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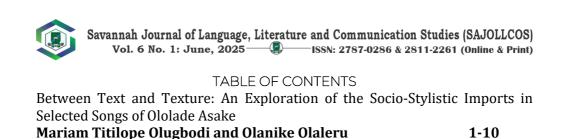
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Social Equality in Hausa Oral Songs: An Overview of [Anmaraya'S Song 'Mai Akwai Da Mai Babu' (The Rich and The Poor)

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Abstract

Hausa people are strongly against division and they always encourage oneness and social equality. Social equality is the state of affairs in which all people within a specific society or isolated group have the same status in certain respects. It also suggests that equality is foremost about relationships and interactions between people rather than being primarily about distribution (Fourie 2015). The historical antecedent of Hausa oral song was presumably born and evolved with the birth and evolution of the language itself (Muhammad 1999). Hausa Song is still considered as one of the means through which Hausa people uses to convey messages, express feelings, portrays intellectuality and resolve differences despite the changes of time and the globalization. Songs are used as a customary means of evolving the constituents of the societal norms with a view to preserving and transmitting the cultural values and the belief system of a particular society. Hausa culture have total rejection to discrimination and uphold communalism between those with and those with not (rich and poor). This principles is confirmation of the philosophical stance of being one's brother's keeper despite considering the differences of social status. It is in the light of the foregoing that this paper gives an overview of one of the songs of Alhaji (Dr) Adamu [an Maraya Jos, "Mai akwai da mai babu" (The rich and the poor), in order to see how well Hausa songs functions as a vehicle of foregrounding Marxist belief of Hausa People. The methodology comprise of descriptive, pragmatic and translation criticism which is employed in the analytical procedure of the study. The study discovered that the song 'Mai akwai da mai babu' is one of the Hausa oral songs composed with the aim of bringing unity and harmony between the rich and the poor and propagates social equality among Hausa people.

1.0 Introduction

Marx argues that throughout history, society has transformed from feudal society into capitalist society, which is based on two social classes, the ruling class (bourgeoisies) who own the mean of production and the working class. Marxism seeks to explain social phenomena within any given society by analyzing the

material conditions and economic activities required to fulfill human material needs.

Oral singers are important personalities in Hausa society and they has a very vital roles to play in the society like every other individual, these includes but not limited to keeping the traditional history of society alive, passing



significant information from one generation to the other, recording any important event that take place in the society and some time changing the ideology of the society on a particular issue.

Dr. [an Maraya Jos is one of the popular Hausa singer that composed many songs on issues that he sees as social problems within contemporary Hausa society. The solo singer was born at Bukur a town near Jos in 1946 (Umar 1985 and Furniss 1996). His birth name is Adamu Wayya, but his father died shortly after his birth and his mother died while he was still an infant. Orphaned as a very small child he was raised by the chief of the town for whom [an Maraya's father had been a kotso drummer. Determined to be a musician like his father he too started with the kotso drum but quickly switched to the small singlestringed lute (kuntugi). He traveled widely following the transport drivers to Maiduguri and back. One of his earliest songs, 'Karen Mota' was about the young men who accompanied professional drivers to act as laborers and assistants. Such concern, in song with categories of ordinary people is unusual and has been a distinguishing feature of [an Maraya throughout his carrier. While some of his songs are moralistic and highly critical of certain categories of people, there is strong sense of his concern for ordinary people. It can be argued that the single theme which runs throughout almost all his songs is the singer's sympathy for the common poor man. Abdulmumin (2018) cited Olosi (1991) who

described [an Maraya Jos 'as highly rated solo artist which his high sense observation of evervdav happenings in the society has enriched his repertoire to a large highly philosophical extent. musician. He is noted for his songs on social commentary, criticism of anti-social acts, satirical lyrics as well as songs of praise..' (Dr) Adamu [an Maraya Jos by the end of his life he had toured internationally. performed in the United States, the Netherlands. Germany, Trinidad, Jamaica, Guyana, Venezuela, Brazil and Ethiopia. He was also a performer at Festac 77 (The second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture) in Lagos. He was a Member of the Order of the Niger (OON) and a recipient of the Nigerian Federal Republic Medal, 1st class. His last concert before he felt sick was at the People's Democratic Party (PDP) fund raising dinner. He died on the 20th June, 2015. The song "Mai akwai da babu" is one of his songs in which he showed his strong feelings against inequality. The portrayed a certain level of equality between the rich and the poor

1.1Theoretical Framework

This paper adopted Marxism theory as its working theory. Marxism is both a social and political philosophy that analyses the impact of the ruling class (the rich) on the laborers (the poor), leading to uneven distribution of wealth and privileges in the society. The theory is a body of doctrine developed by Karl Marx and, to a lesser extent, by Friedrich Engels in the mid-19th century. It originally



consisted of three related ideas: a philosophical anthropology, a theory of history and an economic and political program. Throughout the modern history of Europe, and especially at the end of eighteenth century in France, where a resolute struggle was conducted against serfdom in institutions and ideas, materialism has proved to be the only philosophy that is consistently true to all the teachings of natural science and hostile superstition. At the time Karl Marx invented his theory of class struggle. Marx considered the capitalist class - that is the employers - a reactionary force that maintains a position of supremacy by holding back the advancement of the proletariat or working class. He predicted the proletariat would one day rise up to replace the bourgeoisie as the dominant economic class by taking over the means of production.

