Metaphoric Representations of Spirituality in Ebenezer Obey's Music

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Abstract

This paper investigates the synergy that exists between metaphor and spirituality within the Yoruba cosmology as exemplified in the music of Ebenezer Obey. The study underscores the authenticating role metaphor plays in the concretisation of Yoruba beliefs in the existence of a supernatural world. The existing variations of independent studies on both concepts attest to the rich cognitive influence both ideologies evoke within the academia. However, most of the extant studies carried out on these concepts have mainly honed their distinctive strengths. The corpus of research on metaphor relates its relevance mainly to the academic sphere where it acts as diagnostic tool for the analysis of literary terms and by extension to specified human experiences and restricts its versatile application to the significant influence metaphor has on spirituality, thus, de-emphasising the strengthening potency the connection between both ideologies can have on the social and economic lives of people. This notion of irreconcilable difference has resulted in undermining the veritable possibility of an alignment between metaphor and spirituality. This is against the backdrop of paucity of scholarship on this creative hybridisation. This study, therefore, foregrounds the essence of this metaphorical appropriation on the Yoruba ability to re-interpret their disillusioned post-independence realities. Conceptual metaphor theory is deployed as a tool by which underlying metaphor of spirituality is pointed out in the selected music texts of Ebenezer Obey.

Keywords: Metaphor, Spirituality, Post-independence realities, Conceptual metaphor theory, Ebenezer Obey, Music

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Introduction: Conceptualisation of Everyday Realities through Metaphor

Quotidian struggles and issues humans encounter make it vital for them to understand instructions that are salient to their survival and well-being. Intuitively, they adopt the skill of comparison to aid their understanding of varied matters; this leads to a ceaseless need for the application of meaningful analogy to humans' actual situations. This is a natural thing because people do not live in isolation; the lives of people in society interpenetrate and an individual defines himself/herself by the mutual inter-influence of his/her life and those of the people he/she has around him/her (Remmy Oriaku, 2010:146). However, to achieve significance over their environments, people are required to be able to discern correlative tropes in the circumstances of others that are applicable to their own existence. At this point, an in-depth knowledge of metaphor is an essential ingredient so that the experiences an individual maps into his/her reality can yield corresponding results.

By way of definition, metaphor is derived from the Greek root *metapherein,* meaning 'beyond' (meta) and 'carry' (*pherein*), which ordinarily means "to carry beyond the ordinary level". Joanna Thornborrow and Shan Wareing (1998:78-79) describe metaphor as a process of transporting a concept from one conceptual domain where it is usually located to another conceptual domain where it is usually found, creating correspondences in the world which did not exist before and allowing new meaning to occur. Though this definition seems general, it helps to widen the scope of metaphor, expanding its function beyond the discursive role it plays in poetry. Solomon Olaniyan (2019:71) also views metaphor as "an explicit transfer of the quality of an object to another." The referential/connecting diversity and transference of concrete qualities of the two terms have been noted by critics like Paul Ricouer (1975), Michael Reddy (1979), Moran Richard (1989), George Lakkoff (2002) and Zoltan Koveces (2010).

By implication, contemporary metaphor theorists have moved the essence of metaphor out of the linguistic circle into the wider field of life. Raymond Gibbs (2008:19) submits that "most recent theory of metaphor continues to assert the relationship between the human flow of thought and the referential nature of metaphor, its notion has taken a radical turn from being a decorative aspect of language into a fundamental scheme by which people conceive the world and their own activities". The cross-sectional mapping metaphor offers connects wisdom from the general domain to the target domain or from target domain to the general domain. Hence, it acts mainly as a mechanism with which we link or infer distant abstract solution into our concrete physical existence. According to Lakkoff (2002:4-5), metaphorical mapping demonstrates how conceptual metaphor works, using the illustration of Love as a Journey:

THE-LOVE-AS-JOURNEY MAPPING
- The lovers correspond to travelers.
- The love relationship corresponds to the vehicle.

