

# Adura Fun Nigeria

(Prayers For Nigeria)

Timothy O. Adeyemo

## Abstract

*Adura Fun Nigeria* is a Yoruba vocal–piano composition that engages music as socio-cultural testimony and artistic critique. Set in F major and structured through a multi-sectional through-composed design, the work integrates polyphonic vocal writing with piano and optional indigenous percussion, including the Dùndún ensemble, to create a timbrally rich and culturally grounded sound world. Composed in 2002 during a period of acute national hardship and later re-scored in 2024 for scholarly purposes, the piece reflects Nigeria’s economic precarity, rising commodity scarcity, and the lived experiences of ordinary traders. Through its alternation of solo, duet, and tutti textures, the composition embodies Yoruba dialogic aesthetics and the African principle of variation-within-continuity. The analysis demonstrates how *Adura Fun Nigeria* functions simultaneously as prayer, lament, and social commentary, affirming the enduring role of African art music as a medium for communal reflection, cultural memory, and socio-political expression.

**Keywords:** Nigerian Contemporary Music, Polyphonic Texture, Socio-Political Composition, Vocal–Piano Works, Yoruba Musical Aesthetics

## Introduction

Music in contemporary Africa continues to serve as a vital medium for articulating collective consciousness, negotiating socio-political realities, and preserving cultural memory. Within this landscape, *Adura Fun Nigeria* (“Prayer for Nigeria”) emerges as a compelling contribution to the expanding corpus of African art music that fuses indigenous aesthetics with modern compositional strategies. Composed originally in 2002 during a period of acute national tension and later re-scored in 2024 for scholarly dissemination, the work reflects the enduring capacity of music to document lived experience and respond to societal upheaval. As scholars such

as Nketia (1974) and Agawu (2003) have argued, African musical expression is inseparable from its social environment, functioning simultaneously as artistic creation, cultural commentary, and communal testimony.

Set in F major and cast in a through-composed structure, *Adura Fun Nigeria* integrates polyphonic vocal writing with piano and optional indigenous percussion, including the Dùndún ensemble of Oyo origin. This synthesis exemplifies what Euba (1990) identifies as the African principle of “variation within continuity,” where evolving textures and timbres shape expressive depth without compromising structural coherence. The text, delivered in Yoruba, draws on the quotidian struggles of traders and households navigating economic hardship, rising commodity prices, and social instability. Such thematic grounding aligns with Barber’s (1999) observation that Yoruba expressive culture frequently merges artistic performance with social documentation, transforming music into a vehicle for communal lament and prayer.

By analysing the compositional procedures, structural organisation, and cultural resonances of *Adura Fun Nigeria*, this study situates the work within broader discourses on African art music, socio-political expression, and contemporary Nigerian musical creativity. The piece not only exemplifies the aesthetic hybridity characteristic of twenty-first-century African composition but also affirms the role of music as a site of resilience, reflection, and national aspiration.

### Compositional Procedures and Analysis of *Adura Fun Nigeria*

*Adura Fun Nigeria* (“Prayer for Nigeria”) is a Yoruba vocal-piano composition set in F major and written in simple quadruple time. Cast in a Moderato tempo and unfolding across a through-composed structure (A, B, A, B, B, A, C), the work spans approximately 4 minutes and 55 seconds. Its polyphonic texture, combined with the expressive interplay between voice, piano, and optional percussive accompaniment, including drum set and the **Dùndún** ensemble of Oyo origin, creates a richly layered sound world that reflects both contemporary Nigerian realities and deep-rooted Yoruba musical aesthetics. The inclusion of instruments such as **Ìyá Ìlú**, **Omele ako**, **Omele abo**, **Gúdúgúdú**, **Sẹ̀kẹ̀rẹ̀**, and **Agogo** situates the work firmly within indigenous performance practice, aligning with Nketia’s (1974) assertion that African musical identity is inseparable from its timbral and rhythmic foundations.

### **Background and Inspiration**

The composition was conceived in 2002 during the Obasanjo administration, a period marked by economic hardship, political tension, and widespread public frustration. Initially recorded as dance-band music around the time Idris Abdul Kareem released *Nigeria Jaga Jaga*, the piece served as a sonic response to national disillusionment. In 2024, the composer re-scored the work for scholarly documentation, transforming it into a structured art-music composition for voice and piano. The text, delivered in Yoruba, resonates deeply with listeners familiar with the socio-economic challenges referenced, rising food prices, scarcity of basic commodities such as yam, beans, garri, and rice, and the struggles of everyday traders. This aligns with the long-standing African tradition in which music functions as social commentary and communal lament (Agawu, 2003; Barber, 1999).

