

‘Na Wa o for African Men’: Pragmatic acting in Sir Shina Peters’ *Shinamania*

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Abstract

Music performs different functions besides entertainment. This paper explores the sensitising and advocating functions of music with particular focus on Sir Shina Peters’ album *Shinamania*. I employ Jacob Mey’s *pragmeme*, a pragmatic analytical tool, to identify the pragmatic acts that are performed in the album. The analysis reveals that, with the practs of ordering, Sir Peters compares the attitudes of African men to African women and advocates women empowerment, predicating his advocacy on the fact that women are beautiful and intelligent. He presents them as more humane and considerate than men. He also eulogises the virtues of women, taking them almost to the pedestal of saints. He uses the pract of warning to balance his presentation, but he appears subjective on the side of women. Consequently, the paper concludes that Sir Shina Peters deploys this album as his commentary on cultural and socio-political peculiarities of Africa.

Keywords: Juju, Sir Shina Peters, *Shinamania*, *Pragmeme*, Women empowerment

Introduction

Music plays unquantifiable roles in the propagation of the values of any society, shaping and moulding societal views, re-orientating people on issues, and redirecting people’s ideologies in order to engender societal progress. According to Sunday (2011, p. 1405), music is a universal language. All

known cultures deploy music in different ways and for different purposes. When properly utilized, music can entrench certain moral values more easily than some other media, such as religious sermons, literary pieces and motivational talks, and even coercion. The memorability and easy accessibility of music have contributed to its spread and permanence. These are qualities that make it a veritable means of controlling humans.

One of the viable means of entertainment in Nigeria is music. Of the various genres of music in the country, Juju¹ remains a strong contender. From the late 1960s up to the late 1990s, Juju was the unrivalled choice of many Nigerians, particularly the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria, with Fuji as its only major challenger. However, in recent times, Hip-hop has virtually dragged other genres of music in Nigeria to the back seat, with only Fuji trying to retain some relevance. But for the relentless commitment of the likes of Juju maestro King Sunny Ade (KSA), who still releases albums fairly regularly, nothing meaningful would have been heard about Juju again. Since the time Chief Commander Ebenezer Obey, a contemporary of KSA's, went into full-time Christian gospel music, he has stopped singing strictly Juju, although he occasionally re-enacts some of his oldies. This has decimated the camp of Juju and has diluted the vibrancy that characterised Juju between the 1970s and the 1990s, particularly with regard to the kind of competition leading to excellence between him and King Sunny Ade.

In the heyday of Juju, almost all other genres of music were inconsequential in Nigeria. The transforming roles of Sir Shina Peters' *Ace*, released in 1989, remain fresh in the Nigerian field of music. Before that seminal album, Juju embraced more or less the *owambe* (fun-filled and relaxed) and relatively slow rhythm type. But with its fast beat and tempo, *Ace* sent other Juju musicians, mostly King Sunny Ade and Chief Commander

¹ Juju is a genre of music that became popular in the early 20th-century Nigeria. Its ensemble is dominated by guitars, in addition to keyboard, *gangan* (talking drum), *konga* and drum set. The lead vocalist is usually a guitarist too. There was little difference between Highlife and Juju when it started, as it was strongly influenced by Highlife.

Ebenezer Obey, back to the drawing board. They paced up and increased the tempo of their music. Dayo Kujore (Succour Music Creator) and Dele Taiwo (Funky Juju Creator) also hit the market with the kind of vigour Sir Shina Peters (SSP) brought. With that, the 1990s witnessed highly enterprising Juju.

A major feature of SSP's, Dayo Kujore's and Dele Taiwo's music is idolisation of the woman, with vivid description of some sensitive parts of women, almost on the verge of lewdness. This won for them both friends and foes. Many people enjoy both the melody and the lyrics of their music. Sir Shina Peters is notably known and respected for eulogising the female folk. He is more or less an advocate of women liberation. A most famous album in which he does this is *Shinamania*, released in 1990. In this paper, *Shinamania* is subjected to pragmatic analysis, using Jacob Mey's pragmatic acts theory (*pragmeme*). The aim is to highlight the strategies he uses to convey his message and discuss the pragmatic acts involved in these strategies.

