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Yoruba oral aesthetics in new Nollywood Films Biyi Bamidele's film *Elesinoba*

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Abstract

Yoruba oral aesthetics explores the rich cultural heritage of the Yoruba people, which includes proverbs, storytelling, and traditional performances. This paper assesses the portrayal of oral aesthetics in the chosen film to identify the significance of the different forms of Yoruba aesthetics. This study concludes that modern writers are using oral tradition to reflect present societal realities, which creates a depiction of the human dilemma. To explain this, the study uses Hall's cultural studies film theory to look at the historical contents, representation of Yoruba oral aesthetics and explore the contribution of the overall narrative and visual experience in the chosen film. The research is of a qualitative nature. The conclusion shows that Yoruba oral aesthetics is used to enhance storytelling, preserve cultural heritage, and foster a deeper appreciation of Yoruba culture.

Keywords: oral aesthetics, cultural studies film theory, New Nollywood

Introduction

The forms of oral literature are man's earliest forms of artistic self-expression. According to Akporobaro33, "Oral literature refers to the heritage of imaginative verbal creations, stories, folk-beliefs, and songs of pre-literate societies that have been evolved and passed on through the spoken word from one generation to another."[1] The circulation of oral literature from one generation to another is what lies in memory. The advent of the British colonizers brought about a new culture and way of life, leading to a dilution or total neglect of indigenous culture. Scholar and literary icons like Wole Soyinka took to writing on the role of oral tradition which is to entertain, inform and educate. Asagba is of the opinion thatif playwrights employed traditional materials in their works, the rich tapestry of African orality will be showcased and oral forms will be properly documented.[2]

[1].Akporobaro, Introduction to African Oral Literature," (Princeton Publishing)
[2]Asagba, "For an Alternative African theatre", p. 45

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Oral forms such as folktales, myths, legends, proverbs, riddles, songs and other forms of African oral art are linked to the aesthetics of the arts which are highly relevant to society because of their functional role in the socialization of the people by providing role models for virtues such as obedience, respect for elders and diligence. Aesthetically, the domesticated language of the plays, use of traditional speech elements such as proverbs, idiophones, ironies, personification and other imageries that are common in Nigerian expressions make them relevant to the oral traditions through which the people are able to pass on the values of society, their history and culture and also their views from one generation to the next. In this paper, the focus is on the deployment of oral aesthetic forms in BiyiBandele'sNollywood movie; *Elesin Oba.*

The Advent of New Nollywood

Since the early 2000s, various discussions and conferences have taken place to examine how to revitalize the Nigerian film industry and restore its professionalism to the 1970s level. During this time, some other filmmakers attempted to make "breakaway" films that were considerably different from the usual; examples include Thunderbolt (2001) by TundeKelani, Dangerous Twins (2004) by TadeOgidan, Madam Dearest (2005) by TadeOgidan, and 30 Days by Mildred Okwo, among others. During the Golden Age era, Nigerians had a flourishing cinema culture. However, the culture began to decline in the late 1980s, and the film industry collapsed throughout the 1990s. A few years into the twenty-first century, Nigeria began to see the expansion of cinemas, which were initially designed for the middle and upper classes. The Silverbird Group is the first company to open a series of contemporary cinemas in Nigeria's major cities, with the majority located in affluent areas and districts. It established its movie chains in 2004, beginning with the Silverbird Galleria on Victoria Island, Lagos. The Silverbird Galleria is a huge shopping mall that includes an expensive theater and other stores for mercantile activity. This gives people additional reasons to attend the location than merely to watch movies; it's a social activity and a different type of enjoyment. This trend has provided another plausible reason for the decline of Nigerian cinematic culture in the 1980s, which might be attributed to the outmoded appearance of most Golden Age cinemas.[3]

