

Taxonomy of Sound in Islamic Religious Practice among the Anser-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria

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Abstract

Sound is one of the major elements of communication and its uses cannot be overemphasized. The use of sound in religious practices of the Anser-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria and some others organizations in Nigeria is generally seen as musical and non musical activities based on their religious philosophies. However, the classification above did not give credence to the status of the elements of sound used. The Anser-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria is considered to be one the religious organizations that overwhelmingly embrace the use of sound in its religious practice. The focus of this paper is to examine major religious activities of the Anser-Ud-Deen of Nigeria as a case study to analysis and classify sounds use in the Islamic religious practices in the South-West, Nigeria. This paper relies on descriptive and musicological analysis. Its employed library study, observational techniques and interview to elicit data. This paper reveals that the classifications of the sounds use in the sect were classified according to religious belief and cultural influence. It also reveals that sound used in the socio-religious activities were influences from the cultural milieu. The paper concludes that the sounds use in the religious practice especially the liturgy are very creative and should be made open for further use. Also, there are more opportunities that can be taped in the socio-religious sounds that will increase creativity and human capacity building of the people.

Keywords: Islamic religion, liturgy, prayer, asalatu, sound

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I. Introduction:

The advent of Islamic religion in the South-West, Nigeria brought a change in the lives of the people. This change influenced religious, cultural and social life style of the people. Although, the concept of worship of other religions and Islamic religion may be different however, the concepts of sound are very similar. Every religion in the world has sounds which they use as a means of communication in their worship. However, the mode, style, form and practice may differ. The concept, belief and philosophy of each religion determines its usage in its worship as such create distinction among other religions. It is also worthy of note that the use of sound in religion is considered as integral and marginal. There are terminologies that are generally used by some religions that are not clearly acceptable in Islamic religion as terminology or classification. This paper investigates the various sounds use in the religious worship of the Anser-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria. It further classified the sounds into musicological terminologies without undermining the belief and philosophy of the religion. The choice of Anser-Ud-Deen as a Case study for this investigation was borne out of the fact that it was one of the oldest sect in the South-West that liberally use sound to a large extent among others.

The Anser-Ud-Deen of Nigeria

Anser is a name of group of Muslim philanthropists in Saudi Arabia known for their generosity toward the propagation of Islam to the World. The name was later adopted by Yoruba Muslims and was coined as Anser-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria in 1923. The society was formed to practice and propagate Islam within and outside its communities through charity. The society gained wide acceptance and it experienced rapid expansion from its first secretarial at Alakoro in Lagos Island to Ogun, Oyo, Ondo, Ekiti, Abuja and Northern State in Nigeria. Its organizational structure is widely spread among its sub groups to allow for wide input in decision making and to regularly review all the aspect of its activities. The sub groups of the society include National Council, State Council, Branch, Division, Women Advisory Committee and Youth Association. The society is known for its religious practice and socio-religious activities. Its religious practice is encompassing as it observe all the tenet of Islam. Its socio-religious activities includes building Mosques, schools, organizing lectures and awards to honour and encourage members, emancipation of womanhood among others. The use of chorus

singing in its socio-religious activities is of immense contribution to the growth of the society and has helped it in converting and sustaining its converts.

Liturgy

Yekini-Ajenifuja, (2010) stressed that “all Muslims worldwide share the same form of liturgical worship, though with little or no modification”. Liturgy in Islamic worship is in two forms namely pure liturgy (salat) and socio-religious liturgy attached to ceremonies. Saqib, (unknown) and Daramola, (2005) reported that ‘the pure liturgy worship’ is salat (prayer) observed in daily prayer, Jumant prayer, Id-u-fitre, Id-ul-adha and Id-mid-unabi among others. This form of liturgy is observed in the full sense of solemnization and good decorum. The prayer could be performed individually or congregationally, though, it is believed that congregational prayer is more profitable (sunnah).

The daily salat prayers are divided into five namely, Subh / Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha. The prayers make use of various sounds distinctly different from all other types use at other liturgy. The liturgical prayers attached to socio-religious ceremonies and festivals include Nikah (Marriage), Janazah (Funeral), Turban (Ordination), Wolimoh (Graduation). The above are the various religious activities that involved the use of sound in its practice.