Biography of Sir Shina Peters

Sir Shina Peters was born on May 30, 1958. His musical career started in the church. He later joined the bands of Chief Commander Ebenezer Obey and Prince Adekunle (Peters, 2014). He is married to Olabisi Ayoke Sammie Peters, whom he eulogises a lot in his music. He and Segun Adewale left Prince Adekunle's band to jointly form Sir Shina Adewale, a blend of Shina Peters and Segun Adewale. The union did not last long. Some years after the separation, Sir Shina Peters (SSP) released *Ace*, in 1989. It was this album that brought SSP to the limelight, fame and financial breakthrough. The popularity was almost unprecedented in the history of Nigerian music. He accompanied former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo on his campaign train in 2003 and performed during the campaign period. He has produced several hit albums. He is still active on the music scene. However, despite these achievements, SSP has not enjoyed much research attention. The review of relevant

literature below reveals this.

Review of relevant literature

Some research attention has been devoted to linguistic studies of Nigerian music. Hip-hop appears to have enjoyed significant attention. Ajayi (2012) investigates duelling among Nigerian Hip-hop artistes. Ajayi and Filani (2014) examine the use of pronouns by Nigerian Hip-hop artistes, noting that these artistes use pronouns to solidarize with their fans. Sunday and Ajayi (2017) analyse how Nigerian Hip-hop artistes duel with their music, focusing on the verbal duel among some of the progenitors of Hip-hop. Ojoawo's (2016) investigation focuses on sex and sexuality in the lyrics and video of Nigerian Hip-hop artistes. The paper notes that these artistes use different strategies to escape societal sanctions on their discussion of sex and sexuality which are taboo in the Nigerian culture. These studies on Hip-hop music are relevant to the current study, as they show how the Nigerian sociocultural realities are reflected in music. However, the current study focuses on SSP's advocacy of women emancipation through his music.

The way Nigerian female Hip-hop artistes express sexual ideologies in their lyrics is the preoccupation of Ojoawo (2020). She uses ideological strategies and the ideational functions of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics as the theoretical framework. She argues that women exploit sex and their sexuality to wield power against the hegemony and dominance of males. While examining the use of metaphors in expressing sex and sexuality by contemporary Nigerian Hip-hop artistes, Akande and Ojoawo (2019) note that the metaphors of sex used by the artistes do not wholly show allegiance to culture and religion. The artistes sampled describe sex as a game, food, and music. They freely express sexuality despite cultural restrictions. The focus on women and sexuality makes Ojoawo (2020) and Akande and Ojoawo (2019) relevant to the goal of this paper. The current study does not, however, concentrate on the objectification of

the body of women or deployment of sexual language by SSP, although he too does this. Rather, this paper examines how SSP uses his music to challenge male dominance and hegemony.

Sunday (2011) has explored verbal assault in Fuji, using the musical feud between Sikiru Ayinde Barrister and Kollington Ayinla as a case study. He claims that these artistes violate cultural regulations on interaction among Yoruba adults. They perform face threatening acts while arguing about the originator of Fuji. Sunday (2013) adopts a critical discourse analysis approach to examine how Yusuf Olatunji, a notable Sakara musician, discusses life issues in his album *Yegede*. Adedeji (2004) examines the lyrics of Nigerian gospel music, with particular focus on its style. One of the artistes considered is Chief Commander Ebenezer Obey. Odebunmi (2013) analyses the music of King Sunny Ade, a prominent Nigerian Juju musician, from a discourse perspective. He focuses on the concept of *omoluabi* in his music. The above studies contain elements of style of presentation in music, which this paper benefits from. But this paper goes beyond the style of presentation deployed by SSP; it also considers the practices he uses in his argumentation on women emancipation.