Silverbird cinemas, upon their establishment, began playing Nigerian films of excellent production quality, discouraging substandard film production; the cinema culture in Nigerian cities with film theatres began to improve significantly, with enormous potential. However, there were few well-produced Nigerian films at the time; even then, the majority of films screened were in Yoruba, because they drew a larger audience than a normal English-language picture, which frequently drew no spectators. The first New wave film to be shown in a cinema was the Yoruba-language film Irapada (2006) by KunleAfolayan, which was screened at the Silverbird Galleria in Lagos.TheSilverbirdexperiment was extremely successful, and as a result, the company opened a few more cinemas in Lagos and other locations around the country. Genesis Deluxe Cinemas and Ozone Cinemas opened shortly after Silverbird Cinemas, introducing competition to the industry. However, the

[3]Abimbola, "Gradually, cinema returns to Nigeria", 2009.

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cinemas from the start were still quite under-patronized, because the most of them were erected in the expensive regions. Later, in the 2010s, FilmHouse cinemas also entered the picture resulting in more cinemas across the country and availability outside of affluent districts.
The blockbuster thriller film The Figurine, released in 2009, is widely regarded as a game changer, focusing media attention on the "New Nigerian Cinema" revolution. The film was a critical and commercial success in Nigeria, and it was also showcased at international film festivals. Chineze Anyaene's 2010 film Ijé surpassed The Figurine to become Nigeria's biggest grossing film, a record it maintained for four years before being surpassed in 2014 by Half of a Yellow Sun (2013). Other popular films released in the early years of this revolution include: The Amazing Grace (2006) by JetaAmata, Through the Glass (2008) by Stephanie Okereke, Anchor Baby (2010) by Lonzo Nzekwe, Inale (2010) by Jeta Amata, Tango with Me (2010) by Mahmood Ali-Balogun, and The Mirror Boy by Obi Emeloye.

The most recent chapter in Nollywood's history concerns the adoption of digital streaming services. Netflix and Prime Video have given Nollywood films a global platform, allowing people all over the world to watch a vast variety of Nigerian entertainment. This move has not only expanded the industry's reach, but has also allowed for international partnerships, exposing Nollywood to a wider spectrum of storytelling influences. Nollywood's journey from home videos to cinema and streaming platforms demonstrates the industry's durability, innovation, and adaptability. Nollywood's global effect is growing, stimulating cultural interchange and transforming the landscape of African cinema on the international arena. As the industry looks to the future, it is prepared to create new ground by crafting tales that speak to viewers across borders and generations.[4]

Concept of aesthetics in Yoruba orature

Aisthesis is a Greek term that means sense of perception as sighted by (Budd 1998). According to Mautner, as described in Hall (2010)[5], aesthetics is "the study of the nature of beauty, the theory of taste, and criticism in the creative and performing arts".[6] This comprises a thorough evaluation of any kind of art, whether painting, poetry, or music, through the lens of interpretation, analysis, and criticism of beauty. In making a justified assessment, the critic considers the art's substance, form, and purpose. Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that is concerned with the understanding of beauty and how it manifests itself in art and nature. It deals with the study of what is pleasing to human sense of vision and imagination[7]

The late Hubert Ogunde, Duro Ladipo, Kola Ogunmola, and Dennis Osadebe's artistic endeavors in the use of aesthetics of performance are linked to the use of music and vocalization. Ogunde's use of music integrated dance, music, songs, acting, movements, and acrobatics, elevating his theatre to a worldwide level of

[4] Ibid.
[5] Hall, Definition of Aesthetics (New York: Hall, 2010), 201
[6]Thomas Munro and Roger Scruton, "The nature and scope of Aesthetics".
[7]Olowookere, "oral aesthetics in Iwude-Ijesa festival".

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pure art for its own sake and for moral instruction. Duro Ladipo and Kola Ogunmola are both given equal credit for using performance aesthetics to leave a legacy of historical events, myths, tales, and folkloric culture to their audiences (Kofoworola, 2004).[8]

In traditional African aesthetics, beauty is viewed not only as a symbolic aspect of art, but also as a form phenomenon that can be cultivated and acquired through changes in life. This is reflected in the communal pattern of life in Africa, particularly in Nigeria which Soyinka describes as the communion between the three worlds.