- The lovers' common goals correspond to their common destination on the journey.
- Difficulties in the relationship correspond to impediments to travel.

Essentially, this illustration foregrounds the recent stipulation about the nature of metaphor as being a capable inlet through which personal experiences can be construed. However, in spite of the vital links metaphor represents, its "effect can only manifest on experiences that have formally been stored by the human mind because connections can only be made on stored ideologies" (Lakkoff, 2002: 39). Basically, since metaphor thrives on stored knowledge which is gathered within the definite space of culture, the cultural space provides an indispensable atmospheric condition which propels the possible formation of metaphorical experiences. The scientist declaration of the human mind as being *a tabula rasa* (blank space) at birth further affirms the inestimable role culture plays in moulding the minds of all humans. Expounding man's total immensity in culture, Ajayi Ademola (2005:1) states that culture represents "an all-embracing and heterogeneous concept that encompasses every aspect of man's life and experiences…it finds expression in his religion, language, philosophy, music, dance…." The variation of knowledge people have about their culture determines the depth of their understanding of conceptual metaphors. This creates variable differences in accounting for the vastness of metaphoric application to every day issues of human lives. These peculiarities in the formation of cultures make it erroneous to holistically cross-map essential experiences from one distinct culture into another. This misapplication of metaphor usually creates chaos, conflicts and disillusionments which result from the mapper's attempt to interpret foreign concepts using his/her indigenous knowledge. Perhaps, this reason accounts for the self-identity crisis African immigrants experience abroad. Mark Kipkoech, Goro Nicholas and Mutie Stephen (2022:352) lend credence to this observation when they conclude that:

> Identity formation as a theme has drastically shaped how characters emerge as hyphenates oscillating in the in-between cultural space as they locate their identities. The desire to move out of their initial locations in the novels under study revealed that cultural hybridity plays a role in their displacement.

Overtly, the contribution of culture towards shaping the civilisation of humanity cannot be overemphasised since it serves as a yardstick to measuring how humans' value will be construed. Hence, the distinction of culture shapes how effectually imagination of one's societal metaphor could infer desired knowledge that helps organise one's reality. Kovecses' (2010:1) analogy of social organisation as plant is a valid example of conventional metaphors used on a daily basis by members of a particular society.

Review of Related Literature
Raymond Gibbs, Paula Lenza, Costa Lima, and Edson Franscozo (2004) devote the main portion of their paper – "Metaphor is Grounded in Embodied Experience" – to investigate how metaphor exceeds human know-how and best reveals transcendental facts, which are corroborated with considerable evidence from cognitive science that depicts how metaphor is mainly anchored in embodiment. They argue that the poetical advantage and the verbal expressiveness of the metaphorical partly emanates from its origin in people's ordinary, felt sensations of their bodies in action. Their analysis reveals systemic relationship between linguistic and conceptual structures. This, according to them, makes it possible to create a strategic synergy that maps one domain of thoughts to another despite their obvious irreconcilable difference on a surface value. They cite instances of such recurring patterns of embodiments within three distinct segments; **metaphorical thought and language,** i**mage schemas and metaphorical meaning**, **and desire is hunger.** The first section explains how conventional expressions enduring conceptual mapping foreground the systemic patterns of metaphorical mapping using Lakkoff and Johnson's (1980) statement of LOVE AS A JOURNEY as a case in view. The image schemas and metaphorical meaning dwell on the connection between image sensory and the production of conceptual metaphors. They assert that image sensory plays a significant role which allows the formation of abstract metaphorical concepts. Amidst the various instance cited in their work, the explication of the connection between desire and hunger reinstates the possible mapping that exists between both abstract entities to describe human felt sensory that can exert physical pressure on the person to take concrete actions. Gibbs et al. (2004) conclude that, the body gives rise to metaphor that revitalises language couched in embodied expressions. Their study agrees with the present research that conceptual metaphors activate reality through mapping of experiences from one conceptual domain to another, birthing relatively new experiences. However, it differs from the present study in that, it does not consider the impact of man's beliefs on his preference for mapping abstract ideologies into his physical realities in order to make it more appealing for him to live within such sometimes unpalatable realities.

