

## AFRICAN MUSIC AND AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY IN A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

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### Abstract

*Music is a human enterprise as animal musicum. It is a human heritage that is as old as humanity and its chequered history. The master playwright and poet William Shakespeare mentioned music many times in his works. Bob Marley and many inspired musicians have shown a great connection between Music and Philosophy in their work of arts and humanities. Coming from the world of arts, Music and Philosophy share differential limits as well as differential coefficients. Great musicians have been known to be very philosophical in their content which is always enduring and prophetic. Using the method of critical analysis, the researcher discovers a healthy connection and a therapeutic relation between music and philosophy in line with Plato's enduring maxim that philosophy is the highest music.*

**Keywords:** Music, philosophy, African music, African philosophy, global community.

### Introduction

Music, being part of art is an essential part of early human life. It is a *practical philosophy* within the bounds of aesthetics which modern writers understand by the phrasal expression of *the theory of beauty and art*. It remains a popular saying that *music is the universal language of mankind as well as the language of the spirit*. Bob Marley the Reggae Legend believes that "one good thing about music is when it hits you, you feel no pain." Plato nevertheless asserts that "music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything". And in furtherance of this singular view, he reiterates that "musical training is a more potent instrument than any other because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul".

Music is the most widely practised and accessible of all the arts. Supporting this idea, Enoh (2006) opined that in almost every sector of this country (and elsewhere) music is ever used music for one purpose

or the other because music is accessible to all. Music has been defined as a universal language because everybody in every culture recognizes music when he or she hears it or needs it. This is because, according to Okafor (2001) music is culture-bound. According to him "It doesn't have a single answer. Every culture decides on what is music. It is culture that gives music its definition". Music, therefore, remains a very important means of expressing the beauty of one's culture. It is used in every aspect of human activities, from birth to death, and for some, right before one's birth and after one's death, music is employed as such.

In different sections of this paper, music will be portrayed as a fundamental and salient aspect of human life and interaction. Embedded deep in human culture and tradition, music is a discipline that enlivens humanity as a sociocultural cum trade-political animal. Man in contradistinction from other animals remains a musical animal, *animal Musicum*. Hence, a man not only listens to music but creates one for his pleasure and entertainment. This is beyond some mere animals that sing, *utter sounds* and listens to music. Man as a *homo loquens* (speaking man) and *animal cogitans* (thinking animal) listens to music and equally, create his own in different patterns. Music is a form of companionship. This is why Leo Tolstoy writes that *music is the shorthand of emotion*. Ratcliffe (2017) quoted saxophonist Charlie Parker on his popular remark that 'music is your own experience, your thoughts, your wisdom. If you don't live it, it won't come out of your horn". Benjamin(2020) maintains that music is a philosophy rich in ideas that language cannot say. In furtherance, she reiterates that music is a Socratic teacher. Its melodies and call-and-response mechanisms, together with the subsequent variations in modulations and rhythms, steer us away from linear thinking and direct us towards nuance. African music, beyond entertainment, is rooted in African realities and world-view and nevertheless informs and inspires the global community as such

### **Understanding Music**

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (2023) defines music as "the art of combining vocal or instrumental sounds (or both) to produce beauty of form, harmony, and expression". As a discipline or course in any academic system, music is an organized sound. It's an art and most popularly a performing art. The Merriam-Webster's Dictionary (2022) on-line edition's definition of music is a typical example thus: "the science or art of ordering tones or sounds in succession, in

combination, and in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity". Etymologically, music with its old English *music* of the mid-13th century; the old French *musique* of the 12th century; and the Latin version of *mūsica* derives from the Ancient Greek *mousiké* meaning "(art) of the muses".

Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus. (2023) defines music as "a pattern of sounds made by musical instruments, voice or computers, or a combination of these, intended to give pleasure to people listening to it". Man as a social animal, known for movement, is a danceable animal and very cadenced. Hence, it's very easy to respond to rhythms and other musical time and periodicity while observing intervals and regularity. However, with regard to music, we can say that human beings are rhythmic beings. A human being, however, observes such pulsations and rhythms seen in the heartbeat, breathing and brain waves are all rhythmic. Often, we talk of someone possessing music-ear showing that one naturally responds to rhythm and repetition, tones and tunes. Musical aptitude, talent and disposition are very particular to human beings as *animal Musicum* as a result of his ability to speak and manipulate sounds with his mouth and tongue.

### **Appreciation of Philosophy**

Philosophy, etymologically from the Greek lexicon is *philos* (love) and *sophia* (wisdom) transliterated *love of wisdom*. To this point, philosophy remains a human science that seeks wisdom and a personal enterprise with an unaided reason. It is a human enterprise. Maritain (2005) maintains that Philosophy is the highest of the human *sciences*, that is, of the sciences which know things by the natural light of reason. But there is a science above it. For if there be a science which is participation by a man of the knowledge proper to God himself, that science will be superior to the highest human science. Such a science, however, exists; it is theology. The word *theology* means the science of God. Philosophy is *cognitio rerum per altissimas causas, solar rationis* (science that studies all things in their ultimate and universal principle). It is *scientia rerum per ultima causas*- knowledge of things through their ultimate causes.

Maritain (2005) strongly thought that traditionally, philosophy is divided into three principal sections: logic, speculative philosophy and practical philosophy. The division of philosophy into speculative and practical depends, not on the specific character of the various philosophic sciences or disciplines, but on the end which they pursue. If that end is knowledge alone, the philosophy is

speculative; if it is for the general good of man, then it is practical. Art and Philosophy of Art, therefore, are practical philosophies. Taking cognizance of the sections, it is divided into main and minor branches. There are four main branches of Philosophy: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Axiology (Ethics and Aesthetics) and Logic. There are many minor branches of Philosophy and they are technically regarded as Applied Philosophy or Philosophy and Special Discipline. Applied Philosophy, therefore, is any Philosophy in combination with any other Special Science. Hence Applied Philosophy has to do with the Philosophy of something as shown below: Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Arts, Philosophy of Education and other *Philosophies of*.