Islamic Religious Belief about Classification of Sound

The classification of sound in Islamic religion is controversial when considered through general view. The controversy is based on religious belief about the use of the word ‘music’ for the classification of its sound. The word is seen as an estranged word which should not be used to describe its religious setting because of what they considered as music. As such, it is instructional that Islamic liturgy is devoid of music and the sound use cannot be admitted as music. Shiloah (1995) in Yekini-Ajenifuja, (2010) expressed that ‘the attitude towards music has always been ambivalent as expressed in a series of contradictory feelings and concept predilections, mistrust and devilish; exalting disruptive admissible – prohibition’. It is generally believed that the word music is considered to be powerful force that intoxicates the mind and is capable of creating extreme excitements. It is also viewed as instrument of the devil that is capable of making someone to lose control of its reasoning and go against his or her wish uncontrollably. Basically, the Qu’ran did not discuss the issue of music and thereby allowed followers to moderate themselves. Opeloye (1998) expressed that ‘the Islamic belief and worship . . . have to do with man’s relationship with God’. Consequently, worship should be done without distraction which is considered as music. Vidal (1977) in Yekini-Ajenifuja, (2010) corroborated that ‘the official attitude of Islamic religious leaders to music has always been negative’. The sound used in the religious worship is rather identified in Islamic term than the use of the word music. Renard (2005) remarked that ‘Muslim worship is uniquely centered on the word of God to such an extent the spoken or recited word is the only sound associated with ritual prayers’. Sadie (1998) stressed that ‘. . . no Islamic language has ever describe the reading of the Koran, Hymn singing or even dervish dance as *musiqi* (music) but has used special designations in order to avoid the secular implication of the word’.

It is worthy of note that the word music is not totally abolished among the Muslims especially the Yoruba Muslims who have antecedent of strong musical background. The socio-religious activities of the Muslims are basically acclaimed musical activities. Olukoju (1987) remarked that music making was not part of Islamic worship but its uses for socio-religious activities were drawn from the Yoruba traditional institution. Euba (1988) buttressed that music is comprehensively explored outside mosques ceremonies. The special designations for the classification of the sounds use in Islamic religious worship shall be discussed below.

Classification of Sound

The sound uses in the religious activities of Islamic Religion are classified as follows:

- A. Liturgical Sound:
 - i. Handasah al Sawt
 - a. Qira’ah (Quran Chanting)
 - b. Adhan and Iqamat (Call to Prayer)
 - c. Madih (Eulogy)
 - d. Dhirkr (Hymn)
- B. Socio-religious Sounds:
 - i. Asalat (Religious songs)
 - ii. Were (Awaking songs)
- C. Musical Instruments
 - i. Drum

Liturgy

Liturgy as earlier mentioned, is a sacred worship that is observed in solemnities. It is acknowledged as a means of communication to the Almighty God as such, much reverence is given to its practice. The sounds uses in the liturgical worship are basically classified as Handasah al Sawt in order to avoid the use the word music which is considered secular.

Handasah al Sawt

The word 'Handasah al Swat' is an Arabic expression which refers to artistic combination of tones and rhythms within Islamic culture. Handasah al Swat was coined to find a proper word for sound use in the context of Islamic liturgical worship.

Handasah al Swat is used in the following status:

- a. Qira'ah (Quran Chanting)
- b. Adhan and Iqamat (Call to prayer)
- c. Madih (Eulogy)
- d. Dhirik (Hymn)