The symbiotic relationship between humans and their environment is examined by Olaosun (2016). From a semiotic perspective, he explores how Sikiru Ayinde Barrister, a renowned Fuji musician, and Haruna Ishola, the Apala maestro, use Yoruba flora and fauna to express their superiority over other musicians and the peculiarities of their brands of music. Erinsho and Osunkoya (2010) focus on Haruna Ishola's growth and rise to stardom. They stress that his music still inspires different people. In the view of Ajetunmobi (2010, p. 65), Haruna Ishola deploys the call-and-response style predominantly in his music. He adds that, besides entertainment, his music propagates Yoruba values and ethics. The culture of spraying money on musicians and its value are discussed by Yonlonfoun (2010, p. 49). She contends that many musicians of Haruna Ishola's time made

more money through spraying while performing than through their appearance fees. The discussion of style of rendition by Haruna Ishola and the issue of the values he addresses in his music are also relevant to any discussion on SSP. The dimension of advocacy and praxis is an important difference between the current study and the ones reviewed above.

The use of humour by Nigerian Hip-hop artistes is the focus of Bamgbose (2019). He asserts that the artistes use their music to poke fun at their listeners. They do this through metaphor, hyperbole and teasing. They carefully work on shared sociocultural knowledge in projecting their humour. This study is relevant to the analysis of SSP's music, particularly in the area of shared sociocultural knowledge, though this study does not focus on humour.

Akinrinlola and Adefemi (2019, p. 1) examine the role of context in the music of Asa (Bukola Elemide) from the perspective of Halliday's notion of context. They claim that Asa situates her work within the Nigerian sociocultural, economic and political contexts. In articulating her points, she deploys metaphors, rhetorical devices and different images. Her music addresses important issues, such as motherhood, gender equity, class difference, unity, and social unrest. The current study also examines some of the issues that affect women in the Nigerian society. However, it concentrates more on the pragmatic strategies used by SSP in presenting his argument.

As seen in this review, Sir Shina Peters' music has not enjoyed significant research attention from the pragmatic perspective. This prevents understanding of certain salient issues raised in his music. Therefore, this paper examines his *Shinamania*, with particular attention on how he advocates women emancipation.

The Pragmatic Acts Theory

Mey's (2001) pragmatic acts theory emerged from the speech acts theory. It is concerned with interactional situations

in which both speakers and hearers achieve their aims. It does not start with what is said and looking for what such could mean. Rather, it is concerned with the situation in which the utterance will be considered as appropriate. It does not emphasise rules of speech acts, but focuses on characterizing pragmatic acts based on situations (Mey, 2009, p. 750; Akinrinlola, 2019, p. 184).

The enterprise of this theory could be summarized thus:

Pragmatic acts are pragmatic because they base themselves on language as constrained by the situation, not as defined by syntactic rules or by semantic selections and conceptual restrictions. Pragmatic acts are situation-derived and situation-constrained; in the final analysis, they are determined by the broader social context in which they happen, and they realize their goals in the conditions placed on human action by the context (Mey, 2001, p.228).

This theory argues that the context determines the nature of the pragmatic act. A pragmatic act is different from a speech act, in that a pragmatic act does not necessarily involve speech. Pragmatic acts can be looked at from the perspectives of the agent and the acts. The angle of the agent considers the socio-demographic features of the person and his/her members' resources (MR) or background knowledge (Fairclough, 2001, p. 9; Noveck, 2018, p. 7; Oji, 2018, p. 369; 2019, p. 286; Lucey, 2019, p. 95). The emphasis is on the language used to perform the specific act and the language that can be used to create the condition needed to perform a pragmatic act. Pragmatic acting involves 'adapting oneself, linguistically and otherwise, to one's world', and one cannot pinpoint a specific 'predetermined use of any canonical speech act' (Mey 2001, p.215). In this regard, shared situational knowledge is important (Roitman, 2017, p. 9; Larrivé, 2017, p. 121; Casanovas, Rodríguez-Doncel & González-Conejero, 2017, p. 307; Chiassoni, 2017, p. 126;

Barberis, 2017, p. 342).