### **From Philosophy of Arts: Unto Philosophy of Music**

In a very strict sense, art is anything human-made. Within the ambit of this precise definition, fine arts, paintings and sculptures as well as buildings, furniture, auto-mobiles, cities, and garbage dumps are all works of art. Here we appreciate performing arts vividly seen in theatre arts and music. Therefore, every change brought about by human activity making a difference in the face of nature is art, be it good or bad, beautiful or ugly, beneficial or destructive. In a large sense, the power of arts is expressed scripturally thus: And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (cf. Gen. 1:28). This is humanity's fulfilment of the biblical injunction to conquer the earth is better expressed in a great many works of arts.

Maritain (2005) maintains that "art belongs to the practical order in the sense that it instructs us how to make something, considering not the use we should make of our free will but how the work as such and in itself should be executed. We may thus say that art is concerned with what is to be made, *factibile*" (p.171). Furthermore, Maritain (2005) holds that "the formal character of making is fulfilled primarily in the material objects produced or fashioned by man (the *factibile* in the strict sense). But in a wider sense, it is to be found also in works of a purely spiritual nature" (p.171). Philosophy of Art is an Applied Philosophy within Practical Philosophy. It is the philosophy of making and through it, man procures other goods by some action for the well-being of humanity. Such philosophy regulates human activities as such. Philosophy of Art is an applied philosophy. It is an application of philosophical principles to works of art. Those who use the term *philosophy of art* typically use it to refer to works within the field of aesthetics and general philosophy. Philosophy of Art is the reasoned

inquiry into the nature, origins, concepts and usage of the products of arts. However, *Britannica*, an online dictionary gave the task of philosopher of Arts thus: “to heighten understanding and appreciation of works of art but to provide conceptual foundations for the critic by (1) examining the basic concepts that underlie the activities of critics and enable them to speak and write more intelligibly about the arts and by (2) arriving at true conclusions about art, aesthetic value, expression and the other concepts that critics employ”. Philosophy of Arts, therefore, studies nature or art as a discipline expressing a form of interpretation and or representation while manifesting beauty and value. This is why the philosophy of art is related to aesthetics. Maritain (2005) nevertheless holds that “if we would accurately describe this branch of philosophy, we should term it the *philosophy of making*, but we shall call it simply the philosophy of art” (p. 171).

Art as a disciplinary act and practise of making, therefore, is man’s attempt to reproduce reality, participating through his imaginative creativity. Through art, ideas as ideals are realized as reality as such. To this extent, art is in making; reflecting a kind of transformational reality with value. Philosophical enterprise on art remains a product of interaction between the prototype ideals in imaginative and concrete realization of a new product that speaks of *a being there*. These thoughts are the background of Aristotle’s four causes *formal*, *material*, *efficient* and *final causes*. Through these Aristotelian dispositions, something is brought into existence from many *a given*. Odimegwu, I & Eyi (2007) in their review of a paper titled: *Nze on Art, Communication and Development* reiterates thus,

Art is the product of the interaction between the unchanging model and the artistic idea which engenders the concrete ideal and the ideal form, the material object and the instruments and media of art. The artist comes in as the mediator in this struggle to transform both the ideal and material substances into the final art...Inevitably, therefore, art is a *mediative* activity that involves compromise and relativization of being and essences, (p. 481).

Art as a reality communicates. Aesthetically, art extends unto truth and value through the goodness it relates to hidden realities. Part of this communication is seen in music. It is very possible through man because he is a *homo loquens* and equally a *homo cantata*, *animal Musicum*. In this regard, music not only stimulates but soothes the listener. Humanity has had the privilege to be known as a singing animal because he can speak and utter words and organized sounds in

the form of communication. Music is an art form that doubles up as a form of expression, a form of communication. Music as an art of combining vocal or instrumental sounds harmoniously or expressively purifies art as an act as such. This is why music is generally perceived as the most universal of all art forms. Some even see it as a language that communicates pending on the type of music and one's mood.

Complementing this idea of music as something with great soothing psychological effect, Caesar of William Shakespeare, (as described in *Julius Caesar, Act 1, Scene 2*) enters a public square with Antony, Calpurnia, Portia and hosts of others, followed by a throng of citizens who were ready to celebrate the feast day with a ceremonial run through the city. In that setting and scenario Julius Caesar gave a succinct description of Cassius as a queer man and strange human being who rarely smiles, does not enjoy life, does not listen to music and is always observing the hidden motives in others thus:

He reads much. He is a great observer and he looks quite through the deeds of men. He loves no plays, as thou dost, Antony. He hears no music! Seldom he smiles and smiles in such a sort as if he mocked himself and scorned his spirit. That could be moved to smile at anything. Such men as he is never at heart's ease whiles they behold a greater than themselves. And therefore are they very dangerous.”=

Inability to cherish musical contraptions is abnormal Caesar opined. Ndeche, Chidirim in an online paper on *Fela Kuti: Ten Thoughtful Quotes* writes that Fela Anikulapo Kuti is a musical icon well known for pioneering the Afrobeat genre with provocative style of music. For Ndeche, Fela was a multi-instrumentalist, human rights activist, political maverick, and revolutionary who was never afraid to stand up for his beliefs. He was one of Africa's most controversial musicians who, frustrated with the willingness of Nigerians to accept oppression, fought throughout his life for the rights of the common man despite vilification, harassment, and even imprisonment by the Nigerian government. Fela, K (2011), the music legend, nevertheless maintained that: *Music is the weapon. Music is the weapon of the future* in a YouTube musical video. Art, as well as music, in any of their forms, are brought forth by a person, or a group of talented yet usually inspired or ordinary people, expressing an opinion, oftentimes with regard to present situations. This is why music and art, both visual and performing arts, have a long-standing relationship. One new study

explores music as a source of creativity. Since music has been shown to improve cognition and enhance learning and memory in other studies, it makes sense that perhaps, it has an impact on creative thinking as well as critical thinking.