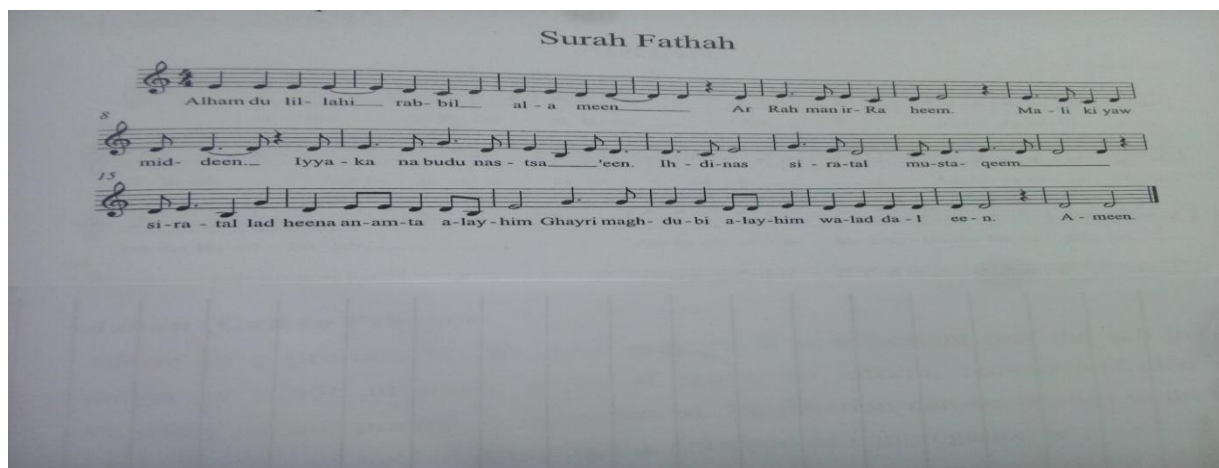
a. Quran Chanting

Quran, the holy book of Islam is regarded as the original source from which all ordinances, principles, guidance and information about Islam are written. It is obligatory for Muslims to read and memorise all or parts of the Quran for the purpose of prayers. The Quran could be read or chanted but it is rather preferable to be chanted according to the Tajwid (rule of pronunciation, production and articulation in the correct manner)

Quran 73:4 state that 'or a little more, recites the Quran in slow measured rhythmic tones'. Consequently, the chanting of the Quran followed varying significant patterns which makes it subtle and creates sub conscious role in the readers and listeners. In the Salat prayer the chanting of the Quran following the rule of Tajwid include Dva and Surah Fatihah among others.

Text

Alhamdu lilahi rabil al amen
Ar Rah manir Raheem Maliki yaw middeen
Iyyaka nabudu wa iyyaka nasta'een.
Ihdinas siratal mustqueen
siratal lad heena an'amta alayhim
Ghayri maghdubi alayhim walad daleen. Amen.



Source: Yekini-Ajenifuja (2010)

Analysis

The above recitative is in the form of spoken words in the structure of a chant. Its rhythmic pattern is exploitative while the tone is short in range and repetitive. It is usually chanted in unison but, occasionally, it is performed in two or more parts counterpoint: Male cleric who lead the chant usually starts with a low or mid-low voice while high voices available add ostinato parts at high range. However, the parts system is usually not preplanned action but an accidental case. The sonority of the chanting inspires the parts system.

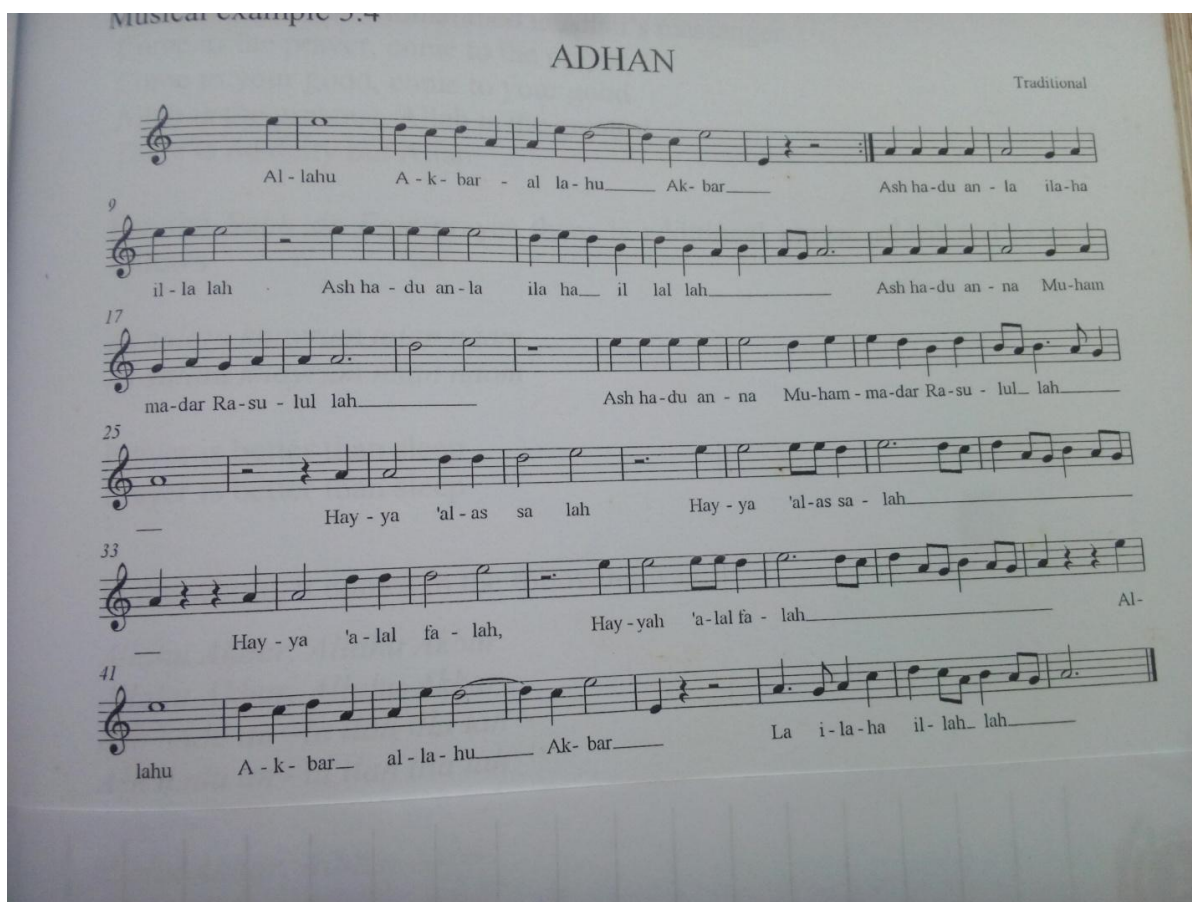
b. Adhan (Call to prayer)