Elements of aesthetics in Yoruba culture

There are various aesthetic elements in Yoruba oral traditions, culture orature and performing arts. These elements include the following:

1. LANGUAGE: This is one of the aesthetic aspects, consisting of a planned creative process and performance framework that allows for improvisation and audience interaction. The play's diction is straightforward and artistic, with lyrical idioms, proverbs, images, and idiophones that are commonly used (Ukala196).[9] Issues are communicated to the audience with traditional nuances which is identified by majority of its audience.
2. RIDDLES: It is another creative aspect that involves puzzling questions offered as an enigma to be answered or guessed, which is tough to comprehend. The term "baffling" refers to a situation that requires creativity to solve due to a paradox or seeming contradiction. In Africa, the strange scenario is utilized to code messages and addresses the elderly, leaving the novice unsure of what was stated. In certain cases, brief allusions are utilized to entertain children and provide insight into their culture, philosophy, and behavior. In most circumstances, riddles require respondents to identify an analogy, such as meaning, sound, tone, or description[10].
3. MUSIC AND DANCE: Music and dance are paramount aspects of African oral tradition. Songs are used to evoke memories or emotions in the audience. As part of its archetypal significance, they are essential to oral narration and serve as a means of communal participation in the performance while simultaneously helping in the creation of the highest level of rapport between the narrator and the audience. Here, they are used to evoke the audience's memories or feelings. Music and dance are used to create the mood of the play, for entertainment, to comment on the actions or plight of characters and also to advance the plot which often involves simple but artistic diction. They are of African culture and for the Africans.[11]
4. PROVERBS: Proverbial sayings are one of the important stronghold of traditional African drama and still of great importance in present day

[8]Kofoworola, "Aesthetics of performance" Ilorin Journal of performing arts
[9]Ukala, 'Folkism: Towards a national aesthetics principle for Nigerian dramaturgy", 279-287.
[10]Akporobaro, "Introduction to African Oral Literature, Princeton publishing.
[11] Ibid

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African sayings. Proverbs consist of wise sayings that are used to instruct, teach and correct the younger generations. Proverbs are well known phrases that give advice or say something that is generally true. According to (Akpobobaro78[12]) they are "essential ingredients in African speech and culture", for they are powerful carriers of traditional wisdom and social morals. These stories are helpful for moral instruction as they convey the facts of African personal and social experiences in a hilarious, enjoyable, and visually appealing manner. Proverbs in oral tradition not only demonstrate the power of the spoken word, but also serve as an instructional tool that emphasizes the pragmatic, collaborative, and committed aspects of arts.

5. RITUALS: This is an integral part of the African theatre (Enekwe 154). Ritual is a fundamental part of oral narration which finds expression in the traditional society preoccupied with festivals and belief in deities. (Ukala289)opines that ritual is reserved for moments of interaction between man and supernatural forces and for waging psychic or metaphysical wars.
6. LEGENDS: Legends are semi-true stories passed down from person to person with significant meaning. They are often based on historical facts but incorporate mythical elements such as heroic characters and spiritual beliefs of the culture. Legends may be exaggerated or untrustworthy accounts of historical figures or events. The purpose is to make the story more convincing or to teach a lesson. In this case, the legend concerns humans and is often similar to myth in that it focuses on historical figures who have grown as a result of what they have done, which causes people to revere or worship them. It is thus a tale allegedly based on reality, with an intermixture of myth and materials told about a person, location, or incident.[13]
7. MYTH: Myth is a vehicle conveying a certain fact or a certain basic truth about man's experience in his encounter with the created order and with regard to man's relation to the supra-sensible world.It describes the origins of long-held customs or explain natural events such as the sunrise and sunset, the cycle of the moon and the seasons, or thunder and lightning storms. According to William Bascom1965

> Myths are prose narratives which, in the society in which they are told, are considered to be truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past. They are accepted on faith; they are taught to be believed; and they can be cited as authority in answer to ignorance, doubt, or disbelief. Myths are the embodiment of dogma; they are usually sacred; and they are often associated with theology and ritual[14]

The research uses a qualitative approach to analyze the aesthetics of African culture and oral traditions, which serve as the foundation for the development

[12]Akporobaro, "Introduction to African Oral Literature, Princeton publishing.78
[13] Ibid.
[14] William Bascom, "The Forms of folklore: prose narratives" Journal of American Folklore 78, no.307 (1965):3.

