

Beyond Presumption: Proof of *Olódùmarè*'s Existence Using *Afẹ́fẹ́* (Air), *Ilẹ̀* (Soil) and *Omi* (Water) among the Yoruba**Author:**Akinmayowa Akin-Otiko **Affiliation:**

Institute of African and Diaspora Studies (IADS), University of Lagos.

Corresponding author:

Akinmayowa Akin-Otiko

E-mail:

pakin-otiko@unilag.edu.ng

Dates:

Received: 29 Dec., 2023

Accepted: 14 Mar., 2024

Published: 06 May, 2024

Disclaimer:

All opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the editors of Nsukka Journal of Religion and Cultural Studies (NJRCS) or the Department at large.

Competing interests:

The author(s) declares that he/she has no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced him/her in writing this article.

Copyright:

© 2024. Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.



This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license

**Abstract**

The study of the religion of the Yoruba, discusses key religious concepts based on presumed existence of *Olódùmarè* (God). Such discussions do not ask whether *Olódùmarè* exists or how he came to be. Discussion around the existence of *Olódùmarè* is built on His attributes. This study, examines three elements of nature – *afẹ́fẹ́* (air), *ilẹ̀* (soil), and *omi* (water) in the belief of the Yoruba, and how these serve as proofs for the existence of *Olódùmarè*. This is a bottom-up approach, it engages what is seen, felt and known to prove the existence of what is unseen and unknown from the lens of Yoruba worldview. The content of *Ifá* corpus was examined to highlight the nature of these three elements. Data were analysed to prove *Olódùmarè*'s existence. This study provides the presumed attributes of *Olódùmarè* as found in the three elements to show that natural elements share the nature that must have been provided by God who is the source of these characteristics.

Key words: *Afẹ́fẹ́* (air); *Ifá* (divination corpus); *Ilẹ̀* (soil); *Olódùmarè* (God); *Omi* (water); Yoruba

Introduction

Anecdote -While teaching in one of my Philosophy of Religion classes, I remember how a young feeble-looking lad got up and asked me: 'Sir, you talk about Olódùmarè so convincingly; what is the proof that He really exists?' And, he added, 'He is probably one of those ideas that Africans have presumed exists.' This query remained with me for over a decade even though I immediately tried responding to the question in defense of what I was teaching and what I also presume exists. The burden of rationally responding to the valuable question that the young lad raised forms the background to this paper.

In the study of the religion of the Yoruba, there have been discussions about *Olódùmarè* and His attributes based on the presumption that, as *Olódùmarè* (God), He must exist. Bolaji Idowu (1996) dedicated a whole book, *Olódùmarè: God in Yoruba Belief*, to the discussion of God with chapters that discuss the name, the persona, his attributes, and status of *Olódùmarè*. There is nothing in the book that proves the existence of *Olódùmarè* – his existence is presumed. The lack of discussion about the existence of *Olódùmarè* is because, 'Generally speaking, African religions hold that there is one Creator God, the Maker of a dynamic universe' (Britannica, 2018).

This same idea is evident in the writings of Mbiti (1975). It has also been said of the Igbo that:

the magnificent conceptions or knowledge of God among the pre-modern Igbo is native and original to them and such knowledge comes basically from natural light of reason, in the sense that his reason leads him to wonder about the mysteries in the world and to recognize the Maker of all things (Mbaegbu, 2010:27).

Generally, discussions about God in the context of Africa do not ask to know if God truly exists or to prove that God (*Olódùmarè*) exists. Many anthropological scholars have discussed God among Africans with the assumption that the existence of God is undisputable. This was noted by Mbaegbu, who said, ‘Scholars, mostly of African Traditional Religion and culture seem to take the idea of one Supreme Being among the Igbo for granted, a fact which needs no proofs, no examination, and no further argument whatsoever’ (Mbaegbu, 2010:27).

To discuss God among Africans is to presume His existence and, if ever the question ‘whether God (*Olódùmarè*) exists’ is raised, recourse is made to highlighting the names He is known by and the attributes that have been associated with Him. All the discussions are based on the presumed knowledge that God (*Olódùmarè*) exists and as Mbaegbu said, His existence needs no proof and no argument, but one should wonder how this presumption is so consuming, such that to ask is to be seen as erring and displaying lack of faith in what is obvious.