Adhan is a prelude to Salat prayers and it is otherwise known as call to prayer. Adhan is chanted at every salat prayer to inform, remind and alert Muslims to observe or join congregation prayer. This person who chants the

Adhan is called Mu'adhan who is usually a male Muslim. The Mu'adhan could be any member of the congregation but have good understanding of what to recite and must have a loud voice capable of reaching people on the street. To recite the adhan, the Mu'adhan must face the Kabah in Mecca and his index fingers must be in his ears while he recites with a loud voice. When he says Hayya alas Salah, he should turn his face to the right and when he say Hayya alas falah he should turn his face to the left.

Text

Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar
Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar
Ash hadu an la ilah ilah lah
Ash hadu an la ilah ilah lah
Ash hadu an la Muhammadar Raullul lah
Ash hadu an la Muhammadar Raullul lah
Hayya alas salah, Hayya alas salat
Hayya alas salah, Hayya alas falah
Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar
La ilaha illah lah



Source: Yekini-Ajenifuja (2010)

Iqamat (Call to prayer II)

This is the second call to prayer or call to start congregation prayer. It is an alert by the Ma'adin to the congregation to rise up and start the congregation prayer. It could be recited by the person who made the first call (Adhan) or another person who has the knowledge of what to recite. Iqamat is recited standing and in a position the congregation can join the ma'adin to form a roll for the prayer.

Text

Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar
Ash hadu an-la-Mahummadar Rasulullah
Hayya 'alas salah, Hayya 'alal falah
Qad qamatis salah, Qad qamantis salah

Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar
La ilaha illah lah

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Iqamat", labeled as "Traditional". The score is written on four staves of music in a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are in Indonesian and are written below the notes. The lyrics are: "A - lla - hu Ak - bar, A - lla - hu Ak - bar. Ash ha - du an - la ila - ha ill - al lah. Ash ha du an - na Mu - ham - ma - dar Ra - su - lul - lah. Hay - ya 'a - las sa - lah, Hay - ya 'al - al fa - lah. Qa - d qa - ma - tis sa - lah. Qa - d qa - ma - tis sa - lah. Alla - hu Ak - bar, A - lla - hu Ak - bar. La ila - ah il - lal lah." The page number "91" is visible in the top right corner of the score.

Source: Yekini-Ajenifuja (2010)

Madih (Eulogy)

Madih refers to an eulogy which is strictly used for the praise of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w). Its theme is based on the attribute of his philosophy, judgment, sociology, business entrepreneurship, leadership model, trust, transparency and honesty among others. Apparently, it is one of old Arabian traditions in the pre-Islamic era but adopted only for the praise of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) in the Islamic era. It is further used by the Anser-Ud-Deen society as a gesture to encourage good Islamic manners, good conduct, morals among Muslims faithful in order to keep and sustain high standards. It is often used at religious gatherings such as khutuba (religious talk) salat, and other appropriate gatherings. The poetry is usually chanted in chorus form or in call and response.