Oluremi (2013) investigates "Conflict-Construing Metaphors in Nigeria Football Discourse". The analysis reveals correspondences between metaphor and human thoughts especially as it relates to the discourse of football match. The research discovers that two domains are actively used in the analyses of football matches, the conceptual domains and the target domains. These two spheres are interdependent on each other. Although the first realm stores preceding experiences of people in the episodic memory, the stored knowledge can only be recognised in a more comprehensible light, if these formerly kept experiences are pulled up from their "episodic" sphere to describe accurately newly acquired knowledge, in this case of a more different category. The concept of metaphor to be used can be drawn from any previous domain and must bear similarities with the target domain. Hence, football journalists, in their

appraisal of football matches, oftentimes apply their knowledge of the determinedness to win or perish in war to describe the intensity of soccer matches being described, *"FOOTBALL IS WAR"*. Thus, Oluremi infers from this that the human cognitive nature is metaphoric, which implicitly means that, metaphor is not only a superficial, rhetorical instrument but is firmly linked to man's thought patterns and comprehension.

Therefore, the mapping of war tropes to the description of players' determinations to succeed at all cost is an example of the many "martial" metaphoric tropes sports journalists often use to analyse soccer games. Through the activation of their mental model, journalists create vivid expressions in the hearts of football fans that enliven competitiveness for the support of their teams. The use of these intense metaphors transposes football game from the realm of fun to that of work as activities done are targeted towards achieving victory. He concludes that the manifestations of conflict metaphors in soccer discourse are successfully applied because both episodic information and the cognitive memory are actively deployed. The research agrees with this recent study that metaphor as an applicable tool is prone towards interpreting cryptic life nuances than surficial clarification of words. The study appears different from this one because it restricts metaphoric interpretations of meaning only to cognitive realm. The essence of spirituality being practised in Nigerian society can mostly be interrogated through metaphors and semantic understanding of some symbols associated with spiritual nuances.

Agbo, Kadiri and Ijem (2018) apprise "Critical Metaphor Analysis of Political Discourse in Nigeria". Their interpretive evaluation of principles and conceptual metaphors in speeches reveals a consistent infusion of metaphors in the linguistic repertoire of politicians when addressing intending voters. The application of metaphor to speech presentations boosts argumentations and as a result promotes self-ideologies which reinforce power unevenness. Their investigation of these linguistic speech patterns identifies different criteria through which metaphor is used to manipulate political audience but discusses three different criteria – linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic criteria. Politicians' ideation of the battle against corruption as **war** might elicit exciting responses from an audience who has suffered backlashes from past corrupt administration. Hence, they give their support for a change and their description of the incumbent administration as a journey sometimes creates in their listeners the illusion of their dedication to travel the course of change, hence, garnering their support. Also, their use of metaphor which conceptualises the nation as a person might arouse the emotional needs of the audience to get justice which might make them perceive the politician in the light of a saviour. Significantly, Agbo et al. (2018) discover that metaphors are mostly used in political speeches to manipulate listening audience both mentally and conceptually, and polarise them and contesting opponents. Their study brings an interesting angle to the appreciation of the ideology of metaphor. Perhaps, it is our deficit in the understanding of the varied outcome the use of metaphor creates which

makes the African continent, especially Nigeria repeatedly fall victim of bad leadership. Their conclusion sums up the fact that the use of metaphor is immanent in Nigerian political discourse.