This paper therefore seeks to engage the basis, the rationale for this seeming certitude of Africans and, particularly, the Yoruba in the belief that *Olódùmarè* exists beyond all doubt. This is not an exercise emanating from lack of belief in the existence of God, but an engagement to explain why the presumption is rationally and logically justifiable. A similar exercise has been done by Thomas Aquinas who had faith in the existence of God but went ahead to develop what is now known as his Five Ways, to prove the existence of God. Although many philosophers have raised critiques to the ‘Five Ways’, they did not succeed in showing that God does not exist or that the Five Ways do not show that God exists. This paper therefore justifies the presumed belief using nature, what can be seen to prove what cannot be seen or known perfectly. Rational proof of God’s existence is important to be able to rationally conceive the existence of God.

Methodology

Without doubting the existence of God (*Olódùmarè*), this work attempts to provide rational bases for the knowledge and acceptance that *Olódùmarè* exists. To achieve this, selected verses of the *Ifá* corpus were analyzed as these are known and accepted as veritable sources of knowledge among the Yoruba. These verses of *Ifá* corpus were selected because they contain clear definitions and representations of the three elements of nature; *Afẹ́fẹ́* (air), *ilẹ̀* (soil), and *omi* (water) that were analyzed as containing the characteristics that are similar to that of *Olódùmarè*.

To achieve the purpose of this research, the narratives of *Ifá* corpus – regarding the selected elements in nature – were gathered through interview with *Babaláwo* and these were analyzed textually, using four logical arguments that were developed to show how one can arrive at the existence of God, through the analysis of the narrated character of these elements. Thereafter, the attributes of these natural elements were examined and abstracted as foundations for knowing and proving that *Olódùmarè* exists. The abstracted elements were arranged in syllogisms, to prove God’s existence. This process was possible because abstracted attributes of *afẹ́fẹ́* (air), *ilẹ̀* (soil), and *omi* (water) belong to *Olódùmarè* in the proper sense. The data showed that this kind of knowledge is possible as Aquinas observed that knowledge can be obtained when active intellect abstracts a concept or an idea from an image or group of images perceived by the senses.

Literature Review

It is critical and significant that this review of extant literature begins with the idea of the *Ifá* corpus. Essentially, *Ifá* corpus refers to the verses of the literary corpus known as the *Ojú-Ifá*. ‘*Ifá* corpus contains a total of 256 chapters referred to as *Ojú Odù*. These are divided into two major parts: the 16 major chapters called *Ojú-Odù* and the 240 minor chapters called *Ọmọ Odù* or *Àmúlù Odù* (Akin-Otiko, 2013:25). Each of the 256 *Odù* has hundreds of poems or verses traditionally linked

to it. 'It is believed that each *esẹ* has a total of 600 poems associated with it (Abimbola, 1975:30).

The attributes and nature of different things on earth can be found in the *Ifá* corpus. This is because, beyond the binary definition, *Ifá* has been defined as the wisdom of *Olódùmarè*, that embodies every aspect of the Yoruba culture. It is an attribute of *Olódùmarè* because it cannot be separated from *Olódùmarè* if its qualities and characteristics are to remain relevant to it. It is only as an attribute of *Olódùmarè* that *Ifá* can be said to contain all, exist before all, outlive all, and so on. Given these characteristics, it becomes impossible to define *Ifá* by a part of what it contains (Akin-Otiko, 2015:26).

It has been said that 'everything – that is in Heaven, in the life of all, visible, and invisible; alive or dead, are all contained the *Ifá* corpus. The events that had happened, the ones happening now and the ones that would happen when our generation ceases to exist, all are contained in *Ifá*.' (Salami, 2008:361). These positions and understandings of *Ifá* corpus give credence to it being reliable as a major source of information on the nature and characteristic of *afẹ́fẹ́* (air), *ilẹ́* (soil), and *omi* (water), as definitive proofs of the existence of *Olódùmarè*. It is noted that '*Ifá* corpus is the ground of validation for Yoruba cultural practices and social organization. *Ifá* corpus contains accounts of Yoruba cosmology, of the founding of major Yoruba towns and the relationship of deities with humans' (Akin-Otiko, 2017:409-433).

