An Ethnographic Approach to the Thematic Classification of Christo-Kegites’ Songs in Nigeria

by

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the songs of the Kegites’ Club, a socio-cultural group at university and polytechnic campuses in Nigeria with the aim of identifying their themes alongside the Christian songs from which they are derived. The analysis of the songs is based on Dell Hymes’ Ethnographic Framework, which identifies contextual variables that account for the various factors that are involved in different communicative events. Thirty songs, comprising 11 English versions and 19 Yorùbá versions are purposively selected for analysis in this study. Even though these songs are derived from the choruses sung by Christians in their fellowships and retain the lyrics of the choruses, they have been cleverly manipulated to underscore their own themes and identity as opposed to the themes of the Christian songs that serve as their sources.

Keywords: Christo-kegites’ songs, universities and polytechnics, Nigeria, Dell Hymes’ ethnographic framework

Introduction

Christo-Kegites’ songs refer to Christian songs that have been adapted by the kegites and sung in their shrines (their place of meeting) during gyrations. The lyrics of the songs are those of Christians, while the vocabulary items are those of the kegites. The Christian songs from which the songs are derived have their themes, such as God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, angels, the power of God, and the goodness of God. The kegites songs have themes such as the palm wine, the chief (the leader of the kegites), palm wine tapper, the kegites and beer. These songs are classified according to their themes. Just like the Yorùbá community in which it originated, the kegites club is a singing society (Olukoju 1978).

Music is an essential part of their gyration (meeting) (Sowande 1970). It is an integral part of their activities. Every significant event is celebrated in songs, drums and dance, typical of the Yorùbá community (Amorele 1987). Drumming, singing and dancing are traditional features of festivals and joyous occasions in the community (Peggy 1976). The kegites are traditionally a musical people (Daramola, 2008).

**Historical Background**

The Kegites’ Club is a socio-cultural organisation that is non-religious and non-political. It was founded to uphold the invaluable heritage of African culture which was on the verge of extinction as a result of Western civilization which came through the colonization of Africa by Western nations. The club started in 1962 as ‘the palm-wine drinkers club’ by the students of the then University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University (O.A.U.) at their temporary site, close to University of Ibadan. The motto of the club then was “The Basis of African Unity is Palm wine.” The Obafemi Awolowo University branch was named ‘World’ Headquarters of the club, while that of University of Ibadan is the ‘National’ Headquarters. The club went into a temporary eclipse in the late sixties. It was later resuscitated in 1972 with the name “Kegites Confraternity”. It has the keg as its symbol. In 1973, the club changed its name from “Kegites Confraternity” to the “Kegites Club.” The motto of the club was later changed to “Unity in Diversity.” The aims and objectives of the club include, the promotion, transmission and assimilation of a dynamic culture of Africa, promotion of socio-cultural activities and friendly interactions through “gyrations” and the encouragement to use things that are of African origin. They hold their “gyration” in the shrine.

**Methodology**

Thirty songs made up of 11 (eleven) English songs and 19 (nineteen) Yorùbá songs usually sung by kegites are examined in the work. These ‘songs’ have words relating to “palm-wine”, “kegites”, “chief-kegite”, “palm wine tapper and beer”. But basically, their lyrics are those of the Christian songs from which they were derived. Those songs in the Yorùbá language were translated to their English equivalents for ease of analysis. The data were collected during the meetings of the kegites, popularly referred to as “gyrations”. As for the reasons why Christian songs are adapted by kegites: one, many of the members of the kegites are ‘Christians’; two, these songs are sung to avoid boredom, to attract new members who might, because of the drumming and singing, join them; and underscore the presence of the kegites on campus.

Two main campuses were used as sites of data collection. These are the University of Ibadan (which is the National Headquarters of the kegites) and the Polytechnic of Ibadan. A tape recorder and a camera phone were used to record the songs.

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The songs were later transcribed for analysis. Some executive members of the kegites were also interviewed to gain insight into the reason why they sing happily in each ‘gyration’. Such executive members were the Chief, the Feda, the Songito, and the ‘elder’. We shall explain these terms below.

Hierarchical Organisation of the Club

The kegites are headed by the Chief, who is the president or chairman of the club. He is followed by the ‘elder’ (an elderly person who serves as a counselor to the chief). Then comes the ‘Feda’, that is the general secretary who takes record of discussions in each meeting. The word ‘Feda’ is derived from the English version ‘Feather’. In ancient times, feather was used as pen to write with inks. The Songito is the composer of songs, who could be likened to the choirmaster in a church. The other members of the executive are listed under the use of local slang later in the paper.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is based on Dell Hymes’ (1964) ethnographic framework, subsequently revised, which according to him, accounts for the various factors that are involved in speaking. He opines that ethnography of communication describes all the factors that are relevant in understanding how a particular communicative event achieves its goals. Hymes captures this proposition with the acronym SPEAKINGT, written vertically, it gives us:

S – Setting/scene, that is, the general context of speech, in terms of the time, place, the physical and psychological circumstances underlying the speech event.