Moreover, as fashioned by Lenin, building on the earlier works of Marx and Engels, it is the belief that history advances by means of class struggle. Always nudged in a benign direction by the leadership of a party. This theory communist foresaw that in capitalist societies, a small vanguard of professional revolutionaries was necessary to infuse the working masses with revolutionary fervor and overthrow capitalism. In Lenin's view, the communist party ruling on behalf of the working class would establish a socialist state and put in place the foundation of a communist society. Eventually class differences would vanish, the state would be abolished

and people would live in affluence and harmony.

Though, Marx and Engels conceived of communism as socio-political system of abundance, equality, and free choice, they said little about how economic decisions would be made other than property would belong to society as a whole. However, Kommuna (1919) as cited in Lenin (1985:60-61) has suggested a way out in building a new socialism. He observes that we cannot totally ignore the materials inherited from the old capitalist world, rather we must utilize them.

If you are unable to erect the edifice with the materials

bequeathed to us by
the bourgeois world, you will not be
able
to build at all. For the
purpose of building socialism, we
must
make the fullest use science,
technology and in general,

everything that capitalist Russia bequeathed to us.

In essence, what Kommuna is suggesting is to place people of old type in new conditions, keep them under proper control, under the vigilant supervision of the proletariat and make them do the work needed under the new system of socialism. It can be inferred from the foregoing that the premise of Marxism is the struggle for egalitarianism (a philosophical perspective that emphasizes equality and equal



treatment across gender, religion, economic status and political beliefs) and fairness.

1.2 Methodology

The data for this paper was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected from a recorded audio cassette and the song transcribed. While the secondary data was collected from some research works on Hausa oral songs. This includes Furniss (1966), Daba (2006), Gusau (2003, 2008 and 2014) among others. Also the methodology comprise of descriptive. used pragmatic and translation criticism which is employed in the analytical procedure of the study.

1.3 Hausa Oral Songs

Hausa oral songs are vital part of Hausa culture, passed down through generations by word of mouth. They often tell stories, share history, and express cultural values. These songs are often acoustic, simple and memorable making them easy to remember and share with others. The term 'oral' etymologically means 'to do with mouth'. Oral song is a composed. verse or poetry performed transmitted memorized by someone without the aid of writing. It is sometimes considered to include any poetry which is performed live. Chamo (2014) stated that oral song exist most clearly within oral culture, and much oral poetry, however is memorized verbatim - though the price wording, particularly of words which are not essential to sense of meter, do tent to change from one

performance to another and one performance to another.

In Hausa, oral overlaps with, or is identical with poetry and verse as stated by Daba (2006) "In Hausa, the term "verse", "poetry" and "song" are be synonyms". regarded to Meanwhile in Hausa society oral poetry is also performed by other means, such talking drums. Songs and dance are very common in Hausa or African society in general. There is almost no communal activity that is not accompanied by songs and dance. There are work songs, marriage songs, nursing songs, praise songs, love songs, spirit songs etc. Songs form an important part of the live and thinking of the people.

In Hausa society, poetry is one of the principal genres of literature if not the most crucial one. Poetry propels social direction. As home to society's values, norms and custom, oral songs in the historiography is the data bank for epistemology and philosophy. Through songs people learn, laugh, mourn, educate, console each other, inspire one another and at times pass secret messages. Akivaga and Odaga (1982:67).

There are stages of development of oral songs in Hausa. Daba (2006) and Chamo (2014) categorized the stages into four categories to include prejihad, during the jihad, post jihad and the current stage or period. Each of the category can be sub-divided into broad categories.

Pre-jihad oral songs in Hausa usually trace the success of leaders in war and they include the use of different



figurative expression to praise a hero and his activities. The Hausa iihad songs were composed as many of the Hausa people embraced Islam and became vast in Islamic teachings. They began to compose songs, which were against the pre-jihad songs. The objectives of the jihad songs were to and stop continued discourage singing of pre-jihad songs which focused and centered on the praises of local cults, heroes and other activities in the community. Islamic oral singers began to offer a morally acceptable alternative to the wa}o}in banza, of the pre-jihad era and to reach the Hausa speaking population with the Islamic message of the salvation ([andatti 1975:62). The trend of discouraging people from wa}o}in banza, the useless songs also continued well into the post jihad period.