### **Formal and Structural Design**

The work unfolds through a series of interconnected sections, each contributing to the narrative and emotional trajectory:

#### **Section A1 (Bars 1–14)**

A four-bar piano introduction establishes the tonal and emotional atmosphere. The A-section begins at bar 5, featuring SATB voices with piano accompaniment. This passage is repeated, reinforcing the thematic material. A two-bar piano interlude (bars 15–16) provides a brief moment of repose.

#### **Section B1 (Bars 17–24)**

This section introduces vocal substitution and alternation:

- Bars 17–18: Tenor and Bass with piano
- Bars 19–20: Soprano and Alto with piano
- Bar 21: Tenor and Bass return
- Bars 23–24: Full SATB tutti with piano

A two-bar interlude (bars 25–26) transitions into the next section. The dialogic alternation reflects African call-and-response aesthetics, where musical dialogue symbolises communal participation (Okafor, 2005).

### Section A2 (Bars 27–36)

A restatement of the A-section, maintaining structural coherence. A two-bar interlude (bars 37–38) follows.

### Section B2 (Bars 39–47)

A duet between Soprano and Alto with piano accompaniment. This intimate texture highlights the reflective quality of the text.

### Section B3 (Bars 49–56)

A Bass solo accompanied by piano, offering a deeper, more introspective timbre. A four-bar interlude (bars 57–60) prepares the return of the A-material.

### Section A3 (Bars 61–70)

A final recurrence of the A-section, reinforcing thematic unity. A two-bar interlude (bars 71–72) leads into the concluding section.

### Section C (Bars 73–92)

The closing section introduces significant expressive contrast:

- **Bars 73–80 (Adagio):** Bass solo *a cappella*, creating a moment of stark emotional vulnerability.
- **Bars 81–86 (Andantino):** Full SATB tutti with piano, symbolising communal prayer and collective resilience.
- **Bars 87–90 (Lento):** A slowing, reflective passage.
- **Bars 91–92 (♩ = 80):** A measured, contemplative conclusion.

This final section embodies what Euba (1990) describes as the African compositional principle of *variation-within-continuity*, where emotional intensity is shaped through evolving textures rather than abrupt structural shifts.

### **Extra-Musical Elements**

The narrative dimension of the piece is enriched by references to everyday commodities, yam, beans, garri, rice, and the imagined dialogue of five traders lamenting national hardship. This grounding in lived experience aligns with Barber's (1999) observation that Yoruba expressive culture often merges artistic performance with social documentation.

### **Performance and Reception**

*A dura Fun Nigeria* has been performed by various choirs and is available on major streaming platforms, including YouTube, Spotify, Apple Music, Boomplay, iHeartRadio, and AudioMack. Its widespread circulation underscores its resonance with contemporary Nigerian audiences and its relevance as a musical reflection of national challenges.

# ADURA FUN NIGERIA

Timothy O. Adeyemo

PRAYERS FOR NIGERIA

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**Andantino**

Soprano Ba-ba mugba to ro run

Alto Ba-ba mugba to ro run

Tenor Ba-ba mugba to ro run

Bass Ba-ba mugba to ro run

Piano



6

S. wa fun wa Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra o ka ri ba ti se ka ro

A. wa fun wa Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra o ka ri ba ti se ka ro

T. wa fun wa Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra ka ri ba ti se ka ri ba ti se ka ro

B. wa fun wa Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra ka ri ba ti se ka ri ba ti se ka ro

Pno.



12

S. na gbe gba wa mu nu wadun lo ri le e de e wa

A. na gbe gba wa mu nu wadun lo ri le e de e wa

T. na gbe gba lo ri le e de e wa

B. na gbe gba lo ri le e de e wa

Pno.



17

S. E wa a ti Ga a ri di Go lu ni ta

A. E wa a ti Ga a ri di Go lu ni ta

T. I su di wiwonI resio se ra lo ja O lo wolo n jewa ta la ka n fe bisun

B. I su di wiwonI resio se ra lo ja O lo wolo n jewa ta la ka n fe bisun

Pno.



23

S. bo ju wo i le sa nu wa o Ba ba mugba to ro run

A. bo ju wo i le sa nu wa o Ba ba mugba to ro run

T. bo ju wo i le Ba ba sa nu wa o Ba ba mugba to ro run

B. bo ju wo i le Ba ba sa nu wa o Ba ba mugba to ro run

Pno.



28

S. wa fun wa Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra o ka ri ba ti se ka ro

A. wa fun wa Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra o ka ri ba ti se ka ro

T. wa fun wa Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra ka ri ba ti se ka ri ba ti se ka ro

B. wa fun wa Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra ka ri ba ti se ka ri ba ti se ka ro

Pno.



34

S. na gbe gba wa mu nu wadun lo ri le e de e wa

A. na gbe gba wa mu nu wadun lo ri le e de e wa

T. na gbe gba a lo ri le e de e wa

B. na gbe gba a lo ri le e de e wa

Pno.