Samuel Olaoluwa and Emmanuel Adekola (2018) adopt the quantitative research method to probe introspective nuances in Agidigbo and find out that the music grifted into its composition some Yoruba values that can be used to educate the general public, especially children of Yoruba descent. Its abundant reliance on proverbs, aphorism and parables necessitates the use of figures of speech, with specific reference made to euphemism and metaphor as the mostly employed device to expiate the moral undertone of the music. Euphemism, according to the writers, helps the composers of Agidigbo to avoid vulgarity in their musical expression. This is in conformity with the Yoruba culture of moderation, particularly in usage of words. Euphemism is then used in this research to establish the Yoruba values in moderation, hard work, self-effacement and the need to maintain a filial relationship with friends and families. To become an *Omoluabi,* which in Yoruba culture describes a noble person, one must be conversant with the values embedded in Agidigbo music. Although the study mentions instances in one or two places, its investigation of metaphor is somewhat generic. However, the need to develop the traits of an *Omoluabi* as discussed in the paper reinstates the present study's discourse on the need for members of the Yoruba society to strive to be responsible members who uphold the moral and cultural standards of society. It differs from the present study in that it does not connect the benefits of exhibiting these traits of Omoluabi to the Yoruba belief of attaining rest in the hereafter, an area which this study covers. Besides, Olaoluwa and Adekola (2018) conclude that most of the desired values exhibited by an *Omoluabi* is replete in Agidigbo music and as such, the music should be introduced to Nigerian education system to instil morals and cultural values into the upcoming generation. The present paper goes beyond the identification of metaphor as conversational or discoursal tool in related academic discourse but asseverates the viability of metaphor in inferring abstract spirituality to their physical reality to ensure they sojourn successfully on earth.

Methodology
This research is library-based. It employs analytical approach in the examination of the selected music tracks of Ebenezer Obey, which are "Eko ila", "Eda to mo 'se okunkun, "Immortal songs for travellers", "Adventure of Mr. Wise", "Immortality" and "Ara n ba da owo o je". These tracks are sourced through direct listening and analysis of each lyrical content. As such, an in-depth reading and study of both primary and secondary materials are done. These materials are used as resources for the critical evaluation of the subject of this research. This paper is a worthy contribution to the field of metaphor and orature and also aspires to be one of the few of the pioneer African studies which expiate the symbiotic relationship that exists between metaphor and spirituality.

Data

This study focuses on the randomly selected lyrics of Obey's music. The data are songs obtained from audio compact disks and the internet from where they were loaded for general use. The songs were played and transcribed. The transcribed songs were translated to English to be able to serve the purpose of the study and for readability of non-Yoruba scholars and speakers.

Theoretical Framework

Considering its emphasis on metaphor, the study adopts George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's (1980) Conceptual Metaphor theory as its framework. The idea of metaphor within the domain of cognitive linguistics goes beyond the concept of metaphor as a stylistic device. It is an experiential and cognitive process, in which we use properties, relations, and entities that characterise one domain of experience and/or knowledge (source domain) to understand, think, plan, and talk about a second domain (target domain) that is different in kind from the first (Lakoff, 1993; Alexandra Jandausch, 2012). According to the proponents of conceptual metaphor, source domains emanate from daily bodily awareness and movement. The two domains often talked about in conceptual metaphor are the source domains (SD), which are required to make sense of the second domain, target domains (TD). The ability to comprehend the interaction of these domains is required to unravel how meaning is derived and represented in conceptual metaphor.

It is stated that music and language are two cognitive systems that are uniquely human. Conceptual metaphor is deployed in engagement on music. For instance, if people perceive a piece of music, they will have to quickly process the incoming auditory input and integrate it into mentally manipulable units or mental representations that can be further processed (Jandausch, 2012). In discussing Obey's metaphoric representations of spirituality, therefore, Conceptual Metaphor theory is deployed.

Music and Its Relevance to Man

Music plays an essential role within the Yoruba society. It serves as a suitable avenue through which cultural ethics are ingrained into people's lives. Its purposes are too numerous to mention. One of its main functions within tradition, however, is to create the right ambience for initiations of dialogue between the natural and the superordinate worlds. To this effect, song renditions, dance and lyrical chants precede procession of rites, rituals, initiations and all other divine activities make "music and dance intrinsically tied to everyday life" (Sola Olorunyomi, 2005:4).