The Hausa contemporary period songs are are composed on different aspect of life, and they are also an extension of the two earlier periods with addition of current issues.

1.4 Social Equality in the song 'Mai akwai da mai babu' (The rich and the poor) By Alhaji Adamu Xanmaraya Jos

Social equality refers to the idea that all individuals in a society should have equal rights, opportunities, and status regardless of their race, wealth, gender, sexual orientation, religion or other characteristics. It involves the absence of discrimination and the promotion of equal access to social status,

resource, services and opportunity. Social equality is a fundamental human right and necessary condition for building a just and fair society. Some key aspect of social equality includes freedom discrimination and harassment. equal access to healthcare and social services and egual rights protection under the law.

Achieving social equality requires ongoing efforts to address and overcome systematic barriers, biases and inequalities. Ĭt involves individuals. communities. organizations, and government working together to create a more just and equitable society for all. people Hausa perceived social inequality and they strive to correct the ill by using verbal arts, oral songs inclusive. Given the understanding that oral songs are communicative and per formative tool which can best be manipulated by an artist, its effect or perlocution transcendent the limit of overt expression of common place. In essence the dignity and respect accorded to singers by the Hausa people invest them with a more compelling illocution such that the singer is lured into putting the teachings there from into practice.

(Dr) Adamu [an Maraya's song 'Mai akwai da mai babu' is a very good example for investigation to see how social balance and interpersonal equilibrium are achieved via aphorism. Below are examples from the verse:



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Amma mai akwai da babu, Duka dangantakarku daidai, Allah yake fa]a haka, Ba ni nake fa]a ba, Da ni nake fa]a haka, Da sai ku }aryata ni, Have and have not, You are the same, It is said by Allah, Not me, If it were said by me You could accuse me by laying.

(Furniss 1966)

The singer composed the first stanza of the verse by reminding the rich and the poor to consider themselves equal and one in the sight of Allah despite their social and financial differences. He exploited the Hausa philosophical view on anything attached to Allah and emphasized

that the saying is not from him but from God. He said that because he want his listeners to take his assertions as nothing but truth.

In trying to equalize the rich and the poor socially, the singer called on both of them to consider that:

Kai mai akwai ka gane,
Idan kai gida talatin,
Cikin guda za ka je ka kwana,
A]aki guda ka kan kwan,
A kayin gado guda]ai,
Haka nan wanda bai da komai,
Gida zai je ya kwana,
A]aki guda ikan kwan,
A gefe guda ikan kwan,
A kayin karauni falle,
To in gari ya waye ta nan,
Duka dangantakarku daidai,

The rich should understand
If you own thirty houses
You are to sleep in only one
In one room,
On a single bed,
It is so with the poor,
He is to sleep in a house,
In one room,
He sleep on one side (OF his mat),
On a single mat,
When it is morning,
They are all equal.

(Furniss 1966).

(Dr) Adamu [an Maraya called on the rich people to know that, no matter how wealthy they are, how much money they accumulated and the number of houses they build. They can only spend their night in one room and on one bed only. So also no matter how poor a person is. He is to spend the night in one room and on a single mat. And when it is morning they are all equal. The singer here

portrayed the Hausa thought and perception that showed social equality between the rich person and the poor in days today way of living, regardless of the number of the houses the rich possessed.

In another lines of the song 'mai akwai da mai babu' (the rich and the poor), the singer shows how the dressing of a rich and the poor



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person look like despite the social differences:

In ba ku]an misali,
Kai mai akwai ka gane,
In kana ta}ama akwai ne,
Ba ka sanya hula goma,
A kanka kai ka]ai,
Ai da an gano ka,
Sai a ce wane ya ta~u,
Sai dai ka sa guda]ai,
Haka nan wanda bai da komai,
Shi ma isa guda]ai,
Matu}ar in yana da hali,
To malam idan ka duba ta nan,
Duka dangantakarku daidai,

I cite example for you,
The rich should understand,
That if you boast of wealth,
You cannot put on ten caps,
At the same time,
If you do so,
You will be declared a madman,
You can put only one,
So also the poor one,
One is enough for him,
If he has any at all,
If you study this case well,
You are all equal.

(Furniss 1996)

In trying to convince his listeners and make them believe that there is no social discrimination about the number of caps the rich and the poor are expected to wear. He capitalized that both the poor and the rich can only put one cap on their head at a time. He added that the rich cannot put ten caps on his head at a time just because he is rich and if he is to that people will see him as a mad man, likewise the poor. With that the rich and the poor are to be considered equal.