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of oral narratives. It examines Biyi Bamidele's adaptation of Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*, titled *Elesin Oba*. In this regard, data is gathered and evaluated from the focus movie. The qualitative method encompasses the content analysis of the case study, *Elesin Oba* and review of other literature pertaining to this research. Although there has been research into various aspects of *Elesinoba;* including those by (Kehinde 2022), (olasunmbo 2023) and (omoleye 2022). It appears that much attention has not been paid to the Yoruba aesthetics in the selected film. This paper attempts to illuminate on the Yoruba aesthetics in contemporary Nollywood movies using *Elesin Oba* (2022) as a case study.

Theoretical Framework

In achieving the set objectives of this paper, the theoretical approach is the Cultural Studies Film Theory. The field of cultural studies in Film theory examines how culture influences the creation of diverse meanings in film, a concept closely tied to Stuart Hall's theory of representation. According to Hall (2005: 18-20), representation is the ability to describe or imagine. Representation is important because culture is always formed through meaning and language; in this case, language is a symbolic form or a form of representation[15]. Cultural Studies Film Theory looks at the way that cultural norms impact the context of film. (Ashley 2023) also defines Cultural Studies Film Theory as a form of theory in which cultural practices are examined in relation to their impact on film. In this style of film study, we look at the way that cultural norms impact the context of films. They are produced in terms of religious content, social content, historical content and political or economic content[16].

Biyi Bandele's Biography

Biyi Bandele is a Nigerian novelist, photographer, playwright, and movie director. He is from the Yoruba tribe but was born in Kafanchan, Kaduna state in 1967. His father, Solomon Bandele Thomas fought in World War II while Nigeria was still colonized by the British Empire. Bandele spent the first 18 years of his life in the north-central part of the country. He had ambitions to be a writer and when he was 14 years old he won a short-story competition. Later on, Biyi Bamidele moved to Lagos. In 1987 he studied drama at the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife.

Bandele worked with the Royal Court Theatre, the Royal Shakespeare Company, as well as writing radio drama and screenplays for television. His plays include: *Rain*; *Marching for Fausa* (1993); *Resurrections in the Season of the Longest Drought* (1994); *Two Horsemen* (1994), selected as Best New Play at the 1994 London New Plays Festival; *Death Catches the Hunter and Me and the Boys* (published in one volume, 1995); and *Oroonoko*, an adaptation of AphraBehn's 17th-century novel of the same name.

[15] Stuart Hall, Representation: Cultural Representation and signifying practices. Sage publications, 2005, p18-20.
[16] Ashley, "what is cultural studies film theory?" Berveley Boys production, 2005.

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He was writer-in-residence with Talawa Theatre Company from 1994 to 1995, resident dramatist with the Royal National Theatre Studio (1996), the Judith E. Wilson Fellow at Churchill College, University of Cambridge, in 2000–01. He also acted as Royal Literary Fund Resident Playwright at the Bush Theatre from 2002 to 2003.