P – Participants, that is, the speaker, the listener or addressee versus addressee and their roles in a speech event.

E – Ends, that is, the goals, aims and objectives of the individuals involved in a speech event.

A – Acts, that is, the actual form and content of the utterance.

K – Key, that is, the tone, manner and spirit with which what is said is said and the accompanying gestures.

I – Instrumentalities, that is, the medium through which a speech is made i.e. oral, written, language, dialect, etc).

N – Norms, that is, the form of behaviour that accompanies language e.g. speaking turns, loudness, interruptions, pauses, etc).

G – Genre – that is, clearly demarcated type or category of utterances e.g. proverb, poem, song, sermon, interrogation, etc.

T – Topic, that is, what is spoken about, subject of discussion, the different themes that are discussed.

Schiffrin (1994) submits that Hymes’ ethnography of communication is the most integrative of all the approaches to discourse, which is based on anthropology and linguistics. According to him, ethnographers are concerned with the writing of rules of speaking for a particular group of speakers. Such a group is referred to as a speech community, a group which shows both linguistic resources and rules for interaction and interpretation.

Data Presentation

The data are presented in a tabular form. The Yoruba songs are followed by their translations. In the last column of the tables, the researcher identifies the expressions that are substituted for one another. The translations are in two parts. Some of the songs are given direct semantic translations, while the other ones are paraphrased. Each table is followed by a brief discussion of its major theme.
### Table 1A

