùbá traditional folk tunes were largely employed in the composition of the songs. The musical instruments used on the prayer mountains were also identified and classified. The massive use of percussive instruments such as *àkùbà*, *agogo*, *sèkèrè* (gourd rattles) and conga drums were noticed. Finally, the process, scope and facilities for music-making and the involvement of musicians were also discussed. As earlier observed, the musical disposition of the founder or presiding prophet of the mountain as well as available human or materials resources such as musicians, musical instruments and funds among others, can also influence the scope of musical activities on the prayer mountains. In both prayer mountains, performances were mainly done by mainly volunteers except for mega events and special programmes where guest musicians both singers and instrumentalists were invited to perform.

In chapter six, the song texts were analysed and the musical structures was analysed. The study revealed that songs used on the prayer mountains can be broadly classified into two: prayer songs with themes on praise and thanksgiving, spiritual warfare, power of the Holy Spirit and divine blessings. The other class include as humorous songs popularly referred to as ‘ginger’ songs by the prayer and song leaders interviewed during the research. The ‘ginger’ songs were more or less satirical in content and were used to enliven the participants, especially when they were becoming physically exhausted during long hours of prayer sessions.

This seventh chapter summarises the discourse of the major findings and highlighted the focal points of the study following which relevant conclusions were made. It also suggests areas for further studies especially concerning contemporary developments in the music performed on prayer mountains owned by other African indigenous churches such as Celestial Church of Christ, Cherubim and Seraphim and Church of the Lord Aládùrà amongst others in Yorùbá land.

## **7.2 Contributions to knowledge**

This work attempted to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on prayer mountains in the following ways:

- i. It has contributed significantly to the existing knowledge on African spirituality among AICs in respect to their environment. The study identified some socio-cultural features of the Yoruba, which are still been observed and adhered to on the prayer mountains.
- ii. As a pioneer work in the field of Ethnomusicology, this study attempted to bring to the fore the musical activities on Ori-Oke especially in Osun State, Southwest Nigeria. The work documented the music typologies, categorized, and classified the musical instruments, musicians, as well as performance practice in the music used on the two prayer mountains. In addition, transcriptions, as well as structural analysis of songs used on the prayer mountains, were carried out. Musicologist and other music-related researchers will found these scores very useful in the teaching and analysis of Indigenous Yorùbá Sacred Music.
- iii. The study explored the significance of music in the religious and cultural expression of the Yorùbá Christians in Southwest Nigeria. The import of music in the perception and interaction of participants on the prayer mountain with their immediate environment was also highlighted.
- iv. The study also contributed to the discourse on the role of sacred spaces in enhancing or stifling the socio-economic development of their host communities. Technological innovation as one of the markers of social change in religion was also highlighted to aid the socialization of religion among the prayer mountains.

### 7.3 Conclusion

Arising from the findings and issues discussed in this study, certain conclusions can be made. First, music on prayer mountains in southwestern Nigeria is largely indigenised both in style and content. The overwhelming influence of the Yorùbá culture is evident in the frequent use of Yorùbá folk tunes in many of the songs used on the prayer mountains. It, therefore, implies that prayer mountain, in a way, is archival and assists in the preservation of Yorùbá folk tunes.

Secondly, prayer mountains are unique in their liturgy and mode of worship compared to the mainstream church settings as spontaneity characterises the process of music-making particularly songs in prayer mountains in Òsun State. It is evident, therefore, that the prayer mountains provide a brand of music, which can be labelled '*Orin Orí-Òkè*' (prayer mountain songs) hence making them production centres for the creation of new songs which were divinely inspired and serve as 'takeaway' for participants to their respective churches. This is a vital way of populating song repertory of Yorùbá lyric airs or choruses in the church.

Thirdly, this study attempts to establish that compositions of songs on prayer mountains largely, are a sort of manifestation and a convergence point for the Divine and the creative instinct of the human agency. Socio-cultural discourse is omnipresent in the themes of the songs. Given the spatial theory framework, participants at the prayer mountain conceive the physical space (an elevated space) where several activities take place as a site for spiritual combats as reflected in the contents and context of performance. This notion of spiritual warfare is seen in the tempi and the performance practice and greatly influenced by this ideology.