***Ifá* and the Natural Elements**

Afẹ́fẹ́: Ìká-Osùn:

Ìrì bẹ̀lì bẹ̀lì, awo Afẹ́fẹ́,

Ló d'ífá fún Afẹ́fẹ́

Ntí ọ̀run bọ́ wáyé

Láti ilé Olódùmarè Agòtún,

Ọmọ atẹ̀nilẹ́jé forí sagbeji omi,

Ní'jọ tí gbogbo ayé n' dojúrú pìpìrì.

Wọn ní kí wọn kó kára nìlẹ́ ẹ̀bọ́ ní kí wọn ó ẹ̀,

Ó gbẹ̀bọ́, ó rú'bo, ó gbé rú, wọn tẹ̀rù,

Ẹ̀jẹ́ Afẹ́fẹ́ dé, awo eréde,

Afẹ́fẹ́ ọ̀ ní tán n'lé ayé,

Afẹ́fẹ́ o dé, awo eréde (open space)

Air: Odù of Ìká-Osùn:

O delicate dew, companion of Air,

Being the oracular principle behind Air

Who was descending to earth from the heavenly realms,

From the abode of *Olódùmarè Agòtún*,

Child of the One who stretches the skies like a pavilion over the horizon of waters,

When the entire earth was in utter turmoil

They were charged to rise up and offer sacrifice

It listened and offered sacrifice, he heeded and followed suit

Thus, Air arrived, companion of the open space,

Air never runs out from on earth

Air, you come, companion of the open space (Ojekunle, 2021).

Olódùmarè sent Afẹ́fẹ́ to calm down the heat on earth.

Omi: Èjì-Ogbè

Èlàngẹ̀jẹ̀gẹ̀jẹ̀ –

A d'ífá fún omi tútù,

Ní'jọ tí n' ti ọ̀de ọ̀run bọ́ wá sóde isálá ayé.

Wọn ní wọn ó kára nìlẹ́ –

Ebo ní wón ó ma ẹ̀ lóde ayé,

Kí omi ó le tù wón lára

Wón gbẹ̀bo wón rú'bo, wón gbé rú, wọn tẹ̀rù,

Ẹ̀jẹ́ omi o wá dé Ilé tán, ó wá n' tu gbogbo ayé lára,

Omi o dé ile ayé, Èlàngẹ̀jẹ̀gẹ̀jẹ̀.

Kí la bá omi tútù tí n' ẹ̀, Èlàngẹ̀jẹ̀gẹ̀jẹ̀

A bá bá omi tútù tí n' tún ayé ẹ̀.

Water: Odù of Èjì-Ogbè

Glimmer of the steady waves –

Being the oracular principle behind the cool water

On the day when he was coming from the heavenly realms to the land that was earth

They were charged to rise up –

The offering of sacrifices would be their custom on earth,
 That water might be soothing to their nature
 It listened and offered sacrifice, he heeded and followed suit,
 Once water arrived earth, it began to soothe all and sundry
 Water, you arrived earth, glimmer of the steady waves,
 What did we find the cool water to be? – glimmer of the
 steady waves
 We found the cool water to serve as remedying to the earth
 (Ojekunle, 2021)

Literally speaking, it is said that water came from heaven in
 the form of rain when there was drought on earth, and every
 living creature became sick. *Olódùmarè* then sent rain down
 to the earth. With the coming of rain, *Olódùmarè* commanded
 that:

Qsán n bá osán,
Oré n bá oré,
Ànàmú ni tògà,
tio tio rére ni wón n sìn 'kú ìgbín, (Ojekunle, 2021)

Bowstrings overtake bowstrings
 Rods overtake rods
 Stretch-out-and-catch is the chameleon's nature
 With delicate crush a snail is buried (author's translation).
 In essence, water must always remain on earth.