#### Palm Wine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Source Song</th>
<th>Kegites’ Version</th>
<th>Substituted Elements</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1a(i) | Jesus power  
Super power  
Jesus power  
Super power  
Exalts Jesus | Palm wine power  
Super power (2ce)  
Exalts palm wine | ‘Jesus power’ is replaced with ‘palm wine power’ | Palm wine. |
| 1a(ii) | Halleluyah, my Lord is good. (3ce)  
He’s good to me.  
Appreciates the goodness of God. | Kegite members, palm wine is good (3ce)  
It is good for you.  
Appreciates the value of palm wine. (that is its nutritional value) | ‘Halleluyah, my Lord is good’ is replaced with ‘kegite members palm wine is good’. | Palm wine. |
| 1a(iii) | Come and see (2ce)  
Come and see what the Lord has done. (2ce)  
Appreciates God’s goodness. | Come and see (2ce)  
Come and see what ‘palm wine’ has done. (2ce)  
Appreciates the benefit of palm wine. | ‘Come and see what the Lord has done’ is replaced with ‘Come and see what palm wine has done’. | Palm wine |
| 1a(iv) | When I come into your presence.  
I’m so happy, when I come into your presence,  
I’m so glad,  
In your presence, there’s anointing when the Spirit comes upon me  
In your presence anointing breaks the yoke.  
Exalts the presence of | When I come to kegites’ shrine, I’m so happy,  
When I come to ‘kegites’ shrine’, I’m so glad.  
In the kegites shrine there’s palmy, and gyration is exciting.  
In the kegites shrine, there’s abundant wine to | (i) ‘When I come into your presence’ is replaced with ‘when I come to kegites shrine’  
(ii) ‘Anointing’ is replaced with ‘palmy’  
(iii) ‘Anointing breaks the yoke’ is replaced by ‘abundant wine to drink’. | Palm wine  
This particular song actually talks about:  
(i) The kegites’ shrine.  
(ii) Gyration the singing, drumming and dancing that characterise each meeting.  
But |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source song</th>
<th>Kegites Version</th>
<th>Substituted Elements</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1b(i) Ọ̀pẹ̀ méta làwa yó se (2ce) À rù láyọ̀, À sọ láyọ̀. À tún rómu gbéjọ̀. Ọ̀pẹ̀ méta làwa yóo se. (Gratitude to God for safe delivery)</td>
<td>Ọ̀pẹ̀ méta làwa yó se (2ce) À gun láyọ̀. À so láyọ̀. À tún rému gbéjọ̀. Ọ̀pẹ̀ méta làwa yó se (Gratitude to God for safe arrival of the tapper with palm wine)</td>
<td>‘Rù’ (carry) is replaced by ‘gùn’ (climb) ‘sọ̀’ is retained. ‘Rómu gbéjọ̀’ is replaced with ‘Rému gbéjọ̀’. Carry a living child’ is replaced with ‘carry palm wine’.</td>
<td>(i) ‘We conceived safely’ was replaced with ‘We climbed the palm tree safely’. (ii) “We delivered the baby safely’ was replaced with “We came down from the palm tree safely” (iii) ‘We also carry the baby joyfully’ was replaced with “We carry the palm wine joyfully”.</td>
<td>Palm wine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b(iii) Èjẹ̀ tó jejé lọ̀ Kó wá tó mí sílẹ̀ Èjẹ̀ tó tó ń sàn ní Kálfári Kó wá tó mí sílẹ̀. (Belief in the efficacy of the blood of Jesus)</td>
<td>Èmu orí ópẹ̀ Kó wá tó mí sílẹ̀ Èmu funfun orí ópẹ̀ o Kó wá tó mí lára. (Belief in the)</td>
<td>(i) Èjẹ̀ ‘tó jejé lọ̀’ (The blood that is mightier than blood) was replaced with ‘Èmu orí ópẹ̀, (The wine from the palm tree).</td>
<td>The Christian chorus, i.e. C.C. talks about the deliverance power in the blood of</td>
<td>Palm wine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>(ii) ‘Ẹ̀jẹ̀ to ń ṣàÀn ní Kálfári’ (The blood that flows from Calvary) was replaced by ‘Emu funfun orí ọpè’. (White palm wine from the palm tree).</td>
<td>(ii) ‘Éjè to ń ṣàÀn ní Kálfári’ (The blood that flows from Calvary) was replaced by ‘Emu funfun orí ọpè’. (White palm wine from the palm tree).</td>
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<tr>
<td>The blood that surpasses other varieties of blood Set me free. The blood that flows from Calvary. Come and set me free.</td>
<td>Wine from the palm tree Come down and set me free. White palm wine Come and refresh me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1b(iv)</th>
<th>Jésù ń fún mi Ó ti ń fún mi. Ohun baba kò le sẹ Ḍi ń fún mi. (Exalts Jesus)</th>
<th>Ògùrù ń fún mi Ó ti ń fún mi. Ohun beer kò le sẹ Ḍi ń fún mi. (Exalts palm wine)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jesus has done for me What my father cannot do for me.</td>
<td>Palm wine has done for me what beer cannot do for me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1b(ii)</th>
<th>È k’álleluyah o. È k’álleluyah o (2ce) Àwa jogún ikú látọ̀dọ̀ Ádámù Àwa sì riyè lọ̀ dò Jésù Olúwa È k’álleluyah o È k’álleluyah (Jesus exalted as the giver of life)</th>
<th>È ká lọ̀ mè mu o È ká lọ̀ mè mu o (2ce) Àwa jogùn èmu látọ̀ dò čhìffù wa A wá sì mè mu o nínú ọgbà national È ká lọ̀ mè mu o È ká lọ̀ mè mu. (Chief kegites exalted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) ‘È káleluyah’ (Shout Halleluyah) was replaced by ‘È kálo mè mu’. (Let us go and drink palm wine. (ii) ‘Àwa jogùn ikú látọ̀ dò Ádámù’. (We inherited death from Adam) was replaced with ‘Àwa jogùn èmu látọ̀ dò čhìffù’. (We inherited</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jesus is gracious to the Christians, palm wine is delicious to the kegites.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<th>È k’álleluyah o. È k’álleluyah o (2ce) Àwa jogùn ikú látọ̀dọ̀ Ádámù Àwa sì riyè lọ̀ dò Jésù Olúwa È k’álleluyah o È k’álleluyah (Jesus exalted as the giver of life)</th>
<th>È ká lọ̀ mè mu o È ká lọ̀ mè mu o (2ce) Àwa jogùn èmu látọ̀ dò čhìffù wa A wá sì mè mu o nínú ọgbà national È ká lọ̀ mè mu o È ká lọ̀ mè mu. (Chief kegites exalted)</th>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm wine. It also talks about other themes: (i) The chief-kegite. (ii) The national garden (that is, the shrine of the kegites).</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b(vi)</td>
<td>Mo ti mọ Jésù Mo mọ agbára (2ce) Ó dámi lójú pé Jésù dára. (Exalts Jesus)</td>
<td>Mo ti mu ‘holy water’ Mo ti m’ẹmu ọpẹ Ó dámi lójú pé Ẹmú dára. (Exalts the delicacy of palm wine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b(vii)</td>
<td>Òdún ń lọ sópin o Baba mímọ. Fisọ rẹ só wa ọ Baba rere Ohun tó ń pa ni lékún o Ninú ọdún Mā jé kó ẹ̀lẹ̀ sì wa ọ Baba rere.</td>
<td>Òdún ń lọ sópin o Baba mímọ Fisọ rẹ só wa ọ A ti m’ẹmu. Ohun tó ọ pawá lékún o Ninú ọdún Mā jé kó ẹ̀lẹ̀ sì wa ọ A ti m’ẹmu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Supplication)</td>
<td>The year is moving towards the end, holy Father, Protect us oh good Father Anything that can cause sorrow for us Do not allow it to happen to us.</td>
<td>(Supplication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torí náà mo ṣe ń sako. Torí náà mo ṣe ń sako Bábá wa lèhin mi. Torí náà mo ṣe ń sako. (Bragging) I am bragging because the father (God) is on my side.</td>
<td>Torí náà mo ṣe ń m’ẹmu. Torí náà mo ụmọ m’ẹmu. Kọ sòhùnmiràn. Torí náà mo ụmọ m’ẹmu.</td>
<td>(i) ‘Ṣakọ’ (bragging) is replaced by ‘m’ẹmu’, (drinking palm wine) (ii) ‘Baba ń bẹ lèhin mi’ (God the Father is with me) is replaced by (there is nothing else to drink).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayò ni mo fẹ o, Baba Olorun ayọ, m’àyọ m’ụ n’ụi Baba. It is joy I want, oh God, the Father of joy. Let my joy be full.</td>
<td>Agbẹ ni mo fẹ o Ẹmu Ẹlẹmu lagbè, k’agbẹ m’ụ n’ụi Baba.</td>
<td>The word ‘Ayọ’ (joy) was replaced by agbẹ ‘gourd’ ‘Olórun ayọ’ (God of joy) was replaced by ‘Elẹmu lagbè (owner of palm wine inside the gourd).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

