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## **Analysis and Aesthetic Appraisal of Embroidery Works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo**

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### **Abstracts**

This paper aimed at compiling the embroidery works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo with a view to appraising the styles, medium, techniques and motifs of depicting some Yoruba proverb and philosophy. The production of embroidery of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo were identified, classified and photographed. The paper will also examine the styles, medium, techniques and motifs used in creating artworks by the artist; the artist biography was equally appraised. The data for the study was collected from both primary and secondary sources, the primary data was derived from fieldwork and this involved identification and classification of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo's embroidery that were randomly selected. Pictures of the selected works were taken for further analysis. The secondary data was collected from existing literature; it provided information on the advent of embroidery in Nigeria and also in Diasporas. This paper unveils the unique artistic techniques as employed by the Artist thereby bringing the textile works and fashion back to life again and using Yoruba traditional proverbs and philosophy to promote our heritage and culture. Lasisi Lateef's textile embroidery is a typical example of using a textile medium as a means of self-expression and a promoter of Yoruba culture and heritage.

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Art is an expression of inner feelings in drawing, textile, sculpture, and graphics, painting etc. some scholars have also defined art according to the meaning of the works from their point of view. For example Lloyd (1957), "defines art as a discovery and development of elementary principle of nature into beautiful forms suitable for human use". Also art can be defined as the real significance of anything that has philosophical, psychological and spiritual effect on the human mind (Baumgharten, 2000). "Art is the production of some permanent object or passing action, which is fitted not only to supply an active enjoyment to the producer, but to convey a pleasurable impression to a number of spectators or listeners, quite apart from any personal advantage to be derived from it"(Sully 2010). Another scholar also defined art as the act of performing creative action that is drawn through observation. Various aspects of art that reflected in the selected works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo in relation to textile were examined.

Embroidery is an aspect of textile which deals with art and handicraft of decorating fabric or other materials with needle and thread or yarn. Embroidery also incorporates other materials such as metal strips, pearls, beads, quills, and sequins. Embroidery adds grace and elegance, and life and style even into our everyday life. It is often recommended for caps, hats, coats, blankets dress, shirts denim, and stockings. Embroidery is available with a wide variety of thread of yarn colour, embroidery on leather; cotton and silk are done all over the world. (ezinearticles.com, 2015)

Embroidery is constructed (mostly by women) in hundreds of tiny stitches which are visible on the front of the fabric. The system of the stitches is revealed on the back of the material, some embroiderers seal the back of the fabric, preventing other from seeing the underlying structure of the patterns, other leave back open those who want to take a peep. (Wikipedia, 2016)

The use of embroidery to decorate clothes has been around since man began to wear clothes; it has been done and used as an embellishment on textile fabrics long before its name was derived. The exact date when embroidered clothing emerged is not known, though it is safe to assume that embroidery may well be as old as clothing itself. Scholars have argued that when mankind first became conscious of how furs can shield one from the elements, decorative patterns on such furs was prevalent; this is considered to be the beginnings of embroidery. (Dall, 2014)

Elaborately embroidered clothing has been a mark of wealth and status in many cultures including ancient Persia, India, China, Japan, Byzantium and medieval and Baroque Europe. The traditional folk techniques were passed from generation to generation in culture as diverse as Northern Vietnam Mexico, and Eastern Europe (Morris, 2009). This has been a chosen pastime for hundreds of centuries, for as long as they have needle and thread, initials or designs have been stitched onto clothing, it is a perfect way to personalize you clothing, it is like a stamp of African aesthetics on an outfit. Modern designs are given exotic embroidery pattern in order to compliment western and African imprints. Each country has its own distinctive style of embroidery which incorporates the culture and imagery from their history and tradition.

#### ***Embroidery in Nigeria***

Embroidery is like a stamp of African aesthetic on an outfit, modern designs are given exotic embroidery patterns in order to marry western African imprints. Embroidery in Nigeria is dated back to centuries though indigenous to the country embroidery has become integral part of Nigeria fashion.

Among the Nupe and Hausa, research has proved that embroidery has been a long tradition and it is used on many types of garments, from Hausa farmer's cloths to riding robes and ceremonial apparels.

According to Picton (1995) the embroidery on men's clothes is traditionally made with dark stitches with asymmetrical non-representation design, gorgeous, voluminous robes, intricate embroidery are symbols of prestige and rank from men in Nupe and Hausa community, designs of Nupe embroiderers are well known and prized by Nupe and Hausa people.