Iyèpè: Ìká- 'fún
Ká fun ká fun, l'èran n wúkó
Èrà mì, òyímìtì-mìtì,
A d'ífá fún Ilè, Adèhìndèhìn
Ní 'jó tí n ti òde òrun bò wá sóde isálá ayé
Pèlú àwon irúnmòlè.
Ilè nígbà tí o dé 'lè yí, là wá rí 'lè tẹ
Ilè tí ó wá fẹ, fẹ, fẹ, tí ó fi dé Òde Ìláré,
Ilè tí o fẹ, fẹ, fẹ, tí o fi dé Òde Ìlajà,
Ilè tí o fẹ, fẹ, fẹ, tí o fi dé ilè tó fẹ yí,
Ilè ló wá gba gbogbo ayé kan.
Ilè Adèndèrè, Ifá jé ka bá won k'èrè ayé jẹ,
Ilè Adèndèrè!

Ilè mọ fẹ nígbà yí o
Àwá gorí ilè, awá gorí ilè,
A se oun rere,
Ilè fẹ nígbà yí (Ojekunle, 2021).

Earth/Soil: *Odù of Ìká-'fún*
Ká fun ká fun, is the coughing of the goat
 The ant moves, rolling stylishly
 Being the oracular principle behind Soil, the revisiting One
 On the day when he was coming from the heavenly realms to
 the land that was earth
 With the divinities
 Soil, upon arrival here, provided us a surface to tread on
 Soil, later spreading out as far as Òde Ìláré,
 Soil, later spreading out as far as Òde Ìlajà,
 Soil, *Adèndèrè* [the praise name of soil], Ifá do make us co-
 inheritors of earth's benefits
 Soil, *Adèndèrè!*
 Soil, do not spread out at this time
 We tread upon solid earth, we tread upon solid earth
 We accomplish the good
 Soil, do spread out at this time (author's translation).

Olódùmarè created *Iyèpè* in heaven and gave it to the leader of
 the *òrìṣà* who is *Egúngún* (masquerade), when they were
 coming to the world. *Olódùmarè* made *Iyèpè* in such a way
 that nothing would be done on earth without having regard for
 it. *Olódùmarè* had given a directive for them to spread the
Iyèpè (sand) on water. There, it was meant to spread and
 become solid land for human and animal habitation all around
 the world. This forms the belief and claim that the world began
 from Ile-Ife, this can be found in *Odù Ìká-Òfún* (Ojekunle,
 2021).

Knowledge from What is Known

In Aquinas's epistemology, he taught that human knowledge
 starts from the senses. '[A]ccording to its manner of knowing
 in the present life, the intellect depends on the sense for the
 origin of knowledge; and so those things that do not fall under

the senses cannot be grasped ... except in so far as the knowledge of them is gathered from sensible things' (Davies, 2016). This position does not stop dissenters a section of philosophers to dispute the existence of God: 'The God question debate in philosophy has remained pervasive and inevitable in the history of human thought and tradition possibly because of its great importance in the question of God-man relationship' (Mbaegbu, 2010:27).

Beyond the assumptions and disputations, this paper argues for the existences of God from the worldviews of the Yoruba, particularly because many have claimed that, among the Africans, 'there are neither sacred writings, nor formulated scientific philosophic proofs or ways of demonstrating the existence of God as in Christianity and Western philosophy' (Mbaegbu, 2010:27). Aquinas had earlier argued for the existence of God in his FIVE WAYS; using 'Motion, Efficient cause, Possible and necessary being, Gradation and Design. In the same way, Africans begin the proof of God's existence from bottom to top.

Traditional Proof of God's Existence

There have been different attempts at proving the existence of God in the religion of the Africans. For instance, Mepaiyeda came up with what he called African Theistic Perspectives' (Mepaiyeda, 2014), the first was argument from the names of God. Some scholars agree with this first point and have argued for the existence of God among the Africans from the names that are given to God or names by which God was addressed. For Mepaiyede, these names proved to Africans that God exists and that He was known to exist in the worldview and experience of Africans even before the arrival of Christianity or Islam. Among the Yoruba *Olódùmarè* is the name of the Supreme Being. For the Igbo, Chi-Ukwu is the name by which the Supreme Being is called. These names are found in myths,

proverbs and folklores, and they indicate that He is known and believed to exist. Obiego writes that the existence of these names implies belief in the existence of God. The implication is that one is in a position to argue for the existence of God from the existence of God's names among the Igbo (Obiego, 1978).