Tables 1a and b above talk about palm wine. As could be seen in the tables, it occurs in four songs in the English versions, while it occurs in the Yoruba versions as oguru, emu, emu funfun, palmy and emu ori opo, all referring to palm wine in ten songs. In fact, in 1(i) its power (palm wine power) is likened to Jesus’ power. In 1(ii) ‘My Lord’ (referring to Jesus) is replaced with ‘palm wine’. In 1(iii) ‘What the Lord has done’ is replaced with ‘what palm wine has done’. This tells us how important palm wine is to the kegites. In the Yoruba versions (1b(i), the process of carrying pregnancy and delivering the baby, which every pregnant woman goes through is likened to the process of climbing the palm tree, tapping palm wine and bringing it down from the tree, which the palm wine tapper does. In b(iii), ‘the blood of Jesus’, which is considered to be a vital weapon in the hands of every Christian is simply replaced with the phrase ‘palm wine’. This suggests that just as every Christian cherishes the blood of Jesus, every ‘kegite’ cherishes palm wine. In 1(iv). The word ‘JESUS’ was simply replaced with ‘palm wine’. In 1b(v), the word ‘ihinrere’ (gospel) was simply replaced with ‘oguru funfun’ (white palm wine), which suggests that just as a good Christian values evangelism, a good kegite values palm wine.
**Table 2A: Chief**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2a(i)</th>
<th>You are worthy Lord (4ce)</th>
<th>You are worthy chief (4ce).</th>
<th>‘Lord’ was replaced with ‘chief’.</th>
<th>Chief.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2a(ii)</td>
<td>Come on, give me a letter J. Come on, give me a letter E. Come on, give me a letter S. Come on, give me a letter U. Come on, give me a letter S.</td>
<td>Come on, give me a letter C. Come on, give me a letter H. Come on, give me a letter I. Come on, give me a letter E. Come on, give me a letter F.</td>
<td>Exalts the chief.</td>
<td>Chief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Lord’ was replaced with ‘chief’.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a(iii)</td>
<td>Angels are singing You are worthy o Lord You are worthy You are worthy o Lord.</td>
<td>Kegites are singing: You are worthy oh Chief. You are worthy Chief. You are worthy Chief.</td>
<td>(i) ‘Angels’ was replaced with kegites. (ii) ‘Oh Lord’ was replaced with ‘Oh Chief.</td>
<td>Chief.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2B: Chief**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2b(i)</th>
<th>Ẹ yọ, ẹ yọ, Jésù Olúwa joba. Ẹ yọ, ẹ yọ, Jésù Olúwa joba (Exalting Jesus)</th>
<th>Ẹ yọ, ẹ yọ, Ọ̀gá dí wọ́n. Ẹ yọ, ẹ yọ, Ọ̀gá dí wọ́n (Exalting the chief).</th>
<th>Jesu Olúwa (Jesus our Lord) was replaced with Chief Ọ̀gá dí wọ́n (chief of the kegites).</th>
<th>Chief.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rejoice, Rejoice, Jesus our Lord reigns.</td>
<td>Rejoice, Rejoice, the chief of kegites reigns.</td>
<td>While the Christian chorus, magnifies ‘Jesus’ as King, the kegites’ version magnifies the ‘chief kegite’ as their king.</td>
<td>Chief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b(ii)</td>
<td>Jésù lówó rẹ̀ ló wá Bábá lówó rẹ̀ ló wá Gbogbo agbára Jésù lówó rẹ̀ ló wá. Kò sì lówó osó, kò sì lówó àjé o Gbogbo agbára Jésù lówó rẹ̀ ló</td>
<td>Chiífú lówó rẹ̀ ló wá Bábá lówó rẹ̀ ló wá Gbogbo agbára chiífú lówó rẹ̀ ló wá. Kò sì lówó songito, kò sì lówó fẹ̀da rárá. Gbogbo agbára chiífú lówó rẹ̀ ló</td>
<td>(i) The word Jésù (Jesus), was replaced with ‘chief’ (the chief kegite). (ii) The word ‘wizard’ was replaced by ‘sóngító’. (iii) The word ‘witches’ was replaced by ‘songito’ (composer) and the fe</td>
<td>Chief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b(iii)</td>
<td>Bí Jésù bá dé, À bá mi lẹnu ihinrere (2ce) Kó ní bá mi nilé aláwo. À bá mi lẹnu ihinrere. (Belief in evangelism)</td>
<td>2b(iv)</td>
<td>Ó fún mi ledidi Gbèsè ńlá tí mo je bó ti fún mi, ó si wi pé Má se gbàgbé mi.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
He gave me a seal
Canceling the great debt I owe
As he gave me, he said
Don't forget me.