This theory considers common scene within the social context, arguing that our acting is determined by the scene and our action determines and reaffirms the existing scene. With the focus now on what is being done and not strictly on what is being said, the theory recognises the instantiated pragmatic acts (practs). This is further buttressed below:

The theory of pragmatic acts does not try to explain language use from the inside out, that is, from words having their origin in a sovereign speaker and going out to an equally sovereign speaker and going out to an equally sovereign hearer (who then may become another sovereign speaker, and so on and so forth). Rather, its explanatory movement is from the outside in: the focus is on the environment in which both speaker and hearer find their affordances, such that the entire situation is brought to bear on what can be said in the situation, as well as on what is actually being said (Mey 2001, p 221).

The theory centres on practs, which are determined exclusively by how the situation is understood by the participants (Mey 2001, p. 219; Bamgbose, 2018, p. 451; Akinola, 2019, p. 233). Grammatical correctness or strict observance of rules is not a factor in studying practs. The instantiated individual pragmatic act (*pract*) has a particular *pragmeme* (generalised pragmatic act) as its realisation. No two *practs* are identical, because they are realised in an actual situation and each situation is unique; every *pract* is an *allopract*. This means that it is 'a concrete and different realisation of a particular instantiation of a particular *pragmeme*' (Mey 2001, p. 221; Weigand, 2018, p. 9). The understanding that individual participants have of the situation and the effects of the pract has or may have in a given context exclusively determines what counts as *pract*.

In relation to music, the artiste as the speaker has anyone who listens to his/her music as his/her audience/hearer. However, he/she may have a primary audience, the target of his/her music. This may be his/her fans or the people of the language of the music. But because music is a universal language, the hearer/audience of any music cannot be limited to only the immediate audience. In interpreting a piece of music, however, cognisance must be taken of the culture of production and the culture of the immediate recipient. Thereafter, generalisations can be made.

This theory is relevant to the goal of this study. Its contextualization of speech and action makes it easy to use it in investigating the lyrics of SSP within the Nigerian context. Besides, the theory argues that we act through language generally, not only through speech. This makes it easy to see SSP's *Shinamania* as containing pragmatic acts that target women emancipation from male dominance.

The data

Sir Shina Peters's *Shinamania* was the data for the study. The album was released in 1990, as a follow-up to *Ace*. The sides A and B of *Shinamania* have seven tracks each. Three of the tracks in Side A ('Give our women a chance', '*Maajo*', and 'Think twice') were used for analysis because of their relevance to the focus of this paper. The three tracks, except '*Maajo*', are in English and Pidgin English; '*Maajo*' is rendered in Yoruba. The tracks run into one another; they are only demarcated mainly by their themes. The same beat is used in Side A; only Side B has two distinct beats (the last track has a different beat). He deploys a combination of choral and call-and-response styles in rendering the tracks. The title of the album derives from compounding: Shina (the name of the artiste) and mania. The word mania must have been deliberately used in the title of the album because of the popularity of its predecessor album *Ace*, as many people were literally obsessed with it. Many radio and television stations often played it repeatedly. Sir Shina Peters

was also invited to perform at many concerts in different parts of the country and on campuses of many Nigerian tertiary institutions. At different functions, he was the invited artiste, just as many disc jockeys used *Ace* at different parties. The album also enjoyed patronage from other ethnic nationals in Nigeria.

The analysis is presented within the framework of *pragmeme*. English translations are provided for excerpts that are not in Standard British English. Each excerpt is accompanied by musical notation. The musical notations were done using MuseScore 2.1, a music software package.