Second, Mepaiyeda (2014) further argued for African Theistic Perspectives, from the personality of God; third from African Theophoric names. "The term "theophoric" comes from the Greek roots "*theos*" (God) and "*phorein*" (to bear) and therefore implies "God-bearing". Thus, theophoric name is one which semantically contains the idea of, or reference to, God, the gods or the Divine" (Mbaegbu 2010:27). Fourth from what he called divine self-disclosure, and fifth, from taboos (Mepaiyeda, (2014:46-48). All these discussions show the belief of the Africans in God. They do not only prove that God exists; they presume the existence of God and show that Africans believe that God exists.

Although this may not represent every view in African philosophy as Mbaegbu (2010) noted that there are two camps in the debate about the existence of God among Igbo philosophers. According to him:

One camp is of the view that the Igbo through natural faith or reason have some knowledge of the Supreme Being. In the opposing camp is the negative view of some scholars of Igbo traditional philosophy. These scholars contend that the one Supreme God is a stranger to Igbo traditional thought and religious practices (Mbaegbu, 2010:27).

This paper goes beyond belief in God because belief is not a proof that something exists. It is possible to have erroneous beliefs that something exists as it can exist when one thinks that a pool of water exists in a mirage. This paper essentially is to prove the existence of God using arguments from three elements of nature (i) *Afèfè* - air, ii) *Omi* - water, iii) *Iyèpè* - sand/earth. These natural elements have been selected because "African people regard natural objects and phenomena as

being inhabited by living beings, or having a mystical life,” (Mbiti, 1975:39), and these three elements in particular possess some enduring characteristics that are similar to those of God. That is why “Ritual is the means by which a person negotiates responsible relationships with other members of the community, with the ancestors, with the spiritual forces of nature, and with the gods” (Britannica, ‘African religions’).

Proof of God’s Existence from *Afẹ́fẹ́* (Air), *Omi* (Water), *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* (Sand/Earth)

Unlike the Ionian philosophers, who had argued that material things began from fire, water and air, I argue for the existence of God from these elements. Basically, I postulate that one can conclude about what is not known or seen from what is seen and known. The bottom-to-up approach helps to acquire the knowledge of God from what is perceptible and conclude about what is beyond the perception of the senses. This is a common method of reaching out to the divine among Yoruba. God, for the Yoruba, is known through the realities they experience. Very easily, the Yoruba believe that the rising and setting of the Sun, the fact of day and night, the unpredictable source of air, earth and water, all make one know that there must be a God who exists (Ojekunle, 2021). *Ilẹ̀ tí n mọ̀, ilẹ̀ tí n sù, òjò àti ẹ̀rùn, àwọ̀n nkan tó fì hàn pé Olódùmarè Ọ̀ba aláṣùàdà ni* (the breaking of the day, and the nightfall, rain and drought, make one know that God is one who changes things). He is in heaven and still works on earth. These ideas give credence to belief in the existence of God. Essentially, life experiences lead the Yoruba to the belief in the reality of God. The first way to prove the existence of God is the limitedness of the divinities associated with *Afẹ́fẹ́* (air), *Omi* (water), *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* (sand/earth). At the top of the theology of the Africans is God. God is regarded and related to as the source from whom all things come and who is bigger than all. Other created elements are related to from the bottom, based on their power.

There are divinities that are associated with the selected natural elements (*Afẹ́fẹ́* – air, *Omi* - water, *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* – sand/earth). These divinities are invoked because of the recognition given to the forces they control through the nature of the things they inhabit. For example, the divinities that are associated with water, sand and air are believed to have force and power because they are contained in the elements they *own*.