He gave me palmy (palm wine) white holy water.
Chief gave me and he said don’t go to the beer parlour.

(White Holy water).

Chief.

He gave me a seal
Canceling the great debt I owe
As he gave me, he said
Don’t forget me.

He gave me palmy (palm wine) white holy water.
Chief gave me and he said don’t go to the beer parlour.

(White Holy water).

Chief.

Tables 2a and 2b talk about the ‘chief kegite’. He is the most important personality in the group. In the English version, it occurs three times and in the Yorùbá version, it occurs four times. In 2a(i), while the Christians magnify Jesus, the kegites magnify their ‘chief’, so the word ‘Jesus’ was replaced with ‘chief’. In 2a(ii), while the Angels are singing: ‘You are worthy o Lord’, the kegites are singing: ‘You are worthy o chief’. In the Yorùbá version, 2b(i), while Christians are rejoicing that Jesus reigns as king, kegites affirm that they rejoice because their chief reigns as king over them. In 2b(ii), while Christians affirm that they inherit eternal life from Jesus, kegites assert that they inherit palm wine from their chief. In other words, as Jesus is the giver of life, the chief is the giver of palm wine. In 2b(ii) Christians affirm that all powers belong to Jesus, kegites assert that all powers belong to their chief. While Christians insist that the witches and wizards (ajé ọ̀nà ọ̀ṣó) have no power comparable to that of Jesus, kegites relegate the ‘fēda’ General Secretary) and the ‘sòngito’ (the composer) to the background in comparism to the chief. In 2b(iv), the Christians emphasized that when Jesus comes, he would meet them evangelizing, while the kegites emphasized that when their chief comes, he would meet them drinking palm wine. All these suggest that just as Jesus Christ is very important to the Christians, the chief-kegite is very important to the kegites. The way Christians revere God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, kegites revere their chief, as the most respectable fellow in the club.

### Table 3A: Palm Wine Tapper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3a(i)</th>
<th>Come down Holy Spirit, come down. We are waiting for you, come down. Inviting the presence of the Holy Spirit.</th>
<th>Come down mighty tapper Come down. We are waiting for you, come down Inviting the presence of the tapper.</th>
<th>‘Holy Spirit’ was replaced with ‘mighty tapper’</th>
<th>Palm wine tapper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3a(ii)</td>
<td>There’s something that makes me come into your presence, my helper. My helper oh, my helper (2ce) There’s something that makes me come into your presence, my helper. Appreciates God as the divine helper.</td>
<td>There’s something that makes me come into your presence, my tapper My tapper oh, my tapper (2ce) There’s something that makes me come into your presence, my tapper Appreciates the tapper as the provider of palm wine.</td>
<td>‘My helper’ is replaced with ‘my tapper’.</td>
<td>Palm wine tapper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3B: Palm wine tapper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3b(i)</th>
<th>Látojó tí mo tí ń rin, yé ò, yé o. Mi ò rírú Olórún yìí rí Yé ò, yé o.</th>
<th>Látojó tí mo tí ń rin, yé o, yé o. Mi ò rírú élému yìí rí, yé ò, yé o.</th>
<th>Olorun (God) was replaced by élému (wine tapper)</th>
<th>Palm wine tapper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have never seen this kind of God since my childhood.</td>
<td>I have never seen this kind of palm wine tapper since childhood.</td>
<td>Christians do not see any god comparable to ‘Heavenly King’ (God). Kegites do not see any tapper that surpasses the tapper.</td>
<td>Palm wine tapper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b(ii)</td>
<td>Òwa ọmọ Jéṣù ń bó Arà ilé Òwa ọmọ Jéṣù ń bó Èrò ónà Òwa ọmọ Jéṣù re ò, Ò o ó yá (Exalts Christ)</td>
<td>Òwa ọmọ élému ń bó Arà ilé Òwa ọmọ élému ń bó Èrò ónà Òwa ọmọ élému re ò Ò o ó yá. (Exalts tappers)</td>
<td>‘Òwa ọmọ Jéṣù’, meaning: ‘We children of Jesus’ is replaced by ‘Òwa ọmọ élému’ (‘We kegites’), that is, we the children of the palm wine tapper.</td>
<td>Palm wine tapper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C.C. sees Christians as ‘children or followers of Jesus. K.V. sees kegites as children (followers) of the palm wine</td>
<td>Palm wine tapper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We children of Christ are coming, neighbours and wayfarers, make way.</td>
<td>We kegites are coming, Home dwellers and wayfarers, make way.</td>
<td>tapper, the supplier of strength.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b(iii)</td>
<td>Agbára Olorun pọ̀ (2ce) Ò lánà sórí òkun. Ò wódí Jēriḵō. (Exalts the greatness of God’s power)</td>
<td>The power of the palm wine tapper is great, He paved a way on the palm wine tree And he brought down palm wine for us.</td>
<td>C.C. exalts God’s power K.V. exalts tapper’s strength.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>God’s power is great. He paves a way on the sea He felled the wall of Jericho.</td>
<td>(i) ‘The power of God is great’ ‘Agbára Olorun pọ̀’ is replaced with ‘Agbára ṣeṣẹ̀ pọ̀’, ‘the power of palm wine tapper is great. (ii) ‘Ò lánà lórí òkun’, (He made a way on the sea) was replaced with ‘Ò lánà lórí ópẹ̀ (he made a way on the palm tree). (iii) ‘Ò wódí Jēriḵō’ was replaced by ‘Ò gbẹ́mu wá fún wa’. ‘He bought palm wine to us’.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tables 3(a) and (b) talk about the palm wine tapper. To the kegites, the tapper is very important by virtue of the fact that he is the one that supplies palm wine to them. In 3a(i), ‘he’ is used to replace the Holy Spirit. The implication here is that just as Christians regard the Holy Spirit as the source of their strength, kegites see the tapper as the source of palm wine which gives them strength to gyrate. In 3a(ii), ‘my helper’, referring to ‘God’ is replaced by ‘my tapper’ in the kegites version. This tells us that while ‘God’ is the helper of Christians, the tapper is the source of help to kegites.

