



STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF AFROBEAT MUSIC OF FELA ANIKULAPO KUTI

Albert Oikelome PhD.
University Of Lagos, Akoka Yaba

Afrobeat, pioneered by Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, has been globally acclaimed as a unique popular musical typology that emerged from the continent of Africa. Although various studies have addressed its philosophical, sociological and linguistic perspectives, not much has been devoted to its stylistic study. There is therefore the need to undertake a stylistic analysis of Afrobeat music with the view to understanding the fragments that has been intelligently woven together to make the music a unique phenomenon. In doing this, we would identify the principles underlying the formation of Afrobeat. This will assist us in understanding the identity that distinguishes it from the mainstream of world music. Afrobeat, like every cultural product evolved from other styles. The challenge then is to identify these styles and see how Felá incorporated them into a distinctive genre called Afrobeat. This will help in better appreciation of the forms and structure of the musical genre. The study will also situate Felá's music into four artistic periods and analyse structural elements of the music. Samples drawn from each of the periods would be orchestrated and analyzed using the western form of music notation in order to establish the structure, form and compositional techniques of the composer. The outcome of the study will define some standard features of Afrobeat genre and articulate some of the theories which could serve as a framework for further specialized studies of other related popular music genres.

Keywords: Stylistic elements, music genre, Afrobeat, fusion, hybridity.

SHORT BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Albert Oikelome graduated from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka as the best student in voice in the year 1991. He also had his postgraduate studies at the University of Ibadan. His current research interest is on ethnomusicological discourse in popular music through both descriptive and stylistic medium. He has also undertaken series of studies on popular music in Nigeria and its relationship in the stream of world music. He has directed series of concerts within and outside the University community; a notable one being the creative Arts-in-Town Project in collaboration with the National Theatre of Nigeria. Dr. Albert O. Oikelome is also a virtuoso singer and choir master and has performed in numerous state functions. Dr. Oikelome has written and published several books articles in both local and international journals. He is presently a lecturer in the department of Creative Arts (Music Unit) of the University of Lagos, Nigeria.