The patterns of his presentation

In the sampled tracks, SSP uses the choral style mainly; there are times that he uses the call-and-response style too. He deploys mainly three languages in his music: Yoruba, Pidgin English and Nigerian English. He code-mixes and code-switches among these languages. Code switching refers to alternation between different codes, languages or varieties of languages across sentential or clausal boundaries, while code-mixing involves alternation between codes, languages or varieties of languages within a phrase or clause (Meyerhoff, 2006, pp. 112 & 120; Youssef, 2010, p. 59; Miller & Caubet, 2010, p. 247; Hansen, 2018, p. 325). The portions of *Shinamania* relevant to this study are mainly sung in Pidgin English and English. These are the portions used for analysis here, as they contain relevant data for this study. He presents these portions in E Flat Major (a key signature). His argument in favour of women empowerment is hinged on certain points. These are examined in this section.

Women have ruled in other countries

In this album, he first tells people to abandon other types of music and embrace his. To indicate change of focus he says 'Haba!²' He then laments the domineering disposition of African men.

2 Haba! is an exclamation generally used by the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria to express astonishment and concern over an issue.

Excerpt 1

Na wa o! Na wa for African men!

Na wa o! Na wa for Nigeria men!

(SSP, 1990)

Na wa o Na wa for African men Na wa na wa

7
for Nigerian men

Na wa o is a Pidgin English exclamation to indicate frustration towards the behaviour of a particular person, thing or situation. It is a way of saying that African men are overbearing. He begins with African men before narrowing down his focus to Nigerian men. He appears to have studied Nigerian men's views and dispositions to females and is uncomfortable and displeased with what he saw. He is a man but he has taken position with women. He extricates and distances himself, instead of saying *na wa for us Nigerian men*. This style is to paint himself as a different man, with an ideology different from other men's. It is as if he were a woman or a man from another country. He limits his comments to Nigeria because he feels that they are the ones who hold on tenaciously to ancient patriarchal views about women.

He does not waste time to state his request, as captured in Excerpt 2 below:

Excerpt 2

Give our women chance to talk *o*

Give our women chance to rule *o*

(SSP, 1990)

Give our women chance to talk o Give our women chance to rule o

This expression is a *pract* of command, presented in the imperative mood. It presupposes that the women are subjugated by the men. This is evident in the predicator 'give', which implies that the men determine who will rule, despite the fact that they are not the only ones who vote. The degree of subjugation extends to denying them the opportunity to talk and the opportunity to rule. Talking here does not refer to normal talking; rather, it means being able to say one's view without being molested or constrained. In a typical Nigerian culture, women are not allowed to rule over men; it is considered an aberration. In the history of Nigeria, no woman has been president. No woman has been a governor; the only exception was Dame Virgy Etiaba, who became Governor of Anambra State (in the south-eastern part of Nigeria) after the impeachment of her boss; she had been the deputy governor then. The *o* in this excerpt is a Yoruba word used to emphasise the point in the sentence in which it occurs. There is a subtle warning in this excerpt; it is like a veiled threat. There is implied ellipsis. The full form could be something like this: 'Give our woman chance to rule *o*, otherwise you will....' In this excerpt, he identifies himself with the women, presenting himself as part of the possessors/owners of the women: 'our women', as against 'your women.' There is *pract* of warning hidden in this *pract* of ordering. These imperatives are suggestive of the prevailing situation in Africa, where women are subjugated. Two of the fundamental human rights are involved here – freedom of speech and freedom of association. The two are infringed upon by men. If the men allow the women to talk, there would not be any need for this imperative. It is implied that African women are silenced. They are not allowed to talk let alone get their views considered. It is assumed that they have no idea. A Yoruba aphorism captures this well:

<i>Awo egungun lobirin le se</i>	Women can participate only in the cult of <i>Egungun</i> ³
<i>Awo gelede lobirin le mo</i>	Women can participate only in the cult of <i>Gelede</i> ⁴
<i>B'obirin f'oju kan oro a gbe</i>	If a woman takes <i>Oro</i> ⁵ for granted, <i>oro</i> will consume her.