In 3b(i), the palm wine tapper is also used to replace God. The point here is that the kegites regard the palm wine tapper as their own god. In 3b(ii), ‘children of Jesus’ is replaced by ‘children of the palm wine tapper’. The implication here is that just as the Christians regard Jesus as their father, the kegites regard the palm wine tapper as their father. In 3b(iii) while Christians affirm that the power of God is great, kegites assert that the tapper is great. Again here, kegites see palm wine tapper as their god. Just as God made a thoroughfare for the children of Israel on the Red Sea, the palm wine tapper creates a way on the palm wine tree in order to have access to palm wine. In 3b(iv), the ‘Holy Spirit’ in the Christian chorus is replaced with the ‘palm wine tapper’. Christians always invite the Holy Spirit to chair their meetings/gatherings; kegites invite their palm wine tapper to chair their gyrations so that his presence would guarantee the availability of palm wine. Finally in 3b(v), the Christians assert that the Lord is good, the kegites assert that the palm wine tapper is good. The implication here is that just as the Christians look up to God for their blessings, the kegites look up to the palm wine tapper for their palm wine. The fact that God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are replaced in tables 3a and b suggests that just as the ‘Trinity’ is central to Christianity, the palm wine tapper is very central to the kegites.

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Table 4A: Kegites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4a(i)</th>
<th>Angels are singing You are worthy o Lord You are worthy You are worthy o Lord.</th>
<th>Kegites are singing: You are worthy oh Chief. You are worthy You are worthy o chief.</th>
<th>(iii) ‘Angels’ is replaced by kegites. (iv) ‘Oh Lord’ is replaced by ‘Oh Chief.</th>
<th>Kegites.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4a(ii)</td>
<td>I’m so glad, I belong to Jesus (3ce) I’m so glad, I belong to Jesus (3ce) Association with Christ.</td>
<td>I’m so glad I belong to kegites (3ce) I’m so glad I belong to kegites Association with kegites.</td>
<td>‘Jesus’ is replaced by ‘kegites’.</td>
<td>Kegites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a(iii)</td>
<td>If you’re happy and you know praise the Lord (2ce) If you’re happy and you know And you really want to show. If you are happy and you know Praise the Lord. Song of praise to the Lord.</td>
<td>If you are happy and you know, Say kegites, kegites (2ce) If you’re happy and you know And you really want to show Say kegites. Appreciates kegites</td>
<td>‘Praise the Lord’ is replaced by ‘say kegites’.</td>
<td>Kegites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4B: Kegites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4b(i)</th>
<th>Báyì́ là ń şe, Báyì́ là ń şe, Báyì́ là ń şe nipàdé omo Jésù (Joyous singing and dancing characterises Christian gathering)</th>
<th>Báyì́ là ń şe Báyì́ là ń şe Báyì́ là ń şe nipàdé omo elému. (Joyous singing and dancing (gyration) characterises kegites meetings).</th>
<th>‘In the gathering of Christians’ was replaced by ‘In the gathering of kegites’.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>This is the way we celebrate in the gathering of Christians.</strong></td>
<td><strong>This is the way we rejoice in the gathering of kegites.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Joyous singing and dancing characterise both the Christian gathering and the ketiges’ gathering. In Christian gathering, it is praise worship; in kegites’ gathering, it is gyration.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kegites.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4b(ii)</th>
<th>Gbọ́ ohùn àwọn Ańgēlī tì ń kọ́rìn (2ce) Wón ń kọ́rìn ọ̀go, ọ̀go (2ce) Gbọ́ ohùn àwọn ańgēlī tì ń kọ́rìn.</th>
<th>Gbọ́ ohùn àwọn kégá̀́lì tì ń kọ́rìn (2ce) Wón n mẹ́mọ́ ọ́pẹ́ ọ́pẹ́ (2ce) Gbọ́ ohùn àwọn kégá̀́lì tì ń kọ́rìn.</th>
<th>‘Singing angels’ was replaced by ‘drinking kegites.’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Here the voice of the singing Angels.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Here the voice of the drinking kegites.</strong></td>
<td><strong>As the angels sing and rejoice, the kegites drink palm wine and rejoice.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kegites.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 4a and b talk about the kegites themselves. In 4a(i) the Christians rejoice that they belong to Jesus, the kegites assert that they rejoice that they belong to the kegites group. In 4a(ii), ‘praise the Lord’ in the Christian chorus is replaced by ‘say kegites’. This suggests that just as the Christians are happy to be Christians, the kegites are happy to be associated with the group. In 4a(iii) ‘Angels are singing’ is replaced with ‘kegites are singing’. Here, the kegites are saying that the kind of happiness and gladness that accompany angels’ songs accompany their gyrations where singing, drumming and dancing are the order of the day. In 4b(i), the joyous singing and dancing that characterise the gathering of the Christians also take place in the gathering of the kegites. The implication of this is that, if Christians are happy in their fellowships to sing choruses to God, kegites are equally happy in their gyrations. In 4b(ii) ‘the singing angels’ is replaced with ‘the drinking kegites’. Here again, the implication is that kegites liken their gyrations to the singing and dancing of Angels.