### **Music, Psychology and Child's Development**

Philosophy, as a human enterprise achieved *via* unaided human reason, by and large, gives credence to all forms of learning to the extent of being regarded as the mother of all-knowing, *mater scientia*. There is a relation between music and psychology within philosophy as *the highest of the human sciences*. Hence, there is *Music Psychology* or *Psychology of Music* as it pertains to one's methodological approach. The Psychology of Music may be regarded as a branch of both psychology and musicology aiming at explaining and understanding musical behaviour and experiences, including the way we appreciate music, well created and reacted to as part of human life, rejuvenating our everyday life, bringing the health of mind and body. William Shakespeare's in his great comic play *Twelfth Night (Act 1, Scene 1)* started with the very first line thus "if music is the food of love, play on". Psychology of Music, therefore, remains an application of musical innuendoes on the human psyche, trying to ameliorate the human mind by way of relaxation and proper healing effect as therapy defines it.

Levitin (2019) in *Encyclopaedia.com* defines the Psychology of Music "as a field of scientific inquiry studying the mental operations underlying music listening, music-making, dancing (moving to music), and composing. This field of study is drawn from the core disciplines of psychology, cognitive science, and music, and music-related works in the natural, life, and social sciences". Many novel research works have been done in this area of musical therapy in relation to musical behaviour affecting human sensation, cognition and perception. Indeed, music has been shown to systematically arouse and provoke emotional responses in its adherents and listeners producing soothing effects. Ongoing research by the University of Sheffield (for September 2023) has it that:

Research on the Psychology of Music uses psychological theories and methods to interpret and understand musical sounds, musical behaviours, and the effects of music. The subject is strongly inter-disciplinary, and generally combines empirical data collection, through observation, experiments, surveys or otherwise, with theoretical innovation. The scope of research in Sheffield ranges from fundamental questions related to music

perception and cognition to applications of music psychology in everyday life.

There are other ongoing researches. *Wikipedia* has it that there is “a significant amount of research concerns brain-based mechanisms involved in the cognitive processes underlying music perception and performance. These behaviours include music listening, performing, composing, reading, writing, and other ancillary activities. Also, it is increasingly concerned with the brain's basis for musical aesthetics and musical emotion. Scientists working in this field may have training in cognitive neuroscience, neurology, neuroanatomy, psychology, music theory, computer science, and other allied fields. According to continued research, listening to music has been found to affect the mood of an individual. The main factors in whether it will affect that individual positively or negatively are based on the music tempo and style. In addition, listening to music also increases cognitive functions, and creativity, and decreases feelings of fatigue. Again, one of Shakespeare’s most famous quotes is: “If music be the food of love, play on” (William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*. Act 1, Scene 1). Music has indeed been the source of many creative and inspirational quotes, with many likening it to a universal language, evolving with rich history, very much rooted in religious and secular society. Research has equally shown the therapeutic and mood-altering qualities of music with great relief to many with different ailments while promoting better brain activities.

Psychology over time has been a part of philosophy. Philosophy of mind we must admit relates to psychology as the study of the mind *and psyche*. Onebunne (2015) defines psychology as the scientific study and systematic appraisal of the human mind and its cardinal functions, especially those affecting behaviour and human nature in a given context. In the areas of abnormal psychology and child’s developmental psychology and general well-being of *homo cantata*, music and in a large sense, psychology of music *via* music therapy plays a major role of positive influence. Malloch and Trevarthen (2018) in the paper published on-line on *The Human Nature of Music* reiterate that “music is at the centre of what it means to be human – it is the sounds of human bodies and minds moving in creative, story-making ways... The central



importance of our abilities for music as part of what sustains our well-being is supported by evidence that communicative musicality strengthens emotions of social resilience to aid recovery from mental stress and illness." *Wikipedia*, was apt in expressing that, "music therapy is an intervention sometimes used to promote emotional health, help patients cope with stress and boost psychological well-being. Some researchers even suggest that your taste in music can provide insight into different aspects of your personality". Nevertheless, in the area of abnormal psychology, music is a great therapy besides psychotherapy and chemotherapy.

*Music-Child's development* is part of *Music Psychology*. The ties between music and our emotional and cognitive states as humans are as old as music itself but beyond both its soothing and energizing effects, music has been shown to play a tangible role in learning and human development and works as a transcending tool of wellness, lifestyle and attitude within humans. In the thoughts of Adeogun (2009), music is one of the most comprehensive and universal ways of expression and communication for humankind which is present in the everyday lives of people of all ages and from all cultures around the world. Listening to music, singing, playing (informally, formally), creating (exploring, composing, improvising), whether individually and collectively, are common activities for the vast majority of people. Music represents an enjoyable activity in and of itself, but its influence goes beyond simple amusement. These activities not only allow the expression of personal inner state and feelings but also can bring about many positive effects in those who engage in them. According to Akuno(2011), there are many dimensions of human life including physical, social, educational, and psychological(cognitive and emotional) which can be affected positively by successful engagement in music.

Human development entails the development to full maturity of all the faculties of man seen comprehensively, *all the potentialities of the body and all the potentialities of the mind*. In addition, *Longman Dictionary* (2005) describes the development as an increase in the ability of an individual to function properly at any age and in a given situation. As a person grows and matures over the years, he is expected to exhibit corresponding behaviours which should show more refinement and be geared towards better adjustment and more effective solutions to daily problems of life. By implication, human development concerns the entire or overall change in human beings, which accordingly does not happen abruptly but rather takes a gradual process. During such moments a lot of actions take place to modify the behavioural changes

that occur in the human person. Our concern, however, has to border around developmental Psychology as such.