Furthermore, writing on "Forms and Structure of Early Indigenous Yoruba Church Hymns", Tolulope Olusola Owoaje (2020) states the preponderant use of music in Yoruba traditional religious culture and Christianity. For instance, he historicises that early missionaries effectively

deployed the use of music to promote their evangelistic mission among the Yoruba. In the same vein, in traditional religious worship and festivals, music is used.

The style of the African indigenous music experienced diverse alteration as a result of its contact with western civilisation. For example, Fela Anikulapo adopts the highlife version to pass his message across; King Sunny Ade plays acoustic guitar to reinforce traditionally scripted tunes while he electrifies the audience with fizzy pop dance style; Ebenezer Obey also plays western guitar to reinforce the essence of his lyrics. Shina Peter's fusion of Afro-juju is a cross-breed of both the western Afro-beat and the Yoruba oral-induced juju music. These western infiltrations create different diversities to African music, which makes it difficult or altogether impossible to find unadulterated renditions. However, Obey's prudent borrowing from western style into his tradition and the vast knowledge of his indigenous tradition give his lyrical renditions trans-generational relevance which most Nigerians refer to as "evergreen".

Ebenezer Obey and His Inter-Reformer Band
A foremost Nigerian Juju musician, Ebenezer Remilekun Aremu Olasupo began his musical career in the mid 1950's under the tutelage of Fatai Rolling Dollar's band but was soon able to raise some money to start off his own musical band called the "The International Brothers Band" in 1964; the band later transposed to "Inter-reformers Band" in the early 1970s under the West African label. The band's transposition of name to "Inter-reformers" was to reflect the didactic reformative tones with which moral, spiritual and social messages would be relayed. Soon his moral philosophies and style made a lot of impact on Lagosians and Nigerians as a whole that Obey took over Fela's highlife spot in Lagos and re-christened it Miliki Spot (enjoyment). The continuous relevance his expressed philosophies bear made his brand of Juju widely accepted and still in-tune with time (Ogisi, 2010).

The Metaphoric Stance of Yorubaism in Ebenezer Obey's Music
The Yoruba people, like most African ethic groups, are overtly religious. Their outlook to life takes on a religious stance in all aspects. Virtually all aspects of lives, including cultures, social endeavours and philosophies, have religious undertones. This explains not only their belief in the existence of two different worlds – the visible and the invisible – but also their constant back and forth movement between these two worlds. To them, activities which occur in one world incite the physical occurrence in the other. This accounts for the consistent reiteration of their belief system, specifically through their philosophy which is explainable through the wisdom of the cause and essence of things. Therefore, in order to understand the outcome of things in the physical realm, the Yoruba consistently relate the events in one to the other in a bid to get a panoramic view of happenings around them. It is during this interspersion of the two realms that the transferring effect, most prevalent in metaphor, becomes a vital connecting tool by which the multilayered outlook of their world can be understood. Adversely, the interpretation of this multi-layered philosophical outlook becomes a major task for all adept practitioners of

culture, who have the cumbersome role of narrating spiritual abstractness into obvious physical realities. Thus, with the aim of clarifying the ambiguity tied to most Yoruba metaphysical assumptions, scholars have resorted to explicating abstract spiritual concepts through the double associative stance of metaphor, which in turn enables them to explain deep-seated spiritual beliefs of the people by drawing inferences to everyday physical concepts. Obey's lyrical construction replicates the metaphoric associative stance in the Yoruba world view. Crouched in metaphoric referential parallelism, Obey in *Eko ila* starts thus:

> Eko ila o gbara re lowo obe
> (Hardened okra delivers itself from the ruthlessness of the knife)
> Werepe gba re gba igi oko
> (Nettle via its itchiness rescues itself from the trees of the forest)