Finally, social changes have necessitated significant influence on music-making on the prayer mountains as presented in this study. The state-of-the-art musical facilities are being employed periodically on the prayer mountains. As much as music-making is largely based on volunteers, prayer mountains subscribe to the professionalisation of musicians although in varying degree, thereby enhancing creative job opportunities for musicians (vocalists, and instrumentalists). This disposition is traceable to the academic and social as well as the ministerial exposure of the founders/leaders of the mountains.



#### **7.4 Suggestions for further study**

Given the heterogeneous nature of the Yorùbá people and the proliferation of prayer mountains in Osun state Nigeria, future studies may be replicated in other prayer mountains in Òyó, Ògùn, Èkìtì, and Òndó States. Since this study was conducted on two historic prayer mountains, which are established and/or affiliated to Christ Apostolic Church in Osun State, Nigeria, further studies can engage in comparing the art of music-making in other prayer mountains like the C&S Church, Celestial Church of Christ and Church of the Lord Aladura.

Finally, the gender perspective and involvement in the musical activities, especially in gender restricted prayer mountains is worthy of further scholarly investigation.

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APPENDICES

TRANSCRIBED SONGS

1.

♩.=160

**Ajaga Babiloni wo**

A-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo\_\_\_\_\_ a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo\_\_\_\_\_

5

a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo lu-le\_\_\_\_\_ a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo\_\_\_ lai lai\_\_\_

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the first song, 'Ajaga Babiloni wo'. It is written in 12/8 time with a tempo of 160 beats per minute. The melody is on a single staff in treble clef. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first line of music has four measures, and the second line has four measures. The lyrics are: 'A-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo\_\_\_\_\_ a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo\_\_\_\_\_'. The second line of music has four measures, and the lyrics are: 'a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo lu-le\_\_\_\_\_ a-ja-ga Ba-bi-lo-ni wo\_\_\_ lai lai\_\_\_'. There are rests in the lyrics corresponding to the blank lines in the music.

2.

♩.=180

**Angeli ton pin re**

An - ge - li ton pin 're An - ge - li

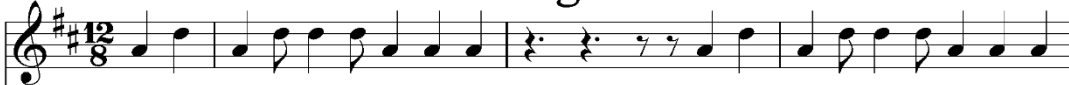
2

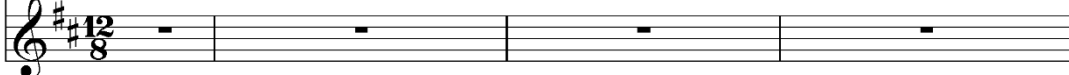
ton pin 're, e - mi ni 'ya - nu kan An - ge - li ton pin re

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the second song, 'Angeli ton pin re'. It is written in 12/8 time with a tempo of 180 beats per minute. The melody is on a single staff in treble clef. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first line of music has two measures, and the second line has four measures. The lyrics are: 'An - ge - li ton pin 're An - ge - li'. The second line of music has four measures, and the lyrics are: 'ton pin 're, e - mi ni 'ya - nu kan An - ge - li ton pin re'. There are rests in the lyrics corresponding to the blank lines in the music.

3


$\text{♩} = 180$  **Ase Oba Olugbala**

Call   
A - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la A - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la


Response 


5

Call   
ti - re la\_\_\_ se o

Response   
a - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la

7

Call   
ti - re la\_\_\_ se o

Response   
a - se o, O - ba O - lu - gba - la

4.

$\text{♩} = 170$  **Atiko adara fun mi**

  
A - ti - ko\_\_\_ p'a - da - ra fun mi\_\_\_ E - mi y'o ma\_\_\_

3

  
mi - len - gbe ni - nu o - go o\_\_\_

5.

### Emi ko ni mo pa

Emi ko ni mo pa o\_\_\_ O - ta mi lo pa ra re\_\_\_

3  
I - bi to tin ro jo ki ri l'E - mi Mi - mo ti pa\_\_\_

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the song 'Emi ko ni mo pa'. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 12/8. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words connected by lines to indicate long notes. There are two staves of music. The first staff ends with a double bar line. The second staff begins with a '3' above the first measure, indicating a triplet of eighth notes.