Embroidery was not indigenous to the Igbo but surface design for body painting which were easily converted into embroidery design for table linens, for example in the Igbo town of Arochukwu. The Yoruba people especially men have also used some embroidery on clothing round the neck of their traditional cloth called "Agbade". Agbade is a Yoruba clothes that is flowing sleeved robe, usually decorated with embroidery, which is worn throughout Nigeria by important men, such as kings, chiefs, and the rich on ceremonial occasions like wedding and funerals etc. The Hausa name for the robe is "Riga". Although today they are often made from hand-woven cloth, the painstaking and beautiful hand embroidery that was used in the past is rarely seen today.

### 1.1 Significance of the Study

It is a general opinion that embroidery is only meant to embellish a dress or home accessories. However this project exposes to the public the aesthetic quality of embroidery on canvas with painterly effects. It will serve as a visual documentation of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo embroidery works which has not been documented before now.

- i) Study the background and professional development of the artist.
- ii) Identify and classify the works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo
- iii) Analyze the artist's use of styles, symbols, colour and techniques in his works.

### 1.2 Research Methodology

This research work made use of both primary and secondary source of data collection. Primary source include personal interview with the artist and observation of the artist's work while the secondary source was from related literature on the subject matter, citations from relevant publications. Personal interview was conducted with Lasisi Lateef Adedayo on his works, styles, passion and drive for his embroidery. The methodology used in this study is according to Edmund Burke Feldman's image and idea. It expatiated the steps or stages necessary to attain a well detailed and scholarly analysis of art. These steps or procedures served as a guide in the analysis of the works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo. The materials and methods employed with the primary and secondary sources of data collection, surfing the internet for relevant literature, oral interview to mention a few. The library units were also consulted for related textbooks. Below are the steps adopted in the analysis of the works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo.

- i. **Description:** Feldman, (1967) says to describe is *a process of taking inventory* (a detailed list of all the items in a place) *and of noting what is immediately presented to the viewer*. This process or stage talks about every detail incorporated in a work of art as presented to the viewer without making any judgment or conclusive statement. When making a critical description, interpretation is usually deferred just like a witness in a courtroom; such a fellow is in the courtroom only to say what he has to say without interpretation. One of the reasons of deferment of judgment is to avoid non-reflective perception about the work. Critical description involves; making an inventory of names of things seen in the object as before the viewer and performing a technical description of the way the work was presented or rendered. Therefore this study described the works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo according to Feldman's laid down principles.
- ii. **Formal Analysis:** This stage goes further or beyond descriptive inventory, to the discovery of how things were made or constituted. This step talks about the work of art with reference or in relation to the elements and principles of design; this means the qualities of line and shape, use of colour, judicious management of space are formally analyzed and discussed. This stage also describes the way the form of the work in view in details. This helps in accumulating evidence that will help to attempt good interpretation of the work and to make judgment of its excellence. The process described above shed light and aided the formal analysis of the works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo and also led to the interpretation of the elements and principles of design present in his works.
- iii. **Interpretation:** This stage expresses the meaning or meanings of the work under survey or study as perceived by the viewer. The stage of interpretation does not aim at evaluation to proffer meanings to the work. The themes embedded in it, the problem (artistic or intellectual) it had successfully solved. At this step, the work that is being analyzed may have more than one meaning which is known as expressive content. This stage of interpretation served as guide in proposing meanings to the works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo for effective analysis.
- iv. **Evaluation or Judgment:** The work of art according to (Feldman, 1967) is giving the work a rank or rating the work by a benchmark or standard in relation to other works in its class using that to decide the degree of its artistic and aesthetic merit. It is the conclusive statement of the procedure of the criticism or analysis, which gives an overview and summary to the process. This process also enhanced the correct and appropriate form of judgment and evaluation of the works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo and aided the conclusion of his artistic exploits.