His debut as a film director was in *Half of a Yellow Sun* which was screened in the Special Presentation section at the 2013 Toronto International Film Festival, and received a "rapturous reception". He also directed the third season of the popular MTV drama series, *Shuga.* In 2022 he directed the first Netflix Nigerian Original series, *Blood Sisters*. He directed two episodes of the series namely: *Run Sisters Run* and *It's a Bloody Affair.*[17]

He was announced as the director of the new Netflix and Ebony life TV co-production *Elesin Oba*, *The King's Horseman* the screen adaptation of Wole Soyinka's stage play *Death and the King's Horseman*, which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2022. He won the International Student Play script competition of 1989 with an unpublished play, *Rai*n before claiming the 1990 British Council Lagos Award for a collection of poems. He moved to London in 1990 at the age of 22 armed with the manuscripts of two novels. His books were published, and he was given a commission by the Royal Court Theatre.

His movies include: *Elesin Oba*, the King's Horseman (post-production), *Blood Sisters* (TV Mini-Series, 2 episodes) (2022), FelaKuti – *Father of Afrobeat* (TV Special documentary), *Fifty*(2015), *Shuga* (TV Series) (8 episodes) (2013). His cause of death still remains unknown as announced by his daughter on Facebook.[18]

Synopsis of Biyi Bandele's *Elesin Oba*

Elesin Oba, The King's Horseman is a 2022 Yoruba-language Nigerian historical drama film directed by Biyi Bandele and distributed by Netflix, based on Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*, a stage play he wrote while in Cambridge, where he was a fellow at Churchill College during his political exile from Nigeria, and it is based on a real incident that took place in Yoruba land during British Colonial rule.

The film is based on a true story and is set in the 1940s Oyo Town, Southwestern Nigeria. The king has just died, and as tradition demands *Elesin Oba* must perform ritual suicide in order to join his dead king in the afterlife so that the king may gain free passage into the land of the gods, thus blocking disaster from befalling the community. As custom demands, *Elesin Oba* is to be given whatever he wants till his death. On the day he is to die, he sights a virgin whom he wants to have before he departs, in his words; he wants to leave the earth 'lightly'. Irrespective of the fact that *Iyalode's* son is the betrothed husband

[17] Sub-editor, "BiyiBandele: Biography, education, wife, children, career, Cause of death and more" NewsWireNGR, 2022.
[18] Ibid.

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to the virgin, Iyalode agrees to let *Elesin Oba* have her since it was his last night and custom demands that whatever he wants he gets.

A quick wedding is conducted and the customary white-blood handkerchief is handed to Iyalode. As part of the passage rites of the king, a dog is beheaded which is to signify the calling of Elesin Oba but Elesin Oba is confronted by the British and arrested. Olunde, Elesin Oba's son whom the whites took abroad comes home in order to perform his father's final rites after hearing about the death of the king. He is shocked at the way things have turned and in order to not bring take away shame from the family, he sacrifices himself in his father's stead. Out of being mocked, Elesin Oba commits suicide in the prison.

Elements of aesthetics in Biyi Bandele's *Elesin Oba*

Oral aesthetics in the Yoruba society is an embodiment of diverse and rich traditions, such as legends, panegyrics, myth, proverbs, ritual, folktales, songs, funeral dirge, lyrics, and ballad. Biyi Bandele is able to project this aesthetics in the adaptation of this film through the cinema judiciously. Although not all forms of oral aesthetics was used in the selected film, this research explores the oral aesthetics used in the film.

One of the Oral Aesthetics used in the film is language. Literature uses language as its form of expression. Language creates characters, creates settings and plots of a literary work. It is easy to identify the tone, the time and mood of a film. Elesinoba set in the old Oyo Empire, is full of deep Yoruba renditions that consist of proverbs and wise sayings. Also translated in English, one is able to understand the settings of the film. *Elesin ma jaaye aye loyo je lode oni o, elesin ma jaye……Aogbe baba dele, eniti o dunmoko book bomi lo, a o gbe baba dele…….* From these, one is able to deduce the setting and tone of ther film. Elesin is asked to continue his enjoyment as it has been done by his forefathers from Oyo

Another form of aesthetics found in the film is rituals**.** Bandele captures the ritual phenomenom in African Society in this film. At first, there is the passage of rite for the Elesin Oba to be killed before the king is buried. The Elesin Oba also enjoys like the the king when he is alive. ElesinOba is given whatever he wants either it is satisfactory or not. This can be seen in the market scene where Elesinoba points out that he wants to have the virgin, Iyalode knowing fully well that the virgin is her son's to-be wife but she respects tradition and made his request available.