6.

### Emi mimo ja

$\text{♩} = 200$

E - mi Mi - mo ja\_\_\_ E - mi Mi - mo

2  
ja\_\_\_ i - de t'a - ye fi de mi o E - mi Mi - mo ja\_\_\_

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the song 'Emi mimo ja'. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 12/8. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 200. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes. There are two staves of music. The first staff ends with a double bar line. The second staff begins with a '2' above the first measure, indicating a pair of eighth notes.

7.

### Eni pe kin ma doke

E - ni pe kin ma do ke gbi-gbe ni yo gbe ku. E - ni pe kin ma do ke

4  
gbi-gbe ni yo gbe ku. A - se a - ko - ko\_\_\_ ni won lo fun\_\_\_ I - gi o - po - to\_\_\_

8  
gbe de le o\_\_\_ E - ni pe kin ma do ke gbi-gbe ni yio gbe ku

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the song 'Eni pe kin ma doke'. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 12/8. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The lyrics are written below the notes. There are three staves of music. The first staff ends with a double bar line. The second staff begins with a '4' above the first measure, indicating a group of four eighth notes. The third staff begins with an '8' above the first measure, indicating a group of eight eighth notes.



8.

## Ese, mori aanu gba

♩.=120

Musical score for 'Ese, mori aanu gba' in 12/8 time. The score consists of two staves. The first staff contains the first line of music with lyrics: E - se\_\_\_ mo ri aa - nu gba\_\_\_ mo - du - pe\_\_\_ mo ri aa - nu. The second staff contains the second line of music with lyrics: gba\_\_\_ ni - to - ri ki\_\_\_ se gbo - gboe - ni - yan lo - ri aa - nu gba\_\_\_.

9.

## Fire for Fire

♩.=200

Musical score for 'Fire for Fire' in 12/8 time. The score consists of three staves. The first staff contains the first line of music with lyrics: Fi-re for fi - re la ma\_\_ fi se\_\_\_ fi-re for fi - re la ma\_\_ fi se\_\_\_. The second staff contains the second line of music with lyrics: B'o gun a - ye mi gbe 'na\_\_ ka rin\_\_\_ o-gun o - run e. The third staff contains the third line of music with lyrics: si 'na\_\_ bo le\_\_\_ fi - re for fi - re la ma\_\_ fi se\_\_\_.

10.

### Gbogbo ide Baba ma ja

♩.=200

Call   
Gbo-gbo i - de\_\_\_ Ba-ba ma a ja\_\_\_

Response   
Gbo-gbo i - de\_\_\_ Ba-ba ma a

Voice   
Gbo - gbo i - de\_\_\_ Ba - ba ma\_\_\_ ja

Voice   
ja\_\_\_

Voice   
o

Voice   
Gbo - gbo i - de\_\_\_ Ba-ba ma a ja\_\_\_

11.

### Holy Ghost Fire

♩.=220 Furiously

Call   
Ho - ly Ghost! Ho - ly Ghost!

Response   
Fi - re! Fi - re!

12.

## Ibi Mo Gba Koja

♩ = 140

I - bi mo gba ko ja t'o-gun fi wo nu a-ye mi Ba-ba la be ko

6  
ja m'o-gun ku ro ninu a-ye mi Ba-ba la be ko ja m'o-gun ku

11  
Stanza 1  
ro ninu a-ye mi O-lu-wa mo fe-ru je -wo pe e-ni i - re a ma su

16  
bu, i-yo si le so a-dun re nu ko ma si ni-yin mo ti - ti a - ye

21  
k'o-ro mi ma se ri be o O-ba mi-mo so o-kan mi po mo ti re

25  
to mi s'o-r'o- ke lo un l'a-fo ri-fo - ji i - fe Re

13.

**Ina wonu mi lo**

*♩.=200 Furiously*

Call I - na wo\_\_ nu\_\_ mi lo\_\_

Response I - na nla\_\_

6

Call

Response wo nu\_\_ mi lo\_\_ i - na nla

14.

**Eero kewu! kewu!**

Call Ee -ro kewu kewu! kewu!,ee - ro\_\_\_\_\_ Ee -ro kewu! kewu!