Table 5: Beer

| 5(i) | Jesús ṣeun fún mi  
|      | Ô ti ṣeun fún mi.  
|      | Ohun baba kò le ṣe  
|      | Ô ti ṣeun fún mi.  
|      | (Exalts Jesus)    |
|      | Òmu ṣe fún mi  
|      | Ô ti ṣe fún mi  
|      | Ohun beer kò le ṣe  
|      | Ògūrọ ṣe fún mi.  
|      | (Exalts palm wine) |

| 5(ii) | Bí Jésù badé  
|      | Á bámi lěnu ihinrere (2ce)  
|      | Kò ní bámi nilé aláwo  
|      | Á bámi lěnu ihinrere.  
|      | When Jesus comes  
|      | He will meet me evangelising  
|      | He will not meet me in the herbalist’s house  
|      | When Jesus comes, He will meet me evangelising.  
|      | Bí shíífù bá dé  
|      | Á bámi lěnu  
|      | Ògūrọ funfun (2ce)  
|      | Kò ní bámi ni beer parlour  
|      | Á bámi lěnu Ògūrọ funfun.  

| Jesus has done for me  
| What my father cannot do for me. |

| Palm wine has done for me what beer cannot do for me.  

| (i) ‘Jésù’ (Jesus) was replaced by ‘ẹmu’ (palm wine);  
| ‘Baba’ (father) was replaced by ‘beer’.  
| Jesus is gracious to the Christians, palm wine is delicious to the kegites.  
| Beer. Actually, palm wine is the theme here, but beer is made a sub-theme, while palm wine is appreciated, beer is relegated.  

| Beer.  
| (To the kegites, beer is inferior in quality to palm wine.) |

Table 5 talks about ‘beer’. In the two songs in which ‘beer’ occurs, it is compared with palm wine. In each case, palm wine is said to be superior, that is, it is better than beer. Kegites are therefore discouraged from patronizing beer parlours and encouraged to rather stick to palm wine, which they consider to be very nutritious.
Ethnographic Analysis of the Data

In this analysis, the songs of the kegites are treated as a communicative event underlined by different contextual variables.

1. Setting
The setting of these songs is the kegites’ shrine in the evening from 6.00pm till around 8.30pm. The shrine itself is a very small building, but it has a wide space in the front. So, the kegites usually gather in the open space. The ‘songito’, that is, the composer of songs is surrounded by drummers and they are faced by the other members. The drummers are referred to as ‘drummitos’.

2. Participants
All the members of the kegites club are involved. They are up to twenty-five in number. The songito raises a song and the other members chorus it, while the ‘drummitos’ beat their drums heartily.

3. Ends
The general goal of the singing and dancing, according to the members that were interviewed, is to ease tension and relax. They believe that the academic community is very tense and boring and the only way to avoid boredom is by creating a relaxed, happy and lively environment through their gyrations.

4. Acts Sequence
The sọngito is the first to lead every song while the other members chorus it after him. He determines the appropriate songs to sing in each gyration. The tone of the song would determine the activities of the drummitos.

5. Key
An environment of jubilation and joy is created so that everybody is lively and happy. There is no room for sobriety. Every member sings and dances lively.

6. Instrumentality
The singing is accompanied by clapping, drumming and dancing. Each participant sings loudly and heartily. As seen in the data, some songs are composed in the English language while others are in Yorùbá. However, many of the songs are in Yorùbá. This must have been because of the fact that the institutions studied are located in the South Western part of the country, where Yorùbá is the dominant language.
7. Norms
In each gyration, the sôngito appears to be the leading force. He is the one that raises each song, while the other members sing along with him. The drummers are not left out. The tune of the song will determine the tone of their drumming.