### 1.3 Biography of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo



*Plate 1. Lasisi Lateef Adedayo*

**Lasisi Lateef Adedayo** was born to Alhaji Mustapha Adewale Lasisi, (a tailor by profession) in Ado-Odo town of Ogun State, Nigeria; He had his early education at Ado-Odo. Where he started developing his innate skill and zeal for Creative Arts, He moved further on the academic ladder by studying Fine and Applied Arts at Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Oto-Ijanikin in 2004, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife for his First Degree and Master Degree with Specialization in Textile Design. Lasisi is an Educationist to the core. He has served in various professional capacities as a Studio Artist, Art Tutor, and Lecturer in many academic programs. Aside from his busy studio practice, Lasisi has participated in Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops as resource personnel in several artistic Endeavours'. He is an active member of various professional bodies namely; the Society of Nigeria Artists (SNA), the Visual Art Teachers Association of Nigeria (VATAN), and the Ologe Group of International Artists (OGLA).

He love drawing and he has been drawing from his early life, ability he inherited from his family. He developed it when he was at primary school and at first in his career he wanted to study fine arts but was discourage because of his religion. He processed to study Islamic studies but he was given Fine arts after applying for Islamic studies in his Joint admission matriculation board (JAMB).

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Many books have been published on embroidery and many artists have also worked on it. However, little emphasis has been made on use of embroidery on canvas which depicts images that can be used as a mean of documenting history as well as decoration.

Edith, (2007) embroidery as “thread art” used to embellish a garment, hat or some other product by adding a sewn pattern. Generally, this sewn pattern includes a design and can also include lettering and monograms. Embroidery is the beautiful art of decorating fabric through stitches. It can be done by hand which is more expensive than machine embroidery.

Vendale, (2010), defines embroidery the art of working with the needle raised and ornamental designs in threads silk, cotton, gold, silver, or other material, upon any woven fabric, leather, paper etc. embroidery is the stitching of designs, both abstract and figurative onto a piece of fabric using specific types of thread and many different decorative stitches.

Johnson, (2010), mentioned that the embroidery effect on cloth could be traced to the northern part of Nigeria and has been practiced as hand craft since ancient times. The embroidery done on men’s clothes is traditionally made with dark stiches with asymmetrical and non-representational design. Gorgeously voluminous ‘robes intricately embroidery are symbolic of prestige and rank for men of Nupe and Hausa communities.

Designs for the Nupe embroiders are well known and prized by Nupe and Hausa people. Three types of stitches are primarily used. There are the chain stitch, the buttonhole stitch and couching. The stitching is done with either imported or indigenous silk thread on either imported or hand-woven cloth. Often indigenous silk thread in its own creamy colour called Tsmia in Hausa is used for the prestigious elegant Rigona robes on hand-woven narrow band cloth which is most times creamy in colour.

There are still other types of embroidery’s design in the country. These embroidered cloths are used as bedspread, tablecloth or wall hangings. Some artists say the colourful and cheerful cloths are the of ‘Fork art’. The Hausa call it ‘Hausa bridal sheets’ what is note in these cloths is that the embroidery designs and traditional house decorations have similar motifs. Embroidery was not also indigenous to the Igbo but surface designs for body paintings were easily converted to embroidery designs for table linens in the igbo town of Arochuwu. Yoruba men have also used some embroidery on clothing, round the neck of their traditional agbada.

### 2.1 Understanding Embroidery:

The word embroidery has been defined by severally by many local and foreign authors based on their perception. Dictionary.com define embroidery as the art of working raised and ornamental designs in threads of silk, cotton, gold, silver, or other materials, upon any woven fabric, leather, paper, etc. with a needle. Ebay, 2014 also define embroidery as the process of decorating material with stitches designs.

There are different stitches in making embroidery design and they are running stitch, back stitch, stem, outline and cable stitch, couching, chain stitch, feather stitch, blanket stitch, Vandyke stitch, cross stitch, stain stitch French knots etc. Needle work is an umbrella that covers embroidery. Needle point is an extension of needle work like the embroidery, needle points refers to family of stitch worked on carves-ground fabric i.e a canvas as the background of the fabrics with needle points covering the mesh. There is a term called canvas embroidery which means or refers to a broader family of numbered

thread stitches, this gives room for the exposure of the background unlike needle point which does not give room for the exposure of the background. Embroidery, applique and quilting are almost the same, so they work hand in hand. As said earlier said, embroidery is used for joining piece of fabrics together, which applies to applique and also surface decoration for quilting.

However Merriam Webster online dictionary define embroidery as the art or process of forming decorative designs with hand or machine needlework. (Annemarie,1994), viewed embroidery as containing ornamental methods in which fabrics are decorated with thread, in his view, (Leslie,1979) puts it as the ornamentation of surface fabrics with stitches regardless of whether it is produced by hand or machine. He went further to state that the characteristic content of this art is basically typified by stitching and not sewing.