Developmental psychology is concerned with the scientific study of how and why humans adaptively grow in the course of their lives. Related to this is our general concern with Child's development. Child development or child's psychology is the study of differential psychological processes of raising healthy children, unto mature adolescence differing from adults. Other scholars describe six stages of child development that include newborns, infants, toddlers, preschool, school age, and adolescents. Failing to reach some of the milestones may signal a developmental disability. This is why developmental psychology, however, recognizes the effect of children's rhymes at that stage of development. Novel research has shown that music is known to improve human intelligence and focus, ameliorate mental health, and boost the human immune system while assuring one's self-esteem and confidence. Music gives one a better personality as it helps one to relax and affects one's most positively just as Bob Marley will say: *one good thing about music is when it hits you, you feel no pain*. The music hits one into activities with no pain.

Children's rhymes vary in style, subject, tone and theme, although many are marked by the use of rhythm and rhymes that makes them easy to remember. Endraswara (2009) explained that nursery rhymes are songs that have cheerful and fun vibes which nevertheless consist of meaningful lyrics. They include crèche rhymes or nursery rhymes, lullabies, finger play, counting-out rhymes, riddles, games, songs, and ballads, among other types. While some rhymes seem designed purely to amuse, others are didactic and educational, including those intended to help children learn the alphabet and numbers. Many nursery rhymes have variants in their languages, with similar rhymes appearing in different nations.

Children or nursery rhymes are part of a long-standing tradition in early childhood education. Many generations of children have learned and recited nursery rhymes in their homes and schools. Gauthier and Lejeune (2008) observe seriously that when they learn nursery rhymes, children face linguistic and musical challenges that trigger their cognitive development through pleasant social interactions mediated by adults and peers alike. According to Procter (1990) nursery rhymes are short traditional songs or poems for children. From the above definition, it is clear enough that nursery rhymes are suitable for

children or younger learners. In this context, thereof, nursery rhymes provide a unique teaching and learning context in which one can also be embedded with explicit and functional instructions that promote early literacy and numeracy, attitudinal and musical development in young children.

However, in Children, crèche or nursery rhymes vary in style, subject, tone and theme, although many are marked by the use of rhythm and rhymes that makes them easy to remember. Endraswara (2009), explained that nursery rhymes are songs that have a cheerful and fun vibe, that also consist of meaningful lyrics. They include nonsense rhymes, lullabies, finger play, counting-out rhymes, riddles, games, songs, and ballads, among other types. While some rhymes seem designed purely to amuse, others are didactic and educational, including those intended to help children learn the alphabet and numbers. Many nursery rhymes have variants in their languages, with similar rhymes appearing in different nations.

Nursery or crèche rhymes are part of a long-standing tradition in early childhood education. Many generations of children have learned and recited nursery rhymes in their homes and schools. Endraswara (2009) reiterated this stand when he observed that to learn nursery rhymes, children face linguistic and musical challenges that trigger their cognitive development through pleasant social interactions mediated by adults and peers. This is why Procter (1995) maintains that nursery rhymes are short traditional songs or poems for children. From the definition above it is clear enough that nursery rhymes are suitable for children or younger learners. Nursery rhymes provide a unique learning context in which can also be embedded explicit instructions that promotes early literacy and musical development in young children.

The entire world process is dependent on development. The general idea of evolution is all about becoming, that is, a form of change, a progressive process. Becoming fundamentally characterizes all of us and everything around us in the world. In Contemporary philosophy, development is seen from the point of view of becoming, a kind of process philosophy, that is, a form of *dialectical process*. Dialectic or dialectics, also known as the dialectical method, like the Socratic method, is at the base, a discourse between two or more people holding different points of view about a subject but wishing to establish the truth through their reasoned arguments. However, the primary aim of

development is human well-being, and in special order, human development.

The broader concept of development places man or human beings at the centre of development. Of course, the main or most fundamental to development is the development of the people which nevertheless borders on human, social, economic and industrial growth. Development in this sense is captioned sustainable development. However, man as *animal laborans* is at the centre of it while *education* is the sure way to achieve it as no nation grows beyond the quality of her educational system. This simply leads to any form of *sustainable development*. Education is, therefore, regarded as the bedrock of any society, hence, its importance to national development cannot be overemphasised. Any society that is serious about development must, therefore, educate its citizenry starting with a well-established and good children development program.

It is against this background that the dwindling fortune of Nigeria's educational sector is worrisome. Education has become everybody's right. That explains why international human rights instruments insist that education is a fundamental human right. These instruments include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. This is what led to the declaration of the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) which took place in Thailand in 1990. In its first article, it was decided that every person: child, youth and adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities, which will, in turn, help the society to grow. In our paper, the role of music in a child's development must be upheld.

### **Philosophy of Music**

Music and Philosophy complement each as arts and humanities. It equally extends to the proper idea of the Philosophy of Music. As a minor branch of philosophy as well as an applied philosophy, philosophy of music. *Philosophy of music*, as an applied practical philosophy, is a reasoned inquiry into the role of philosophy in music. Philosophy of Music remains a fascinating area of research at the intersection of philosophy as *mater scientia*. Music as a human enterprise borders on the human spirit *via* his emotions. Therefore, it means that music is spiritual. This form of spirituality which is beyond religious innuendo is hereby understood as the quality of being concerned with

the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things. Spirituality in this order entails a kind of recognition of something beyond mere physicality, a feeling or sense or belief that there is something greater than myself, something more to being human than sensory experience. This is the realm of Music as a transformational piece in human enterprise. This is why at the dawn of philosophical movements, Music for the Greek philosophers was a part of their metaphysics. Music was a part and parcel of how they thought the universe was structured. Even in ancient times, music was at the heart of their religious celebrations. And in contemporary religions, music is very central. Mere listening to classical music and music from *the masters*, both local and international, ancient and contemporary, shows that music has a kind of aura that goes with it. Benjamin (2020) captions the relationship between music and philosophy in this sensitive caveat thus:

The art of musical thinking offers a perspective and a context for composing our experiences. It provides a philosophical foundation that embraces dissonance alongside harmony and casts sound and silence as equal protagonists in a democracy, where the realisation that dualities such as tension and consensus coexist is a core tenet of a vibrantly realised life. If we learn to sit with the inexplicable sounds of our historical moment, we'll open an unexpected path of self-elucidation, and contribute to questioning and redefining the society we're creating, (p.243).