An association is supposed to ensure equality before the law. Disallowing women from ruling indicates that they are considered unfit to rule.

In debunking these archaic and stereotypic views, SSP says:

Excerpt 3

Go to India, na women dey rule
Go to India women ruled dem before
Great Britain, Philippines Nicaragua, na women dey rule

(SSP, 1990)

Go to India; a woman is ruling
Go to India a woman has ruled before
In Great Britain, Philippines, Nicaragua it is women that are ruling.

3 *Egungun* is roughly translated as masquerade. It is believed that the *Egungun* is not human; it is *ara-orun* (an entity from the spirit world); it is a cult among the Yoruba involving communication with ancestors. Fadipe (1970, p.213) translates *Egungun* as 'ghost mummer'.

4 *Gelede* is a cult similar to *Egungun*, as it involves mask-wearing. It is popular among the Yoruba in the northern part of Oyo State and Ogun State, both in south-western Nigeria, and in some parts of Republic of Benin, where the Yoruba can also be found. The *Gelede* festival is an avenue through which people involved in anti-social acts are publicly satirised, and the satirist is not sanctioned. See Adejumo (2008, pp. 9-10 for more detail).

5 *Oro* is the 'bull-roarer cult' (Fadipe, 1970, p.265). It is found among the Yoruba of south-western Nigeria. It is exclusively for men. During the *Oro* festival, females must not go out. It is believed that if any lady sees the *Oro* she will die.



As a committed advocate, SSP uses precedents in other countries to support his call. This shows him to be a thorough researcher, an erudite historian and a foreign affairs analyst. He uses the pract of ordering here too; he asks men to go to some places to find out what is happening. He also shows that the men are far detached from contemporary trends in world politics. Although he does not mention the names of the women who have ruled in these countries, his claims are right. For instance, Indira Gandhi ruled in India and Mrs Margaret Thatcher ruled in the 1980s in Great Britain. He feels that with the achievements of these countries, Nigerian men should shift their position.

Intelligence and Beauty of Women

As if pre-empting the argument that might be raised that the women who have ruled in the countries he has mentioned are exceptional and that Nigerian women are dullards, he says:

Excerpt 4

*In Nigeria, there are women of knowledge
North and South, there are women of success.
East o, West o,
give dem chance to deliver the goods, a beg o
...African women get knowledge.*

(SSP, 1990)

In Nigeria there are knowledgeable woman
North and South there are successful women

East o, West o
Give them chance to deliver the good, please.
...African women are knowledgeable

in Nigeria there are women of knowledge North and South there are women

5 of success East o West o Give dem chance to deliver the goods a beg o

11 African women get knowledge

What is needed most in leadership is knowledge; with it, one knows the past, manages the present and secures the future. Sir Shina Peters claims that Nigerian women are knowledgeable; they are not novices. He stresses that it is not a particular region that is blessed with such women. This is a strategy to make his music acceptable to all Nigerians. This accounts for his presentation of this portion of the album in Pidgin English and English. Not all Nigerians speak his own native language –Yoruba. It is also a way of internationalising his views on this issue. One then wonders why these women have not been allowed to deliver the goods. There is strong indictment of the men here. The pract of indicting reveals that the men are wittingly stalling the progress of the society, by disallowing the knowledgeable woman to deliver the goods. This implies that the society is the loser if qualified people are prevented from holding public offices. Sir Shina Peters is silent about some women who have failed in various offices. For instance, a powerful female minister in Nigeria between 2011 and 2015 has been accused of financial corruption running into billions of naira by the Economic and

Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Nigeria's foremost anti-corruption agency. This woman has become a fugitive and some of her property, including expensive jewellery, has been confiscated. If this woman becomes the nation's president, what happens to the economy of the nation? It appears that SSP closes his eyes to the negative side of women, which some of them have exhibited in public offices.