The metaphoric reference of mature okra and the itchiness of nettle with which Obey starts this particular lyric prepares listeners for the envisaged victory he assures those whose trust is anchored on Olodumare, that they will find themselves too difficult for enemies to handle because they will possess the stinging nature of nettle which is sure to facilitate their deliverance from the enemies. The mental picture of victory this metaphorisation gives to the Yoruba helps them to concretise the protective nature of the invisible and invincible Creator in whom their trust is fixed. This further strengthens their faith and devotion to Olodumare, irrespective of His invisible presence. Supporting the correlation that exists between the encompassing personality of the Creator and that of the stinging nettle, the Yoruba people believe that in the same way Olodumare cannot be captured from a definite angle:

> Werepe o ni bikan a n gbamu, gbogbo ara nitiyunni
> (Nettle does not have a definite handle; when it strikes, the effect is felt all over the body.)

Since the feature of the stinging nettle is made analogous to explain the universal influence of God within the entire universe, it becomes easy for the Yoruba to totally depend on Olodumare's supremacy; knowing that just as the nettle, He possesses the ability to frustrate all evil-doers who wish to destroy their destinies. So these people at this point hand over all their concerns to Olodumare.

Corroborating this fact, Obey further extends:

Eda o le wa laye laini ota	Humans cannot dwell on earth without having enemy
Eniyan o le walaye la lai n iota	Mortal beings cannot live on earth without having enemy
Amo to ba je nipa temini, motiforo mi l'Oluwa lowo.	But as for me, I have handed my matters over to the Lord

Hence, to understand and correctly apply spiritual symbolic concepts into his physical realities, Obey takes two metaphoric steps. First, he draws similarity between spiritual concepts and his physical need for protection by equating the symbolic message with a concrete object he can easily associate with. Consequently, he moves a step further to transfer the beliefs into his own reality, moving it beyond the spiritual realm into the corporeal world where the effect of such abstract spiritual notion becomes concrete: "mo fi oro mi l'Oluwa lowo". This link established between the two realms yields an eventual result of stability for the Yoruba people, a fact to which Kola Abimbola (2005:26) readily testifies:

> Well-balanced people, it is believed, are able to make positive use of the simplest form of connection between their Oris (head the maker) and the omnipotent Olu-Orun to which an adura (petition or prayer) for divine support is made.

In other words, petition or prayer serves as a metaphoric avenue through which stability is imported from the spiritual realm into the physical situation of man.

Furthermore, Obey's ability to interpret spiritual philosophical assumption via conceptual metaphor clarifies the absurdity earlier associated with the act of living in two different worlds at the same time. He expounds the providence such synergy births. He espouses in his collection titled *Eda to Mo se Okunkun* thus:

Edumare lo n pese atije eda.	It is the creator that provides food for all humans.
Edumare lo n pese atije.	It is the creator that provides sustenance.
Igbin o lowo, aro o l' ese.	The snail is without hands, the cripple is also without legs.
Edumare lo n pese atije.	It is the creator that provides sustenance.

The message in this track commences with the affirmation of man's helplessness without the intervention of God. Humans, according to the Yoruba tradition, are believed to be incapable of providing their own needs without the help of the Creator. In other words, humans can perform no feat by themselves unless God assists them. To add effect to this notion, Obey deploys the visual imagery of the snail which reinstates his argument of humans' incapacity to sustain themselves without Olodumare's intervention. This analogy creates a mental picture in the mind of the listener; thus, making it easy to connect provision to the non-physical realm where Olodumare (Creator) is believed to be the human Providence. Supportively, the Yoruba believe that *"Ise ko lowo"*- hard work is not coterminous to wealth. Rather, it is the combination of diligence and faith in the Creator that ensures success and abundance of wealth in all human endeavours. In connection to this, Obey warns:

Bi o si temi, ore o ni le je.	Without me, my friend will not eat.
Bi o sitemi ore, ore o ni le mu.	Without me, my friend will not drink.
E jowo e ma so be mo.	Please, stop such talks.
Oba Oluwa l'alewilese	Only the Supreme King can say and perform great deeds.