Socrates, in an on-line source, *The Mindless Philosopher* (2013) was accredited for this good and appreciative understanding of music thus: "Rhythm and harmony most of all insinuate themselves into the inmost part of the soul... they make a man graceful if he is correctly reared, if not, the opposite." The purpose of music, Socrates says, is to encourage the development of a good soul. The philosopher Plato suggests in *The Republic* that music has a direct effect on the soul. Equally, Plato was credited with the saying that *music is a moral law*. It is often thought that music can affect our emotions, intellect and psychology; it can pacify our loneliness or prompt our passions. Preševo Center for Refugees (2016) in a paper cited Plato as saying that "music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything".

Equally, the prominent Greek philosopher Aristotle, a disciple of Plato toed the same line to affirm that music contained an intrinsic element that was conducive to the promotion of moral or spiritual harmony and order in the soul. *Generate PressForum* (2023) refers to Socrates as saying that music is very important, but not for pleasure, rather a utility to educate. So the philosophy of music is the study's basic questions with regard to the nature of music and humans as *homo contains* the experience of it. Therefore, the Greek philosophers saw a relationship between music and mathematics, envisioning music as a paradigm of harmonious order reflecting the cosmos and the human soul. Many famous names in philosophy celebrated and blended the idea of Music and philosophy as Leibniz, Kant, Schelling, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. For them, music is philosophy in singable words. This is why the philosophical study of music has many connections with philosophical questions in metaphysics and aesthetics as beauty. In our ear the man and best brain of the 20th Century Albert Einstein himself acknowledged that sound, in the form of music, gave him more pleasure than anything else in life and it played such a significant role in his scientific prowess. However, the beauty of this section is seen in the recent area of study known as introducing African Music and African Philosophy in the world of academia.

### **Appreciation of African Music from African History**

The geography of continental Africa shows that the history of Africa begins with the emergence of hominids, archaic humans, that anatomically modern humans (*homo sapiens*), circa 300–250,000 years ago in East Africa. If we do not understand how vast Africa is as a continent, we may not appreciate the length and breadth of her natural environment and endowment. In line with this, Africa has been regarded as the mother or cradle of ancient civilization with Mesopotamia in the lead. Through years of research, it is accepted that Alkebulan meaning mother of mankind remains the original ancient name of Africa. Africa is the most tropical of all continents with five geographic regions North, South, West, East and Central. The climate and vegetation range from equatorial rainforests, tropical deserts and savannah grassland to the Mediterranean. The Sahara Desert, the largest of its kind anywhere in the world, is over 10.4 million km<sup>2</sup> North-South is approx. 1800 km and East-West is 5600km.

As an acclaimed mother of civilization, the history of Africa is not contentious even though some enlightened but frustrated philosophers like Hegel and Hume declined as such. In the 1830s the German philosopher G. H. F. Hegel remarked that Africa “is no historical part of

the world; it has no movement or development to exhibit." From Hegel's perspective, Africa is said to be unhistorical; undeveloped Spirit: *Geist* - still involved in the conditions of mere nature; devoid of morality, religions and political constitution. This came with the justification for Europe plundering and ravaging, from exploration, exploitation, slavery, colonialism, neocolonialism, capital flow and now debt. Africa has been a victim of misinterpretation since the first African exploration. This remains a form of pedagogy of the oppressed which thwarted African progress leaving it with yet another contemporary great divide in the global south.

This is why Colonizers, unfortunately, made some of us believe that before their visit and exploration Africa was backward, barbarous and uncivilized savages without art and culture. Yet we had Artefacts they took away and kept in their museums. Many of our arts and crafts of men that were not progressive for example, Igboukwu bronze and Mali bronze were carted away into their museums. Africans traditionally cured many ailments, tapped their palm wine and lived a comfortable life before the colonialists interfered in their development and progress. Many African arts are now decorating European museums while many African legacies which they removed dot their world and history as they partitioned Africa. Amidst all these about Africa, there remain two Africas: One, Africa, Europeans created for their selfish gains, the other Africa, the original black Africa, the pride of Africa. The latter is making it possible for the contemporary quest for Africans to be or not to be.

History shows that Africans have art and by implication music. Blain Muema in an on-line paper, *A Brief History and Background of African Music* asserts that "African music has undergone many and significant changes over the years, as is acknowledged. Traditional music now is likely to be different from African music in the past; neither has African music been associated with certain ethnic groups in the past. Individual musicians, their styles, and their originality have always been significant". Even as African people migrated in large and small groups, they did so with their musical styles and instruments. Equally, most African music literature is based on Western theoretical frameworks, with categories such as African music, world music, global music, and ethnomusicology. Nevertheless, the *Africanity* of African Music, as well as the *Musicality* of African Music, makes this paper ad rem as African Music and African Philosophy will be dealt with as an effort is made to understand the interplay between the duo.

Music is an integral part of African life in general. African music is a discipline sharing in the world's musical heritage. It is African music because it is done within Africa and or by Africans outside the Africa Continent. It is African as long the theme or the message is African as such, African music is a result of the unique African musical tradition that smacks styles and spans across the African continent. African Music, often referred to as Traditional African Music or Music of Africa is as vast and varied as the continent's many regions, nations, and ethnic groups. Thus, Hagar (1993) maintains that the *New World Encyclopaedia* on Music of Africa, formerly Music Library explains that:

Africa and music intersect with every aspect of life and express life through the medium of sound. By helping mark the important moments in life, music helps to underscore the divine and eternal value of human life. African music also helps to connect people in a variety of ways, strengthening the fabric of the community, which in turn reinforces people's commitment to support each other and the community, toward mutual health and prosperity. Another crucial role of music in Africa is as a mode of communication. Traditional African music simply communicates.