Also, in Yoruba land, there is the ritual that is done for virgin. A lady who is not married is expected to be met as a virgin. On a bride's wedding night, her husband brings out the handkerchief with blood which signifies that she is whole when she got married. If otherwise, the bride and the bride parents are put to shame and she is referred to as an "incomplete bride", she is therefore returned to her parents with half kola nuts, half calabash and other things in half. Elesin Oba brings out the white blood stained handkerchief which signifies that the lady is truly a virgin.

In addition, Song is an important part of African society. In Africa, there is a song for every situation. Nkatia (1974) posits that: The themes of songs tend to center on events of common interest and concern to the members of the community or the social group within it. They may deal with everyday life or

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with the traditions, beliefs and customs of the society[19]. Nkatia's argument implies that songs reveal the traditions, beliefs and customs of the society in question[20]. There are different types of songs, songs of praises, warning songs, celebratory songs, all of which is embedded in Elesin Oba. One of such song is

A.

Akogunjaye	The valiant one is enjoying
O njaye o	He is enjoying life to the fullest
Alaniaremoobawa	Our father's house is that of kings
Eyii so juwana	We have witnessed this,
Oun to be sejueni, kiiseyineni	whatever one has witnessed can never be truly forgotten
Elesin ma a jaye	Elesin keep enjoying like a king
Aye l'Oyo je. Lode oni o	Like Oyo enjoys its prominence in today's world
Elesin ma Jaye	Elesin keep Enjoying like a king

B.

A o gbe baba dele	We will carry our father to the afterlife
Eniti o dumokogbokobomi lo	Whoever is unhappy should leave
A o gbe baba dele	We will carry our father to the afterlife

All these songs are celebratory songs used to show the enjoyment of Elesinoba. They are used to serenade him as he enjoys with women and as he dances in the market. In another song, the Iyalode is warned:

C.

Iyaloja, iyagbogbo	Iyaloja, mother of all
Moni o banuso, ma beniyan so	Always nourish your thoughts within, discuss very little with people
Bi asiribapemefa, sokanpere	If you have six secrets, share only one
Nitoriebiti o pera	Because the ones closest to you are the ones that may hurt

[19]J.H Nketia, "The Music of Africa" 1974, 189.
[20] Ibid.

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	you
Araileeninisekupani	
Omoojubanira la so ododo	Everyone smiles in your presence
Aseyineni o wopo Sasaeniyan lo fenibasile Tajateran lo fenilojueni Iyaloja, Iyagbogbo	But not many have your back Iyaloja, mother of all

This song is used to warn Iyalode about betrayal. It shows that Elesin Oba is about to betray her by going after her son's betrothed wife and she is about to give in so that customary rites can be performed

Orikiisa concept captures the whole essence of an individual's person in both terrestrial and celestial domains. This is further regarded as the whole essence of a person in connection with his/her origination. While oriki is often generically called praise poetry, some of it is hardly flattering, but it encodes the ancestral identity of a lineage, and what the members of that lineage share in common. Oriki is an intangible cultural heritage. One of the oriki used in the film is:

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A

Ode o Elesinoba mama de o O gbesokoto fi enu e sole Okodudu, Oko pupa Okoborokini baba salami Mo lenuabobakuni won peniElesin Nile baba to bi yin lomo Eyinlomo Oyo Alaafin Ogbashekeremobi a ti Iyennilesiyanbola o Olukueku, Ladigbolu Oro obaAtiba Okutameji baba elubo Ma jayeobaniso Elesin o	He is here Elesin Oba is here He who is always well adroned A lover of all men A lover of life and full of beautiful things One who follows the king into the afterlife is called Elesinoba like his ancestrals A true indigene of Oyo kingdom who knows the rhythm of the shekere In the homestead of Siyanbola Lineage of Olukueku, Ladigbolu Of Oro cult of Atiba house Strong like two stones that grind yam flour Go on keep enjoying like a king Elesin o