39

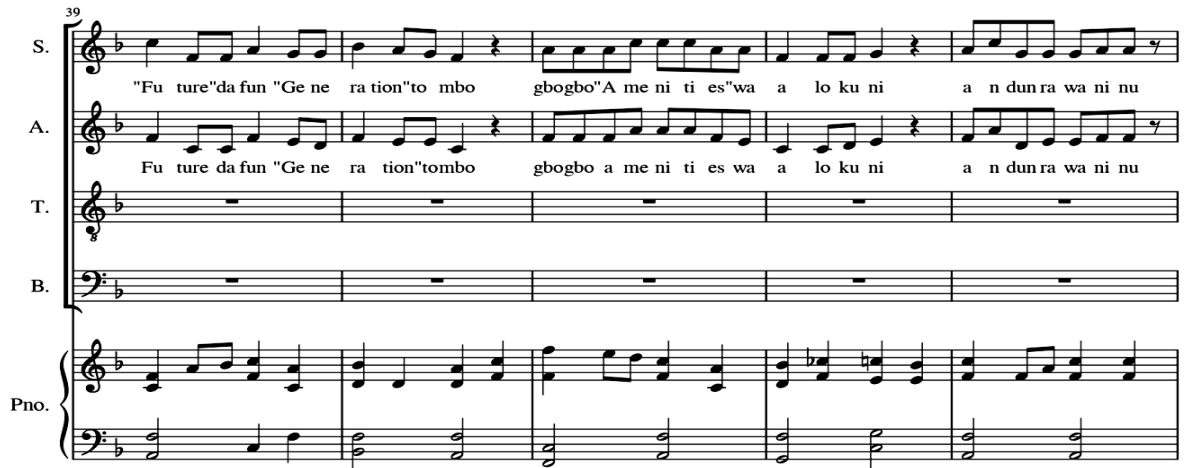
S. "Fu ture"da fun "Ge ne ra tion"to mbo gbogbo"A me ni ti es"wa a lo ku ni a n dun ra wa ni nu

A. Fu ture da fun "Ge ne ra tion"tombo gbogbo a me ni ti es wa a lo ku ni a n dun ra wa ni nu

T.

B.

Pno.



44

S. a ni Tokunbo O lu ra pa da ra wa pa da

A. a ni Tokunbo O lu ra pa da ra wa pa da

T.

B.

Pno.



49

S. \_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_

T. \_\_\_\_\_

B. *O ti se le ri ni le Sa ma ri a    O na i ya nu lo fi so owandi o po    O-mi-ni-po-tent    O-mi-ni-pres-ence*

Pno. \_\_\_\_\_

55

S. \_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_

T. \_\_\_\_\_

B. *O-mi-ni-sci-ence    sa nu wa o*

Pno. \_\_\_\_\_

60

S. *Ba-ba mughato rorun wa fun wa    Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra o*

A. *Ba-ba mughato rorun wa fun wa    Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra o*

T. *Ba-ba mughato rorun wa fun wa    Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra ka ri ba ti se*

B. *Ba-ba mughato rorun wa fun wa    Ni-ge-ri-a ko tu wa la ra ka ri ba ti se*

Pno. \_\_\_\_\_

66

S. ka ri ba ti se ka ro na gbe gba wa mu nu wadun lo ri le e de e wa

A. ka ri ba ti se ka ro na gbe gba wa mu nu wadun lo ri le e de e wa

T. ka ri ba ti se ka ro na gbe gba a lo ri le e de e wa

B. ka ri ba ti se ka ro na gbe gba a lo ri le e de e wa

Pno.



71 **Adagio**

S. - - - - -

A. - - - - -

T. Pe lu i gbagbo Ba ba ti se pe lu I re ti e tu ju ka

B. - - - - -

Pno.



77 **Andantino**

S. - - - - - Ka le fe ran

A. - - - - - Ka le fe ran

T. I fe ti so nu lo ri le e de e wa e pe e pa da e pe e pa da ka le fe ran

B. - - - - - ka le fe ran

Pno.



77 **Andantino**

S. Ka le fe ran

A. Ka le fe ran

T. I fe ti so nu lo ri le e de e wa e pe e pa da e pe e pa da ka le fe ran

B. ka le fe ran

Pno.

82

S. a ra a wa ka le la yo ni le Ba ba wa o ti to lo le gbewa le ke

A. a ra a wa ka le la yo ni le Ba ba wa o ti to lo le gbewa le ke

T. a ra a wa ka le la yo ni le Ba ba wa o ti to lo le gbewa le ke

B. a ra a wa a ka le la yo ni le Ba ba wa o ti to lo le gbewa le ke

Pno.

87 **Lento**  $\text{♩} = 40$

S. O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja E-je-ka so ti to

A. O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja e-je ka so ti to

T. O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja e-je ka so ti to

B. O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja O-moNa-i-ja e-je ka so ti to

Pno.

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