Essentially, Obey's warning is to sensitise humans, especially the people in his own cultural milieu, about their limitations. He admonishes them to work hard but they should also take cognisance of God's ultimate support without which they cannot make any headway in life. The fact that Obey could covet help from the spiritual realm where he has never been is strongly dependent on the use of his visual metaphor:

Eni Olorun yan lo le k'aye je.	It is the person chosen by God that can succeed in this world.
Nitori re mo se ro m'o O.	And that is why I cling strongly to You.
Agbokanle mi ma je ko d'ofo o	Don't let my expectation be cut short.
Baba, mogb' okan le o.	Father, I depend on you.

Using this visual metaphor in the above extract, Obey pictures God as an earthly father, who possesses physical qualities that can be felt and held - *"Nitori re mo se ro mo O"* (And that is why I cling strongly to you). To be able to cling to someone or something, the entity must have visible solid form that one can rely on. In this instance, it is only through visual association that he can connect with God. Dasylva and Jegede (2005) assert the popularity of the use of such visual metaphor. They reinforce that in Yoruba praise worship of the supreme deity referred to as *Olorun* (Owner of heaven) or Olodumare (Creator of the Ifa corpus). It is common to refer to God as:

Eletii gbaroye	He whose ears are meant to receive complaints.
Eletii gborogodo	He whose ears are extremely large.
Olowo gbogborogbo	He who possesses extremely long hands.
Ogbagba ti ngba ara adugbo	The Saviour who protects our neighbours.

- (Dasylva and Jegede (2005:3)

Interestingly, the supposed description of the relationship that exists between God and humans, according to the Yoruba myth, is made explicit through visual metaphor employed to create parallel uniting both worlds. Richard Moran (1989:4) notes that visual metaphor has the ability to clarify concepts:

> …among the tropes, it is metaphor that is continually and insistently thought of as providing a kind of picture, such as verbal icon, or a physiognomy of discourse. The reason for this is anything but clear, for the association persists long after the images have lost the place they once had in accounting for the rest of language and thought.

The lead musician's metaphoric analogy which is drawn from the corporeal world to explain hidden spiritual nature of God falls within the category of what Marion Guck (1981:509) refers to as an experience explicated through an "embryonic structural interpretation" since it elucidates spiritual remoteness via physical openness. This multi-layered analogy exercise practised by people makes their view of the physical world an intertextual symbolic one, where activities intermingle. Ultimately, the reason the Yoruba habitually reaffirm spiritual beliefs into their physical existence is tied to their aspiration to reconcile with Olodumare (Creator) in *Orun* (heaven) which is the home of all earthly pilgrims. *Aye* (earth) then represents a temporary abode and one's behaviour and efforts to fellowship with Olodumare while on earth despite all the distractions it is filled with determine whether man's reconciliation will be possible. Hence, Awoniyi (1975) opines that any humans aspiring to return to the Creator in the hereafter must be described by their fellow humans as *Omoluabi* (a responsible being) who must exhibit good traits and live at peace with all humans, especially those who are their neighbours and are also thought to live in cognisance of the vital role they have on their immediate environment. In order to succeed in this journey, Obey imagines himself as a sojourner. Therefore, he is able to attribute the temporariness of journey into his circumstances; this helps him endure challenges taking solace in the fact that his journey is towards home. In other words, his physical home is just an abridged representation of his eternal home. After his daily transaction or elongated sojourns, he returns home to rest. This signifies a compulsory return to the hereafter after all earthly activities. Obey alludes to this return in his song titled *Oro Awa Eda*. He sings:

Oro awa eda nile aye,	The situation of humans in the world,
Ha eyin eeyan mi, e sun mo bi e wa gbo	Ah, my people come closer and hear this.
O da bi eni to lo s'ajo,	It is parallel to someone going on a journey,
Ha eyin eeyan mi, e sun mo bi e wa gbo.	Ah, my people come closer and hear this.
Abi eni to n lo so ja,	Or it can be compared to the case of someone going to the market,
Ha e yin eyan mi, e sun mo bi e wa gbo.	Ah, my people come closer and hear this.
Aye loja o, Oba Oluwa mo fi oro mi le o lowo	This world is a market, owner of heaven, I commit my matters into your hands.
Aye ye o ja ni orun ma n'ile, Ki a ma gbagbe re se ajo.	Thus, we should not enjoy this earthly journey and forget our real abode.
Orun ma n'ile.	Hereafter is our actual abode.