African music is as diverse as its cultures and nations, languages and peoples. It has flourished in many indigenous forms as well as shaped by foreign influences. Of great benefit is African music to the existential life of the people that own it. However, the Hagar (1993) opines that the *New World Encyclopaedia* maintains that Music of Africa, formerly Music Library reiterates that:

As African society has changed in response to the forces of colonization, independence, and globalization, the role of music changed as well, adapting to the new situation in which the people of Africa find themselves. Though there have been changes in some of the forms of music, including the infusion of instruments, musical styles, and genres from outside the African continent, music remains very important in Africa today. Also, as Africans travelled from Africa to other parts of the world, both as a result of the African slave trade and later migrations, the music and dance forms of the African diaspora influenced several international musical styles and genres (Paragraph 4).

The current idea of African Music as well as African Philosophy and other African disciplines are simply championed because Africans have



come to stay. Most importantly, liturgical music has seen a lot of adaptations or properly put, inculturation with regard to her music becoming soothing for Africans. Iroegbu (1996) envisages this complementarity and inculturation ecclesiology when he writes thus:

African traditional cultures, religion and thought patterns cannot cohabit side by side with now the arrived Christian religion. An authentic African ecclesiology must dynamically integrate these ...The languages, symbols and ritual expressions like Ofo, Ogu, colanut and Music (African Music of course-emphasis mine) are to be used to express Christian truth (p.72).

### **African Philosophy**

African Philosophy traditionally is knowledge of African realities and African realism in their englobing universal principles. In Contemporary times, African Philosophy is primarily a discipline and secondarily a movement. It is more of a movement as it tries to reclaim its position as a discipline within the world's philosophical heritage. It is, therefore, fundamentally a disciplinary movement as it tries to rediscover itself within the world's philosophical heritage and equally establish itself as such. In *lato sensu*, African Philosophy is that branch of knowledge that grew from African Philosophical Tradition as a philosophy done within and outside continental Africa for humanity as a human enterprise with regard to authorship, scholarship and literature. Moreover, the adjective African qualifies the noun Philosophy and beyond delimiting it, it expands such critical enquiry on the far side of just African. In *stricto sensu*, it is that course that is African and Philosophical within the limits of Africanity and *philosophicality* or *Africanness* and *Philosophicalness*.

Moreover, as a discipline, it is the love of African wisdom, that is, *Philosophia Africana*. Iroegbu (1994) was very premier in giving this succinct definition. In this definition, one can read a kind of defence as regards African philosophy. This is why for Iroegbu (1994) African philosophy is a *philo-sophia*, a quest for African wisdom. African Philosophy, therefore, is *scientia rerum per ultima causas* within African realities. It is the search for the unaided authentic human knowledge that is philosophical and African. It is the habit of every wise and reasonable African man. Consequently, African Philosophy as a movement is a clarion invitation by Bob Marley's redemptive insinuation to "emancipate yourselves from mental slavery...non but ourselves can free our mind". His redemption song demands a total breakaway from the stereotype innuendoes that philosophy is the

prerogative of the West, therefore, questioning directly our human nature as *homo sapiens* and *homo cogitans* as well as *animal rationalis*.

As a movement, African Philosophy, rooted in and springing from African philosophical tradition, is a cursory look into the problematiqués and prospects of Africa as part of the world's philosophical heritage. As a movement, African philosophy is an effort at recovering all lost status as a result of the stolen legacies with regard to philosophy and its origin. As a movement, African Philosophy searches for the authentic knowledge that is Philosophy and African within and or outside the African cultural world-view. Therefore, a definitive-thoughtful interpretation and critical analysis of the symbols of African cultures would be the African philosophy *qua tale*. More so, a reflection with the profound application of criticality, analyticity and originality on African thoughts and cultures will give credence to Philosophy and rightly put, African Philosophy. However, rather than Western philosophy of Western philosophical tradition and her philosophy which started with wonder, African philosophy according to Chimakonam (2023) opted that African philosophy started with *Onuma*, that is, having been frustrated by the colonialism and racialism and other bumps of African predicaments orchestrated by many years of doubt its historical existence, greatly shrouded in controversies and submerged in conspiracies of lies, Africans lately woke up to rediscover the truth about philosophy and the western connection. Therefore, as a movement, African philosophy started of frustration by many lies against Africans' literary disposition.

### **Recognising Contemporary African Music**

Traditional African musical forms, despite their diversity, are rhythmic with an entertaining melodious and harmonious air amidst a body movement that scintillates as such with the whole person. African music always informs and communicates. Muema (2021) reiterates as such that African music is often used to transmit messages and ideas; and to record and recount historical events. Today than ever, it is good to know that there is an Africanization of every form of music within and outside Africa as long as it suits our musicians, with their local languages and styles, versions and presentations. One can equally allude that Africans have a natural disposition to sounds and beatings. This plays out as every African culture is very much in tune with a musical style as the people respond easily to every African musical beat.

Modern African Music is highly influenced by Traditional African Music. Contemporary African Music is equally vast, vibrant and dynamic. African Continent can boast of multicultural popular and musical genres, from Reggae to Afrobeat. Equally, Contemporary African music continues to develop more national musical and international genres, emerging throughout the continent, assimilating and adopting global musical styles such as *jazz*, *Rhythm and Beats (R&B)*, *hip hop*, *rock'n'roll*, *country music* and Reggae as they make their impacts on today's African musicians. Successful musicians are usually the ones who successfully blend some of these foreign musical styles with the musical traditions of their different African countries. Contemporary African music continues to Africanize global musical genres while retaining our traditional ones even with a tincture of Westernisation. At this point, a special reference is made to Reggae as an African genre.