In trying to portray the rich and the poor as equal and harmonizes their social status, the song gives more examples of some worldly materials that no matter how rich or poor you are you will be seen and address with no differences. He cited example with watch which can be used for time-telling. Despite

knowing that there are different types of watches and some are made from gold or silver and they are made of stylish accessories and functional tools with many luxury brand and innovative features, and they worth lots of money but he considered them to be the same, because all they meant are to tell time. So when a watch of three thousand and that one worth three thousand pounds and that of thirty shillings says time they are all regarded to be equal and of no different. He also made mention of the number of pairs of shoes that a normal person is expected to wear, which cannot be more than one, no matter how rich or poor he is. Here he emphasized when a person wears more than one pair of a shoes simply because he is rich, people will see him and address him as a mad man.



In ba ku Jan misali,
Da agogon jaka talatin,
Da agogon sule talatin
Da agogon sulai talatin,
In wannan I ba da loto daidai,
Wannan I ba da loto daidai,
In za a dai kira su,
Sai ka ji sunansu dai agogo.

I am giving you an example
A watch worth three thousand
And a watch worth three thousand pounds
And a watch worth thirty shillings
If this one gives correct time
And that one gives correct time
If you are to name them
Each will be called Watch.

Kai mai akwai ka gane,
In kana ta}amar akwai ne
Ba ka sanya takalmi goma,
A sanka kai]ai,
Ai da an gano ka
Sai a ce ga mahaukaci nan
Sai dai ka sa guda]ai
Haka nan wanda bai da komai,
Shi ma i sa guda]ai,
Matu}ar in yana da hali
Malam in idan ka duba, tan an
Duka dangantakarku daidai

You rich should know that
If you are boasting for wealth
You can't wear ten pairs shoes
At a time
As soon as you are seen
You will be declared mad man
You can only wear one pair
It is so with the poor
He also wear one pair
If he can afford them
If you study this
You are equal.

(Furniss 1996)

Alhaji Adamu Xanmaraya cited another important example of social equality within Hausa society. Here he concluded that there are no differences on the final arrangements and rites of a rich and a poor person after death within the Hausa society. He said:

Kai mai akwai ka gane, In ba ku]an misali, Ran komuwa ga Allah, Kai mai akwai ka gane Im ba ku]an misali, Ranar komuwa ga Allah, Yadi biyar fari]ai, A ciki za a nanna]e ka, Rami guda akan tona, Ku tuna ba a tona goma, Don wai kana da hali, A ciki za a turbu]a ka

You the rich should understand I am giving you an example On the day of passing away, You the rich should understand I am giving you an example On the day of passing away It is only five yards of white cloths That you will be wrapped with, One grave will be made Ten grave will not be dug Simply because you are rich You will be buried in there



Haka nan wanda bai da komai Ran komuwa ga Allah Yadi biyar fari]ai, A ciki za a nanna]e shi, Rami guda akan tona, Ku tuna ba a tona goma, Don fa wai bai da komai, Malam idan ka duba Ta nan duka dangantakarku daidai,

It is the same case with the poor When passed away
It is only five white yards
That he will be wrapped in
One grave will be made
No up to ten
Becouse he is poor
If you study this
You are equally treated

(Furniss 1996)

In this corpus the singer explained the rites performs for the funeral arrangements of a Hausa man being him rich or poor without any bias. He highlighted that when a Hausa man died being him rich or poor will not change the status of his funeral rites, so they are treated equally. He explained that when the rich person died, he will only be clothed with five white yards and same with the poor man without any different. He also added that both the rich and the poor are buried in one grave when they died, and non of them will be buried in ten graves because he is rich or otherwise. By these he emphasized that when you study it you can see how the rich and the poor are treated with social equality within Hausa culture.

1.5 Conclusion

The foregoing, is an attempt that briefly examines and bring an overview of one of the songs of Alhaji Adamu Xanmaraya 'Mai Akwai da Mai babu', which is a thought-provoking song that highlights social equality in Hausa society. Through Alhaji Xanmaraya's powerful lyrics and haunting melody, the song inspires listeners to reflect on the

social equality and justice among human. The paper went through the song and brought out the level of which the singer discussed how the Marxist world view superimposed, which are directly serving the role of vehicle for the ideology expression. Hausa people presented as one which celebrate togetherness, fairness and social cohesion as opposed to capitalism and the social inequality which modernization instigates. The song highlighted the level of which social equality is observed within the Hausa society up to the final stage of funeral rites.

The study confirms that most of the Alhaji Adamu Xanmaraya songs are of generally philosophical in nature with a strong didactic tone, as claimed by Furniss (1996:153). This was seen in the song 'Mai Akwai da Mai babu' which was composed philosophically and expressed the Hausa people's perception on social equality.



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