8. Genre
Kegites gyration is dominated by singing, dancing, clapping and drumming. Some members noted that it was the songs that first attracted them to the group.

9. Topic
Each song has a theme. The songs in table 1 have ‘palm wine’ as their central theme. The songs in table 2 have ‘chief’, (the leader of the kegites) as their subject matter. The ones in table 3 talk about the palm wine tapper who supplies the group with wine. The songs in table 4 revolve around the kegites themselves. The songs in table 5 all revolve around the fact that palm wine is better than ‘beer’, so beer is discouraged among the members. The summary of this analysis is that when the kegites sing, they are communicating among themselves. This communicative event serves the purpose of easing off tension, eliminating boredom and expressing their identity on the campus.

The Use of Slang and Coinages
Some coinages and slang were used in the songs of the kegites. Let us examine some of them briefly.

1. **The chief**: This is the president/chairman of the club. He is the Chief Executive and he wields great powers in the club.
2. **Kegites**: The word ‘kegites’ itself was coined from the word ‘keg’. Palm wine is kept in the keg for preservation. The keg is gourd.
3. **The elder**: The next person to the ‘chief’ kegites in hierarchy is the elder, typical of a counsellor.
4. **Palmy**: This is a coinage which refers to palm wine. See 2b(iv), above.
5. **Holy Water**: Palm wine is referred to by the kegites as holy water. See 2b(iv), above.
6. **Feda**: This refers to the general secretary of the association. The word was coined from ‘feather’. In ancient times, the feather was used with ink to write.
7. **Parrot**: The Public Relations Officer (P.R.O.). The ‘parrot’ is noted for its ‘talkativeness’; so also does the P.R.O. talks much in trying to project the image of the kegites.
8. **Songito**: A coinage from ‘songs’. It refers to the chief composer/singer of the kegites. He is otherwise referred to as ‘cricket’.

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(9) **The H.O.D.**: The Head of Drummer is the officer that leads the beating of drums.
(10) **The cricket**: (That is the ‘songito’) see number 7 above.
(11) **Marshal**: This officer is in charge of discipline and security. Discipline is a very strict affair among the kegites.
(12) **The purse**: The treasurer is referred to as the purse, knowing fully well that money is kept in the purse.
(13) **The cowry**: This is the ‘Financial Secretary’. In ancient times, the cowrie was used as legal tender (money).
(14) **Pourer**: This officer is in charge of sharing and serving palm wine. He pours it inside the calabash called ‘ahá’.
(15) **The curator**: This is the officer in charge of the club’s property.
(16) **Kẹ́tẹ́kẹ́tẹ́**: This refers to the chief transport officer. The word Kẹ́tẹ́kẹ́tẹ́ is the Yorùbá word for ‘donkey’.
(17) **The tapper**: This is the person that climbs the palm tree to tap palm wine. The officers have been arranged in hierarchical order.
   All these words could be described as the ‘register’ of the club.
(18) **Biscuit**: Pieces of calabash, broken when a ‘comrad’ is dekegged (that is excommunicated) for misconduct.
(19) **Fellow**: Jesus, it also refers to senior members of the group, who are not students. They regard Jesus as a fellow for turning water to wine in Canaan of Galilee.
(20) **Comrade**: An official member of the kegites.
(21) **Comrado**: A non-member.
(22) **Emblem**: Calabash for drinking palm wine.
(23) **Regalia**: The uniform of the group.
(24) **Capito**: Cap
(25) **Solidify**: Food.
(26) **Manya**: Amen (response of the kegites members to Chief’s prayer).
(27) **Obeng**: An official outing on the group (the group occasionally goes out on invitation by a member of a fellow. For instance, Chief Olúségun Obasanjó (the former President of Nigeria, is a fellow and he usually invites the group to his house).
(28) **Ópéké/Opésis**: Lady/ladies.
(29) **Ópákà/Opákasis**: Guy/guys.
(30) **Drummito**: Drummers.
(31) **Jarass or Informajara**: Information.


Conclusion

This paper has examined thirty songs adapted by the kegites from Christian choruses. These songs are regularly sung by kegites in their gyrations to attract the non-initiates. The adapted songs maintain the lyrics of the Christian choruses from which they were derived, but the register changed. Lexical items associated with Christianity were changed to the ones associated with kegites. This is so cleverly done that a casual listener might not notice that the songs have been adapted by kegites to suit their own purpose. We can refer to this as secularization of sacred songs. Each Christian song that is adapted has its own theme, the same way each kegites’ song has its own theme, which is associated with the kegites. These gyration songs of the kegites are major tools members of the group register their presence on the campus as well as create a unique social identity for the group. The kegites’ gyrations attract non-members. Each time they are ‘gyrating’, one would see students who are not members gather as onlookers. So, in our analysis, we treated the songs themselves as a communicative event.

References