### **African Philosophy of Reggae**

Reggae is a brand of musical genre, very original to Africa. Reggae is *African Spec* and African-made. Reggae is a musical genre developed by Jamaicans of African ancestry in the late 1960s. Reggae bands incorporate musical idioms from many different genres, including *mento* (a Jamaican folk genre), *ska*, rock steady, calypso, American soul music and rhythm and blues. Etymologically, Reggae comes from the term “rege-rege” which means “rags” or “ragged clothes”, and this gives the first clue into the story behind reggae music. Another source had it that reggae is said to derive from the term “streggae,” which is a derogatory term meaning a woman of low morals. The former seems to align with what reggae portrays all along. Reggae was recognized by UNESCO and added to the list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2018. Reggae has been a medium for sending messages to the world condemning the ongoing inequities and forms of injustice that affect not only Black people but people everywhere. At the front of that worldwide trend was Jamaica’s planetary icon: Bob Marley and the Wailers. Often referred to as Rastafari, Reggae bloomed on its mission of salvaging all from the shackles of man’s inhumanity against mankind.

Rastafari, sometimes called Rastafarianism, is a religion that developed in Jamaica during the 1930s. It is classified as both a new religious movement and a social movement by scholars of religion. Rastafarianism has symbols associated with it as the Lion of Judah, Pan-African colours, dreadlocks, and *ganja*. The online Merriam-Webster defines Rastafarianism as a religious movement among Black Jamaicans that teaches the eventual redemption of Black people and their return to

Africa, employs the ritualistic use of marijuana, forbids the cutting of hair, and venerates Haile Selassie as a god. The boast alongside Rastafarianism was dramatic. Homiak (2021) in *Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage Magazine* recalls thus:

Like so many other things that have altered the course of Jamaican history, the birth of reggae music would require a catalyst from beyond the island's shores. It came in the form of the three-day state visit of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I to Jamaica in April 1966. Emperor Haile Selassie I—deified by the Rastafari from the early 1930s as their God and King—had attracted the support of the entire Black world when Italy invaded his kingdom in 1935. He arrived in Jamaica not merely as the biblically enthroned monarch of Africa's oldest state, but as a champion of racial equality and as the recent founding chairman of the Organization of African Unity (1963), the organization then spearheading efforts at decolonization on the continent.

The name Rastafari is taken from Ras Tafari, the title and first name of Haile Selassie I (Ras Tafari emperor of Ethiopia) before his coronation. In Amharic, Ras, literally "head", is an Ethiopian title equivalent to prince or chief, while the personal given name Täfäri means one who is revered. Reggae from its root and origin is a movement like African philosophy. Onebunne (2022) explained this in his lecture notes on African Philosophy thus:

As a movement, African Philosophy, rooted in and springing from African philosophical tradition, is a cursory look into the problematiques and prospects of Africa as part of the world's philosophical heritage. As a movement African philosophy is an effort at rediscovering and recovering all lost status as a result of the stolen legacies with regard to philosophy and its origin. As a movement, African Philosophy searches for the authentic knowledge that is Philosophy and African within and or without the African cultural world-view (p. 21).

Reggae was made in Africa, for Africans and their invaders rooting Africans of their natural and human resources. Reggae became a message with *Onuma*, that is frustration as Chimakonam (2023) would opine with regard to the effects of colonialism and racialism and other bumps of African predicaments orchestrated by many years of doubt of its historical existence that is greatly shrouded in controversies and submerged in conspiracies of lies against the African continent and

Africans. Other scholarly works have shown great interest in Reggae as African music and movement as Marcus Garvey's *Garveyism: Back to Africa* and Barry Chevannes' *Rastafari: Root and Ideology*.

### **African Philosophy Redefining African Music**

African music is as vast as the continent of Africa as well as the cultures and languages and people of Africa, in and beyond geographical Africa. Having come to stay and influencing the world with its message, African Music becomes the conscience of society with its nature of entertainment. An On-line paper by Peralta (2018) published in *Save the Music Foundation* on "Benefits of Music to the Brain" has it that, "music shows something about who we are as people. Our identities can be communicated through what we play, create, and the music we share with others. We can illuminate our cultures through music... With music education in schools, teachers can encourage students to use their voices, expressing themselves through music". Music, by this sublime understanding becomes *acultural right*, aiding in the *promotion and protection of other human rights*. It can assist in healing process, dismantling walls and boundaries, reconciliation, and education. Around the world, music is being used as a vehicle for social change and bringing communities together in a very *celebrative* mood of joy and often mourning" (Paragraph 3)

African Philosophy can only redefine music as African Philosophy of Music. African Philosophy of Music is an applied philosophy as well as a Philosophy of Arts under Practical Philosophy as a major broad division of Philosophy. African Philosophy of Music, therefore, is a reasoned inquiry into the role of philosophy in Music creating musical transformation. It delimits excess and encourages musical creativity especially as there are many vulgarism in music in general. As some African music is gradually losing its lustre and literary genre. Even though music has been defined as an organised sound but traditional African music is beyond an organized sound to a meaningful organized sound that invigorates as well as entertains amidst a specific rhythm. Today, many contemporary African music has lost the lustre or the musical genre for which music is made. Much of what is called music today does not entertain nor inform rather they exalt a kind of titanic moral uproar. Some of the lyrics often are incoherent if not for the sake of the beatings that have a kind of rhythm.

### **African Music and African Philosophy in a Global Community**

The world continues to tilt towards a global hub as a result of globalisation. The yawning gaps between the Global North and Global South divide expand more with the contemporary Global digital divide. An *Online TechTarget* defines the global digital divide as the gap between demographic and regions that have access to modern information and communications technology (ICT) and those that don't or have restricted access. Despite this seeming and concrete divide especially in socio-economic and political dispensations, globalization brings humanity and nature under one umbrella.

In principle, the basic orientation of globalization is the liberalization of trade and integration of free markets to enhance social, economic, and political stability across the world. Then why the divides? Why promote the divides? Globalization according to *Peterson Institute for International Economics* as in global community is "the word used to describe the growing interdependence of the world's economies, cultures, and populations, brought about by cross-border trade in goods and services, technology, and flows of investment, people, and information". Music is a universal language often with philosophy underlying it. African music as such depicts the life of African people in totality. The community, however, is the focal and receptive point of this music as such. *Wikipedia* defines global community as a "term world community used primarily in political and humanitarian contexts to describe an international aggregate of nation-states of widely varying types. In most connotations, the term is used to convey meanings attached to consensus or inclusion of all people in all lands and their governments". *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* has it that global community is "the people or nations of the world, considered as being closely connected by modern telecommunications and as being economically, socially, and politically interdependent".