B

Elesin Oba o Eyinlomoikoomoolokunesin Eyinlolokun to diluojoro Eyinlomooloyo pa shekere Mo duro, owo mi o to shin Mo Mo bere, owo mi o to shin I am unable to match your grandeur	Elesinoba o You are the King's horseman You are the thread that holds Oyo kingdom steady A true indigene of Oyo kingdom who knows the rhythm of the shekere No matter how I stand I am unable to match your grandeur

Iyaloja o, owuIyaloja o Iwo lo gbaipalowoopa To gbogedetodotodo Gbogbooun to bati so labege	Iyaloja o The honorable one with authority over everything Your wish is our command

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C.

Furthermore, PROVERBS are considered to be imbued with ancestral wisdom, passed down from generation to generation until they become part of a society's oral tradition. Meider (2004) has defined the proverb as a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorable form and which is handed down from generation to generation".[21] Proverb is a traditional, conversational, didactic genre with general meaning, a potential free conversational turn, preferably with figurative meaning. In proverbs, the rich historical experience of the people, the ideas connected with work, life and culture of the people are reflected. The correct and appropriate use of proverbs and sayings give speech a unique identity and special expressiveness. Examples of proverbs used in this selected film include:

PROVERBS	**TRANSLATION**	**MEANING**
"alubatakankiidarin..."	Enough	Although the proverb was not used completely in the film, but it signifies that the ritual murder in the land is enough
"ajaobatiku, esinobasititeleolowo re lo"	The king's dead and the king's horse has followed its master	After the dog has being beheaded, it is time for the Elesin Oba to follow. Elesinoba knew that it was time for him to die
"ile aye ti lo bi orere, awoneyaninu re sitisonu"	The world is set adrift and its inhabitats are lost	Elesinoba is trying to convinePikling to release him to do his duties because if not done, according to custom the world would not remain the same
" biogedebaku, o ma n fi omo re ropo"	When the banana plant dies, it replaces itself	Iyalode is talking to Elesin Oba while she brings in the dead body of Elesin's son, Olunde who sacrifices himself in place of his father

[21]Mieder, "proverbs", Greenwood press.

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" aja o le sarekojaowo to n bo"	The dog cannot outrun the hand that feeds it meat	
"biesinba ta, olowo re a dubu ere"	When the horse throws its rider, its owner stops running	

Lastly, costumes and makeup, costume can simply be defined as anything worn on the body. Makeup is used to accentuate a look. Makeup adds to the age and reduces the age of an individual. The use of costume and makeup in a play is an aesthetic element as it shows the identity of the play, it shows the time, period and setting of the play and it adds to the beauty of the play. From the costumes used in Elesinoba, it is easy to identify the characters in the play and to know the settings and period of the play. Elesin Oba is dressed inaso-okeregalia to show that he is a person of wealth and status likewise Iyalode, she is also dressed in aso-oke which is different from other people in the film. Olunde, Pikling and the other whites' costumes showed that they are educated and they do not identify with the culture of the people. The only exception made were the servants wearing soldiers' uniform which signifies the British colonizing the country

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper has observed the Yoruba aesthetics in Biyi Banidele's Elesin Oba. The study discovered the different aesthetics in the selected focus. Using oral traditions can assist Nigerian society reclaim its culture and overcome denigration through social restructuring, bringing traditional alternatives to the forefront of modern life. Modern writers are using oral traditions to reflect present societal realities, creating a symbiotic depiction of human dilemmas. Oral traditions are important in Nigerian society as they reflect Africa's socio-cultural, religious, and political experiences. They also contribute to social change and advancement. Elesin Oba is rich in Yoruba aesthetics forms such as language, ritual, proverbs which enhance the performance aesthetics to a significant extent.

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