Men Are Bad

Sir Shina Peters is a man but he strongly criticizes men, particularly with regard to how they treat women. Could it be that he just wants the women to feel good? He sings:

Excerpt 5

*Ninety per cent bribery and corruption caused by men
Ninety per cent motor accident caused by men*
(SSP, 1990)

Ninety per cent, bribery and corruption are caused by men

Ninety per cent motor accident are caused by men



The pract of assertion is deployed here. The claim above is serious, particularly in a country like Nigeria, where corruption is endemic and remains an intractable problem; and accidents of different kinds occur. Sir Shina Peters' claim generates a moral question: If men cause ninety per cent of bribery and corruption and accident, what moral justification do they have to hold on to the reins of power? If it is true that they are such corrupt, they

o loun o mori oko waye (a woman lost character but lamented that she was destined not to have a husband). A soft-minded and sensible person will behave well in society. He/she will not steal, kill or be involved in any vice. If African women possess these and are also beautiful, it is unfair to subjugate them. He tries to say that Nigerian women are not what Nigerian men take them to be – weaklings and people bereft of ideas. With their soft-mindedness, they are able to show human and humane feelings. They are not gullible, because they combine being sensible with soft-mindedness. Their beauty will also fetch them honour and recognition.

Nigeria has produced many industrious women. Notable among them are Queen Idia of Benin, Queen Amina of Kano, Moremi of Ile-Ife, Madam Anikulapo Kuti, Madam Efunroye Tinubu of Lagos. In contemporary Nigeria, some women have excelled where men have failed. Prof Dora Akunyili, former Director of the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control did brilliantly well. Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, a former Nigeria's Minister of Finance, did well during President Olusegun Obasanjo's regime. She was the first African to contest the post of World Bank President, which she lost to an American in 2012.

Women should be cautious

In view of the prevailing circumstances, SSP admonishes women to be careful before they accept love proposals from men. The excerpt below captures this:

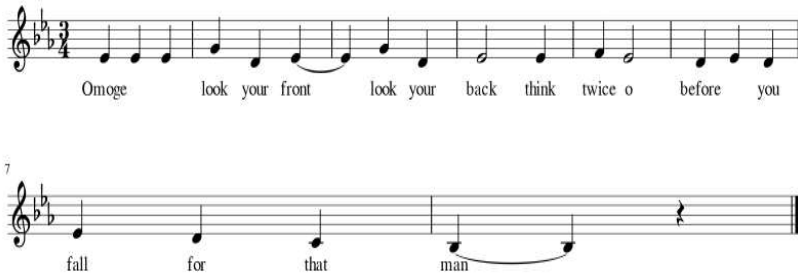
Excerpt 7

*Omoge, look your front
Look your back
Think twice o before you fall
for that man*

(SSP, 1990)

Lady, look front
Look back

Think twice before you
Accept that man's love



Omoge is a Yoruba word for a charming young lady. Sir Shina Peters deploys the practice of admonishing; he advises the lady to look before she leaps. This is candid advice often given by elders to young ladies so that they will not choose wrongly. He uses the pictures of men painted above as a point to warn young girls that not all men are loving and not all men value the intelligence and qualities of women. He warns women not to allow their achievements to make them fall prey to men's antics. He specifically cautions them not to accept love proposal from poor men, as seen in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 8

You can be Miss World o

You can be Miss Africa

You can be Miss Nigeria o

Without money nothing can be done...