Response

3

Call kewu, ee - ro, i - bon E - le - du - ma - re, ee - ro kewu! kewu!

Response re, ee - ro kewu! kewu!

5

Call kewu,lee -ro i bon E-le-du-ma-re, ee -ro kewu kewu kewu,ee -ro\_\_\_\_\_

Response kewu,lee -ro re, ee -ro kewu! kewu! kewu,ee -ro\_\_\_\_\_

15.

## Irinse Esu

♩ = 100

4 I - rin-se e - su\_ Ba-ba fi-na jo won run i- rin-se o - ta

o, Ba-ba fi-na jo\_\_da nu o-gun to\_\_nda mu i-gbe-si a-ye\_\_mi i- rin-se o

8

11 kun-kun to-nf'o-jo o-ri<sup>3</sup> mi\_\_ so fo\_\_ da na si\_\_ won\_ Ba-ba fi na run

\_\_won jo won run\_\_ o ke mi le gbe gba o - pe\_\_\_\_\_

16.

## Jeki majemu soro

♩ = 100

Je ki ma-je-mu so ro\_\_ lo ri mi je ki ma-je-mu so ro\_\_ lo ri

4 mi O - lo - run Sa - am - so - ni ba - ba

6 A-bi - ye l'E - de Je ki ma - je-mu so-ro\_\_ lo ri mi\_\_

17.

## Jesu maa bo wa

♩ = 120

Je - su ma bo wa\_\_\_\_\_

18.

### Jesu nbe koma sofo o

Je-su n - be ko ma\_ so-fo\_ o Je-su n - be ko ma\_ so-fo o. A-se-ti o

5  
si o e! a - se - ti o si fo - mo\_ 'lo - run\_

8  
o Je - su n - be ko ma\_ so - fo o

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the hymn 'Jesu nbe koma sofo o'. It is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody is on a single treble clef staff. The lyrics are: 'Je-su n - be ko ma\_ so-fo\_ o Je-su n - be ko ma\_ so-fo o. A-se-ti o'. The score is divided into three systems. The first system contains the first line of music and the first line of lyrics. The second system contains the second line of music and the second line of lyrics, starting with a measure rest. The third system contains the third line of music and the third line of lyrics, also starting with a measure rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

19.

### Lai lai mi o fe

lai lai lai mi o fe\_ lai lai lai mi o fe\_ o-gun

5  
a - ye\_ to te mi lo ri ba\_ lai lai lai mi o fe

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the hymn 'Lai lai mi o fe'. It is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The melody is on a single treble clef staff. The lyrics are: 'lai lai lai mi o fe\_ lai lai lai mi o fe\_ o-gun'. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains the first line of music and the first line of lyrics. The second system contains the second line of music and the second line of lyrics, starting with a measure rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

20.

### Mo kan sara si O

Mo kan sa ra si O\_ mo kan sa ra si o Ki - ni - un

3  
e - ya Ju - dah\_ Mo kan sa ra si O\_

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the hymn 'Mo kan sara si O'. It is written in 12/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is on a single treble clef staff. The lyrics are: 'Mo kan sa ra si O\_ mo kan sa ra si o Ki - ni - un'. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains the first line of music and the first line of lyrics. The second system contains the second line of music and the second line of lyrics, starting with a measure rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

21.

### Oba t'ola re

O - ba t'o-la re n mi len-gbe, len - gbe\_\_\_ O - ba t'o-la re n

7

mi ri - e, ri - e\_\_\_ gbo- gbo'e-ni - yan e - ba mi gb'O - lu-wa ga\_\_\_

22.

### Oba t'onile

O - ba to\_ n'i - le\_\_\_ wa\_ la i - le mi\_ ko ja O - ba to\_ n'i

6

le\_\_\_ wa\_ la i - le mi\_ ko ja la i-le mi\_ ko ja\_\_\_ k'a-ye mi ko lo\_ ju

12

o la i - le mi\_ ko ja\_\_\_ k'a - ye mi ko ni\_ tun - mo

17

O - ba to\_ n'i - le\_\_\_ wa\_ la i - le mi\_ ko ja

23.

### Olorun Baba Abiye

O - lo - run\_\_\_ Ba - ba A - bi - ye\_\_\_ O - lo - run\_\_\_ Ba - ba A - bi-

3

ye\_\_\_ ba mi se te mi\_\_\_ ko ju ma ti mi o\_\_\_

24.