The fact that they are contained in what they control shows that they are not God. It is observed that their domain is limited to the elements they control. Their domain is reflected in their names such as *Olú-òkun* (the owner of the Ocean) and *A’lálẹ̀* (the possessor of land). Whereas God is referred to as *Olú-òrun* - the owner or possessor of the sky, that which is above and covers all (Akin-Otiko, 2020:100-102). The limitedness or confinement of these divinities to the element they control gives room for something bigger and mightier which can only be *Olú-òrun* - the owner or possessor of the sky, that which is above and covers all and not limited by any.

The second proof of the existence of God is the question of the source of *Afẹ́fẹ́* (air), *Omi* (water), *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* (sand/earth). Once², I stood by the Atlantic and thought to myself, the power and seeming endlessness of the Atlantic and the other elements under consideration such as *Afẹ́fẹ́* (air), *Omi* (water), *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* (sand/earth) made me recall my earlier work on the understanding of these elements among the Yoruba. I realized that it is impossible to prove that these natural, powerful, vast elements have come into existence without something bringing them forth. It is also clear that the divinities that are associated and worshipped because of the power these elements have could not have brought them into being. Since these divinities (*Ọ̀ya Ọ̀rírí* for *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Ọ̀ya/Ọ̀ṣun* for *Omi*; *Ilẹ̀* for *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀*) have legends contained in the *Ifá* corpus that explain or account for their own sources. The fact that these divinities are contained in the natural elements, makes it illogical to hold that the divinities associated with these natural elements are

² 3rd March, 2021, Cotonou Beach.

the sources of the elements that house them. One can therefore think and state that there must be ‘something’ bigger than *Qya Òrírí* for *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Qya/Ọ̀sun* for *Omi*; *Ilẹ̀* for *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* that made these elements. It is only necessary to accept that what brought these elements forth into being must be bigger than them, despite the magnitude of these elements.

In agreement with this conclusion, the Yoruba believe that divinities were made and sent to the world by God, so created elements and their associated divinities require something greater than both for their existence.

The third proof of God’s existence for the Yoruba is from the question of the source of life. It is difficult to deny that these three elements have life because they sustain life. The argument from the source of life will be done using syllogisms. This will help in the traditional proof of the existence of *Olódùmarè*. The syllogism is to show whether these elements are in themselves sources of life or whether they received the life they preserve from some other.

Syllogism

Afẹ́fẹ́, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* give life

Only *Olódùmarè* is the source of life

Therefore *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* are *Olódùmarè*.

The conclusion cannot hold among the Yoruba. *Olódùmarè* alone gives life. *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* are seen to sustain life, but they cannot be the source of life. One may then go with the following syllogism:

Afẹ́fẹ́, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* seem to give life

Only *Olódùmarè* give life

Therefore, *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* seem to be *Olódùmarè*.

This argument is not whether *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* sustain life in other things, they are seen to sustain life, which means they also have life. The main issue is whether they are the source of the life they sustain. Again, for the Yoruba, living things have life, but they are not the source of the life they possess.

Afẹ́fẹ́, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* sustain life; they would not be able to sustain life if they did not have life. No one can give what he/she/it does not have. It is well accepted that *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* are so essential to life; that is, they sustain life because no one can live without them. There is oxygen in the air and water and plants get their nutrients from the soil. And, because these elements (*Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀*) purify themselves, it is difficult for anyone to claim that these natural elements that sustain life do not have life. But in the mind of the Yoruba, they are not the source of the life they sustain.

The fourth way to proof God’s existence is to consider the characteristic that these elements exude. There are syllogisms from which one can infer the kind of essence shared by these three elements of nature, such as the unchanging, eternal, nature of God.

Syllogism

Afẹ́fẹ́, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* have unchanging nature

Only *Olódùmarè* has unchanging nature

Therefore, *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* are *Olódùmarè*.

It is difficult to hold unto this conclusion because Yoruba people do not hold these elements (*Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀*) to be God. There are stories that show that they are not God even though it can be loosely said that these elements are unchanging. This makes the first premise wrong, a better way to put it will be:

Afẹ́fẹ́, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* seem to have unchanging nature

Only *Olódùmarè* has unchanging nature

Therefore, *Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀* seem to be *Olódùmarè*.