Music, African music, is ever at the disposal of technology. African Music, being part of art is an essential part of early human life and is a practical African philosophy within the bounds of aesthetics which modern writers understand by the phrasal expression of the theory of beauty and art. It remains a popular saying that music is the universal language of mankind as well as the language of the spirit. Bob Marley the Reggae Legend believes that "one good thing about music is when it hits you, you feel no pain." Plato nevertheless asserts that "music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything". Plato's enduring maxim is that philosophy is the

highest music. And in furtherance of this singular view, he reiterates that “musical training is a more potent instrument than any other because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul”. This is why African music carries a message for the community that appreciates. Within the global community African music resounds the tenets of the African philosophy of to be. This sole idea is realized in Africanism and Pan-Africanism.

### **Africanism, Pan-Africanism**

*Africanism* as a theory and a school of thought is all about Africans and the African continent. Africanism defines and interprets *Africinity* in relation to African *Weltanschauung*. The spirit and full understanding as well as the appreciation of Africanism are equally expressed in belongingness. Belongingness as one of the definitive principles of communalism defines Africans and African ideologies. *Merriam-Websters* On-line dictionary defines Africanism as “a feature of language or culture regarded as characteristically African”. Continuing, it defines it also as “the belief that black Africans and their culture should predominate in Africa”. Africanism portrays the content of Africa as an exclusively *whole* continent with peculiar history and particular characteristics. This is why it is “allegiance to the traditions, interests, or ideals of Africa”. History is replete with common trends of sociocultural and traditional outlooks. The truism of this fact is seen within the dispersed descendants of African people who have displayed many forms of cultural retention of their African ancestry amidst different interpretations and misunderstandings. This is why Africanism is a kind of devotion to African customs and traditions. Specifically, Africanism is a strong promotion of independence for the African continent or of Pan-Africanism. Africanism, nevertheless, spells identity, autonomy and recognition of all that makes an African to be known as an African as such. Africanism, therefore, is a theory that simply identifies and links every African and her entities as such. This form of identification or association in Africanism underlies belongingness. Belongingness, therefore, situates Africanism within the context of communalism in African Philosophy. Belongingness is nevertheless pillared in Africanism as an African Metaphysics of to be. ‘To be’ is ‘to be with the other’, in a community of beings. This is based on the African philosophy of community, which is the underlying principle and unity of African Traditional Religious and philosophical experience. The whole thrust of belongingness lies in the fact that there is unity and commonness of purpose within an entity of a sort. The spirit of Africanism is rekindled in Pan-Africanism as Bob Marley musically begged: *Africa unite!*

Music and philosophy are very foundational in that they are at the centre of what it means to be human sharing in man's exploration and conquering of his environment. Music and philosophy are, therefore, mutually exclusive of each other as arts. They are in line with the fact that man who is fundamentally *homo cogitans* is by extension *animal cantata*. The rationality of this fact is related to the singular act of singing. Here, we see the human nature of music, making true the popular saying that *philosophy is the highest music and music is the universal language of mankind*. Malloch and Trevarthen (2018) in their novel work *On The Nature of Music* asserts that "our innate communicative musicality is the 'raw material' for cultural forms of music and the rules of grammar and syntax. For them, humans are innately musical and respond to it intuitively. To any extent, Philosophy of Music and Music in Philosophy or Musical Philosophy are forms of complementarity between Music and Philosophy.

Music is not only a special field of knowledge or an art but it's also an experience, a reality which is considered as a philosophy. These musical works are created, obtained and composed by *homo loquens* (speaking man) from pure human language. This is why musical productions are concrete and abstract at the same time. Music, therefore, bears a critical meaning. This is the philosophical nature of music. Music in its fundamental nature as an art is all about the expression of an idea and ideals that border on reality as truth as such. Equally, this form of truth or reality remains the prerogative of philosophy. And this philosophy etymologically is all about striving for truth, which is expressed in *a love of wisdom*. The word music, however, opens up within philosophy. A philosophy of music or Music in Philosophy complements each other as an ontological condition that captures man as *animal rational* (rational animal) and *animal music* (musical animal).

### **Conclusion**

African music and African philosophy take cognizance of the interplay in Traditional African Music amidst other world musical heritage. The global movement of Western or world music influences African music as such as musicians continue to experiment with African Musical compositions and instruments mixed with international styles of music. This gives room to the Africanization of music or Africanized style of musical genres. With African philosophy as an applied philosophy on African rhythm and sounds as well as on African lyrics and instruments, African Music will have a great influence and also be a



major factor in the shaping of contemporary African music and reshaping of traditional African music. To this end, African Music will be very significant in African philosophy qua tale.

African traditional music which was greatly prevalent before the era of the exploration, through slavery unto colonization, lost most of its glorified genre to those unspeakable moments in which Africa was plundered. Traditional African music lost its originality and finesse as a result of such reticulation and was often regarded as assimilation. The era of and after independence became another good moment for marriage and total absorption even with the local languages between Traditional African music and Western music with regard to musical genre, styles, instruments and new varieties giving birth to High-life, Afro-beats and many more. More so, in the 21st century, African music has simply developed into many musical facets with many global and successful blends of musical styles. With the methodological moment of proper hermeneutics, one can dependably and realistically infer that African Philosophy is Philosophy with an African source and is nourished from African culture as its cultural reservoir and primary critical nourishment. African music in its entirety remains a value in any functional African society and equally tries to address the realities in and around Africa from the point of view of bringing order and harmony, bringing a kind of equipoise in one's personal life and existential living.

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