## Olorun ipe yi

$\text{♩} = 100$

Call   
O - lo - run i - pe yi wa tu ma - je - mu

Response 

2

Call   
se

Response   
O - lo-run i-pe yi wa tun ma-je-mu se

25.

## Olowo nla

$\text{♩} = 200$

  
O - lo - wo nla o - lo - wo

4

  
nla, Ba - ba n'o - wo re o, o - lo - wo nla



26.

### Oluwa mo gbe o ga o

Musical score for 'Oluwa mo gbe o ga o' in 12/8 time, key of B-flat. The score consists of three staves of music with lyrics underneath. The first staff has a measure number '4' at the beginning. The lyrics are: O - lu - wa\_\_\_ mo gbe o ga o\_\_\_ O - lu - wa\_\_\_ mo gbe o ga. The second staff has a measure number '4' at the beginning. The lyrics are: o\_\_\_ a - won o - run ba - mi yin o o, pe o. The third staff has a measure number '6' at the beginning. The lyrics are: se\_\_\_ a-won o-run ba-mi yin o o pe o se\_\_\_.

27.

♩.=170

### Oluwa sanu mi o

Musical score for 'Oluwa sanu mi o' in 12/8 time, key of D major. The score consists of two staves of music with lyrics underneath. The first staff has a measure number '4' at the beginning. The lyrics are: O - lu - wa\_\_\_ sa\_\_ nu mi o\_\_\_ O - lu - wa\_\_\_ sa\_\_ nu mi. The second staff has a measure number '4' at the beginning. The lyrics are: o\_\_\_ je - ki gbo - gbo e - ni - yan ba - mi gbe 'gba o - pe\_\_\_.

28.

### Orun si, iwo orun si

Musical score for 'Orun si, iwo orun si' in 12/8 time, key of D major. The score consists of two staves of music with lyrics underneath. The first staff has a measure number '3' at the beginning. The lyrics are: O - run si\_\_\_ i - wo o - run si o,\_\_\_ o - run. The second staff has a measure number '3' at the beginning. The lyrics are: si\_\_\_ i - wo o - run si fun mi\_\_\_.

29.

### ♩.=180 Otise o, kotun gberi mo

O - ti - se o\_\_\_ ko-tun gbe-ri mo\_\_\_ o - ti - se o\_\_\_ ko-tun gbe-ri

4  
mo\_\_\_ o - gun t'a - ye fin - pe mi lo - ru - ko, o - ti - se\_\_\_

30.

### Sunmi Siwaju

Sun - mi si-wa - ju ma\_ jen de-roe'-yin Sun - mi si-wa - ju

7  
ma\_ jen de-roe' yin O-lo-run o - ri o - ke yi o, sun\_ mi si-wa-ju

31.

### Tiyin tiyin mo wa s'odo re

Ti - yin ti - yin\_\_\_ ti - yin ti - yin\_\_\_

3  
ti - yin ti - yin mo wa s'o - do re, O - lo - run O - ba

32.

### Trading my sorrows

I'm trad-in' my sor-rows I'm trad- ding my shame

5 I'm lay-in' them down for the joy of the Lord. Yes, Lord, yes, Lord,

10 Yes, yes, Lord. Yes, Lord, yes, Lord. Yes, yes, Lord

13 Yes, Lord, yes, Lord, Yes, yes, Lord, A - men

33.

### Wiwo loye k'araba yi o wo

Wi-wo lo ye k'a - ra-ba yi o wo wi-wo lo ye k'a - ra-ba yi o

7 wo t'e-we nba - yo a - ra - ba yi o gba

12 wi - wo lo ye k'a - ra - ba yi o wo

34.

### Wole wa, Emi Olorun

♩. = 180

Wo - le wa wo - le wa o E - mi O - lo- run wo - le wa o

35.

## Yio s'agolo de Port-Har

Yio s'a - go - lo de Port- Har \_\_\_\_\_ yio s'a - go - lo - de Port-Har

3  
o \_\_\_\_\_ e - ni ba bi - nu mi \_\_\_\_\_ yio

6  
s'a - go - lo de Port - Har \_\_\_\_\_