I say before before

I say in the past

Love *boku* between men and
women

there was much love
between men and women

But nowadays money for hand
back for ground

but nowadays there is no
sex without money

(SSP, 1990)

The image shows a musical score in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody is written on a single staff. The lyrics are: 'You can be Miss World o you can be Miss Africa you can be Miss Nigeria o without money nothing can be done I say before before love boku between men and women but nowadays money for hand back for ground'. The score is divided into four systems, with measure numbers 7, 14, and 21 indicated at the start of the second, third, and fourth systems respectively.

‘Money for hand back for ground’ is a common saying among commercial sex workers. It means you cannot have sex with me if you do not pay. Sir Shina Peter argues that, in the past, there was pure love between men and women, but now, there is no true love again. He indicts women for making money the basis of their love. But he is quick to exonerate them:

Excerpt 9

Call: *Me I no dey blame women
I no dey blame women at all*

Response: *Baby wan buy beautiful dresses
Baby wan buy beautiful shoes
Baby wan buy beautiful jewelleries
Even sef baby wan ride beautiful car
E wan stay inside beautiful duplex
All dis tin na ego e go cost.
(SSP, 1990)*

Call: *As for me I don’t blame women
I don’t blame women at all*

Response: Baby wants to buy beautiful dresses
 Baby wants to buy beautiful shoes
 Baby wants to buy beautiful jewellery
 Even baby wants to ride beautiful cars
 She wants to stay inside a beautiful
 duplex
 All these things cost money.

Call

Me I no dey blame women o I no dey blame women at all because

8 Response

Baby wan buy beautiful dresses Baby wan buy beautiful shoes

14

Baby wan buy beautiful jewellery even sef baby wan stay

20

inside beautiful duplex all dis thing na na ego e go cost

He deploys the pract of defending in this excerpt. He attributes women’s seeming love of money to the need to satisfy their basic human needs of food, clothing and shelter. He is saying that it is the Nigerian patrilineal society that is responsible for this. As fathers and husbands, men have a role in women’s predicament. They do not provide for the female folk (as wives and daughters). This has pushed them to being involved in immoralities. They request money for everything. Men are made to indirectly pay for their action and inaction. The failure to empower the women has led to societal disorder. ‘Baby’ is a word of endearment for a female lover. He also claims that men too need money. In his justification for the action of women,

he does not consider misconstruction of his intention. He may be seen as encouraging money in exchange for sex or love. His justification could worsen the situation. There are some women who chose to protect their dignity despite the fact that the men in their lives did not cater for them. There are also many cases of women who married some men because of money but they regretted the union at the end. Some ladies married some men because of genuine love despite the fact that the men were poor, but eventually they became rich and happy. Making money the centre of spousal relationship has not proven to bring happiness.

He argues that men too need money, as seen in this excerpt:

Excerpt 10

You can be Mr World
You can be Mr Africa
You can be Mr Nigeria
Without money nothing can be done.

(SSP, 1990)



Besides presenting a gender-balanced view, this excerpt is a pract of indicting. It is a way of telling men that their view about women demanding money is subjective. This is because, as women need money, men too do. In SSP's view, money is central to living. While this is true, making it the major determinant of expression of love may not always be the desired happiness and marital fulfilment.

Conclusion

Sir Shina Peters uses his music to comment on societal ills and to advocate women empowerment. He decries the subjugation of women in Nigerian culture. He uses adjectives to present women in a positive light. Where he mentions some negative tendencies in women, he still defends them, viewing such as occurring as a response to men's action and inaction. He uses precedents in other climes and identifies why men are unjust to men. He gives statistical figures and strongly contends that women are good leaders and even better ones. This piece of music is a commentary on an important national issue; it is not just a way of attracting audience and making more money. As art is life and art is ever relevant, this work of art is still relevant in Nigeria and even other parts of the world, particularly where, through religious, cultural and other restrictions, women are undervalued, underrated and subjugated. The paper has some theoretical implications. The application of *pragmeme* to musical discourse has farther shown its amenability to any form of language use. In addition, the study has extended the frontiers of the theory to discourses that seem like monologues but are actually dialogic.

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