This conclusion shows that the qualifier ‘unchanging’ used for these elements (*Afẹ́fẹ́*, *Omi* and *Iyẹ̀pẹ̀*) is neither correct nor suitable to these elements. It is more appropriate to say that these elements share the qualifier ‘unchanging’ with something to which it properly applies. This ‘something’ to which the qualifier ‘unchanging’ properly applies to has to be something that was not created and will not go out of creation. Nothing fits this qualifier except God.

The second set of syllogisms which is used in the fourth proof highlights one of the natures of *Afẹfẹ*, *Omi* and *Iyẹpẹ*. This then leads the Yoruba to conceptualize the existence of *Olódùmarè*. If these elements are great in strength, length of life, capability, etc., then there must be a God that is greater than them, and this God can only be *Olódùmarè*, *Chineke*, etc. This syllogism has been constructed to compare and test whether these elements share the same nature and quality in a strict sense with God/*Olódùmarè* as well as to show that the referenced qualities only apply properly to *Olódùmarè*.

Conclusion

It has been argued that there are “basic structural differences between the use of logic in a religious system (religion) and in certain other consistent non-religious systems, such as a scientific theory, algebra, geometry, a system of logic, a system of philosophy” (Balcerowicz, 2018:15). This argument does not exclude rational engagement with the *Ifá* corpus as a basis for the proof of the existence of *Olódùmarè*. This study moved beyond the presumptions that God exists in the life and worldview of the Yoruba. Referencing the anecdote which I open this paper with, this was an attempt to rationally prove that *Olódùmarè* exists. It is only after this that younger generations of philosophers can accept and meaningfully discuss the names, nature, attributes, etc. of *Olódùmarè*. Experience has shown that rational engagements drive home issues and ideas among the teeming young generation today. This paper will achieve more if it receives critiques that can lead to more gainful future engagements.

References

- Abimbola, W. (1975). *Sixteen great poems of Ifá*. UNESCO.
- Akin-Otiko, A. (2013). *Ifa: A redefinition of concept*. Ibadan: Gold Press Limited.
- _____ (2015). *Àdímúlà [Religion In Yorubaland]: A New Perspective*. Ibadan: Gold Press Limited.
- _____ (2017). ‘Jesus Christ and *Ela*: Comparative study of the Two Central Religious Figures’. In Falako, F. O., Olademo, O. Oladunjoye, O. & Dairo, A. O.

(Eds.) *Biblical Studies and Socio-Political Issues in the Nigerian Context*. Lagos: Concept Publications Limited. 409-433. ISBN: 978-978-55101-7-1.

- _____ (2020). *The Study of Religion and Issues in the Religion of the Africans*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press and Bookshop Ltd. ISBN:978-978-983-042-8.
- Balcerowicz, P. (2018). Logic in religious and non-religious belief systems. *Int J Philos Relig* 84, 113–129. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11153-017-9646-x>.
- Britannica, (2018) The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "African religions". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 23 Feb. 2018, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/African-religions>. Accessed 22 May 2021.
- Davies, B. (2016). *Thomas Aquinas's Summa contra gentiles: A guide and commentary*. Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books. 1.1:3.
- Mbiti, J.S. 1975. *Introduction to African Religion*. Heinemann: London.
- Mbaegbu C.C. (2010). Traditional Rational Arguments for the Existence of God (Chukwu) in Igbo Traditional Philosophy. www.ajol.info. 27-42.
- Mepaiyeda, Solomon Makanjuola (2014). Interrogating the Theological Argument for the Reality of God within African Religious. *Milieu Issues in Social Science* ISSN 2329-521X, Vol. 2, No. 1. 42-50.
- Obiego C. O. (1978). The Idea of God: Assertions of God's Existence, *Lucerna, Bigard Memorial Seminary, Enugu*, No. 1, Vol. 1.
- Ojekunle, Ifasesan (2nd of June, 2021), interviews. Mokola, Ibadan.
- Salami, A. (2008). *A complete IFA divination*. Lagos: NIDD Limited.