Dhikr (Hymn)

Dhikr is a chant for the praise and acknowledgment of Allah. The theme is taken from the Qur'an but it is self-composed and chanted according to anaasheed Islaamiyyah. Dhikr is structured like the hymn reminiscent of the early church chant (Daramola 2005). It is performed in free rhythm in ad lib and in a manner close to the Qui'rah which makes it almost inseparable except that its pitch contour is more undulating with lots of embellishment. The poetry is usually chanted in chorus form or in call and response.

Text

Marhaban bikun marhaban
Marhaban bikun marhaban
Aha lan wa sahalan
Marhaban bikun marhaban
Eki won,
Marhaban bikun marhaban

94

Marhaban bikum

The image shows a musical score for a song titled "Marhaban bikum". It consists of three staves of music, each labeled "Voice". The first staff contains the lyrics: "Ma-r-ha-ban bi- kum ma r-ha-ban, ma-r-ha-ban bi- kum ma-r-ha-ban Aha-lan wa sa-ha-lan". The second staff contains: "ma - r - ha - ban bi - kum ma - r - ha e - ki won" and "ma - r - ha - ban bi - kum". The third staff contains: "e - ki" and "mo - r - ha ban ma - r - ha - ban bi - kum mo - r - ha - ban". The music is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are in Yoruba.

Source: Yekini-Ajenifuja (2010)

Asalatu (Religious Song)

The word Asalatu was derived from As-Salat (Ad-du'a) meaning to seek Allah's favour and praise Allah (Adekola, 1995). Asalatu is used in the socio-religious activities of the Anser-Ud-Deen society and is one of the major identities associated with the society. Asalatu chanting originated from dhikr chanting which was prominent before it but experience language barrier among the people. Dhikr was chanted in Arabic language but because of the level of illiteracy in the use of the language and as such asalatu chanting emerged among the women to increase their level of participation in the religious practice. It also became an avenue for the emancipation of women in the religious practice. The chant has grown to be song which took its derivation from the Dhikr and Yoruba cultural setting. A case where tunes from the dhikr are set into Yoruba text or a part of the dhikr is fused with Yoruba text. Some Yoruba cultural tunes are also set into religious text. Asalatu

Asalatu song has developed further into Islamic influenced genres such as waka, Dadakuada and Senwele among others (Adeola 1997, Biodun, 2000 and Daramola, 2005).

Were

The socio-religious activities of Muslims include activities during the Ramadan festival. Apart from the general liturgical worship known to all Muslims all over the World, the Yoruba added a musical expression that added colour to it. The one of the activities require that Muslims observed sari before the fast. Independent musical group usually engages in light musical performances to awaken Muslims for the early morning food. This was a mere alertness at inception but gradually became a musical group and genre. This is what is regarded as music. The songs use in these performances is composed in the Yoruba cultural context, though, sometimes, Arabic texts are infused. The instruments use includes drum, sekere and agogo among others.

Musical Instrument

The use of musical instrument in Islamic religion is marginal. It is not considered very important compare to the vocal renditions. It is use as simple accompaniment in the socio-religious activities of the religion while it is totally forbidden in the liturgy. Drum is the only officially satisfied musical instrument for the socio-religious activities. The Asalatu women group performs their socio-religious activities with or without the drum. But the were group performs their functions with the drum and other light percussions. This group

depends heavily on percussion because of their concept and motive. Arguably, their vocal renditions without percussion may render their motive irrelevant. In recent time, more musical instruments are now been introduced in to the system for the socio-religious activities only. Duff drum is generally considered Islamic drum for socio-religious activities but were such drum cannot be found local drums like dundun drum and sakara among other are used.

II. Conclusion

This paper has identified and examined the various sounds use in Islamic religion using Anser-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria as a case study. This paper has classified the sounds into two namely, Liturgical sound and socio-religious sound. The liturgical sounds are strict and are confined to salat prayer only. While the socio-religious sounds are general and flexible in it uses. The use of musical instrument is restricted to drum though it is confined to socio-religious activities while it is forbidden in the liturgical worship. The understanding of this classification will enhance an appropriate use of the sound and also open up the socio-religious sound for more creative exploration. Although, this opportunity had been explored to an extent in the past and genres like Fuji, Apala and Akurebe among others were created. However, there are more opportunities that can be taped that will increase creativity and human capacity building.

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