Here, the connection between man and his physical abode is parallelism that reminds him of a need for a perpetual rest in the hereafter. The unrest that besets him on his daily activities or sojourn makes the thought of home a soothing relief to his entire being. Since his abode provides him with shelter, warmth and comfort, he looks forward to reuniting with his home

on a daily basis. His physical abode and the respite he enjoys within it then become a symbolic pointer to his eternal home where all struggles will be over.

Obey's music has vast metaphorical in-depth which makes his lyrical composition profound. Tunji Olaopa's (2017:1) comment during an interview with Guardian news group testifies to this point:

> Obey's philosophical music; it commands your critical attention. You are invited by the guitar and the drum not just to tap your legs but also to bend your minds to philosophical reflection. The music is also an exercise in social experience and national orientation. His songs are not just the regular sycophantic praise singing for the sake of money what you hear is what you have seen around. Or what you should be expecting for good or ill. Above all the music is tranquil and measured as if he is being careful not to transgress against God and the people. There must have been spiritual intimations.

Inferably, Obey depicts Yoruba imbedded metaphoric nature which affects all areas of their lives. This appears more glaring in their philosophies. Consequently, arguments revolving around both bodily and spatial concepts are deepened by their use of associative metaphor which makes both spheres operate more on a multifarious level than usual, and this explains why concrete objects and phenomena within Yoruba setting appear more symbolic than ordinary since they are grounded on their spiritual beliefs. The musician's symbolic representation of time as controlled from the superordinate realm renders all circulated attempts of his enemies futile because they can never accurately predict his next move. The notion of time here defiles the sequential linearity because its existence is beyond human understanding. Thus, operating in such hyper-accreted realm guarantees unstoppable progress. Obey again analogises:

Aimasiko lo n damu eda o.	It is the inability to discern time that confuses humans
Oro mi lowo Oluwa lo wa.	All that concerns me are in God's hand.
Ki ni gbedo-gbedo fe fi igi ogede gbe?	What can the carver carve with the banana tree?
Ki la t'egun fe fi igi gedu se?	What impact can the storm have on the teak tree?
Oro mi lowo Oluwa lo wa.	All that concerns me are in God's hand.
Aimasiko lo damu eda o.	It is the inability to discern time that confuses humans.
Oro mi lowo Oluwa lo wa.	All that concerns me are in God's hand.

Metaphor here foregrounds the unparalleled superior existence of God over humans whose affairs are handled by God Himself. This fortifies them against the numerous attacks of the evil ones.

Conclusion

This study establishes the cogent fact that the Yoruba world and culture thrive on the equating stance of metaphor which makes it possible for them to transfer spiritually abstract guided beliefs into their physical world through the associative effect in metaphor. The paper foregrounds that spiritual concepts are given more apparent vision through the application of this cross-sectional metaphor, thereby bridging the gap between the mystic and the mundane worlds, which affords the Yoruba world the opportunity to operate in a cyclic motion as opposed to the linear plotting of the western world. The analysis is based on selected lyrics of the oral artistic resources. The lyrics are categorised according to content and symbolic influence they have on the Yoruba cultural beliefs. What this study mostly emphasises is the dynamic impact of metaphor on the constant renewal of hope for the Yoruba people. Besides, the overall notion the investigation projects is that, there is a vast difference between the metaphorical mapping of western world and that of the Yoruba community. This resonates with Adeleke Adeeko's (2007:234) assertion that the African oral resources serve as an indigenous fertile heritage from where dynamic forms of metaphor keep emerging.

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