In recent times, as a result of the emergence of technology and civilization, embroidery is now sparingly done on cloth, cap and the likes. The outlook today in varied and embroidery is now created in form of wall hangings. It is even accepted at the highest level as a new art form. In view of all the above, embroidery can be defined as an art of decoration, it is also stitch technique executed in a particular manner, to form a figure or pattern, on a fabric. It can be done manually has images, illustration and so on. It is also observed that intricate designs and brilliantly embroidered patterns infuse beauty of their own onto the fabrics adding to their economics values.

### 3.0 ANALYSIS OF SELECTED WORKS BY LASISI LATEEF ADEDAYO

Aesthetics is the philosophy that examines the nature of art, its worth and role in the society. Aesthetics examines, studies the principles, elements and characteristics of an artwork is rendered or art piece produced by an artist. This shows how the artworks, how valuable it is, its functionality, its role in the society and its benefits. Aesthetics according to Aristotle is the scientific study of the context, theme, concept or ideal of beauty and the beautiful. This means that aesthetics launches one into the realm of appreciating the value of a work of art, or an art piece. Vansima J (1984)

Aesthetics is the formal study of art, in relation to the ideal of beauty; it could also mean the state of being tasteful, graceful, elegant, pleasing, lovely, adorable, exquisite of a thing, person, environment or artwork. All the above mentioned definitions of aesthetics are related to visual art practice; it (aesthetic) teaches how to appreciate a work of art. Though; artwork is mostly produced to express the inner feeling or emotion of the artist.

#### 3.1 His Style of Embroidery

Embroidery is used to embellish fabric. There are many styles of embroidery which can be used to add floral, geometric or other designs to garment or hangings. The styles are Cross-stitch or counted round chain-stitches, quilting, needle lace, thread painting, stump work, etc. all these styles are under surface embroidery, or free styles hand embroidery is a general category that encompasses most surface embroidery techniques, but here, Lasisi Lateef Adedayo is a free style embroidery artist without any strict technique but with beautiful results. Surface embroidery is the embellishment of fabric (and other mediums-paper, leather, etc) with embroidery stitches. Any type of design may be used in surface embroidery, there are hundreds of documented surface embroidery stitches, with the most popular, including back stitch, stem stitch, chain stitch, French knots, daisy stitches. (Detached chain), button whole stitch; stain stitch, and simple straight stitch. Free style surface embroidery can be used to stitch pictures of people, place and things using variety of thread. Today machine embroidery has been widely used computers have also added another twist into these sewing techniques making the process easier for mass production of embroidery design. Lasisi Lateef Adedayo embroidery is different from other Nigeria artist, his works look like the embroidery works of India and China.

The selected works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo to be analyzed are classified into two; Embroidery (thirteen works) and mixed media (two works)



Plate 1: Ehin gbeti 18" by 24" Embroidery 2010.

- a) **Ehin Gbeti:** The *Eyo* festival otherwise called *Adamu Orisha* is a Yoruba festival unique to Lagos people, Nigeria. In modern times it is presented by the people of Lagos as a tourist event and according to historical records, is traditionally performed in Lagos Island. The white flowing costume consists of an '*agbada*' (the top robe and the "*aropale*"- (the bottom wrap around). No part of the person carrying the *Eyo* is expected to be seen. The *Eyo* also wear an "*Akete*" a hat that bears the colours and shield of the *Iga* from which he comes. An *Eyo* may tie ribbons in his *Iga*'s colours to the *Opambata*(palm branch) that he carries. An *Iga*'s *Eyo* may have up to 50 to 100 or more members, each person carrying a robe as *Eyo* must pay a fee for the privilege, this fee is paid to the *Iga* ruling house, whose colours and "*Akete*" the *Eyo* wears. The artwork consists of the "*Ape*" or "*Aga*" (hat) which comes in different colours depicting the unique group and cadre of the *Eyo*.

The close fittings “*Agbada*”(robe), the “*Aropale*” (loin-cloth) the *Ibori* (veil) and also carries an “*Opambata*” (staff); an exquisitely carved, “*Opambata*” is held before the face and wielded as a sign of felicitation to friends and admirers.

From the forgoing it is obvious that from the purely religious significance of *Adamu-orisa*, it also has other significance and attractions which sometimes overweight the religious essence of the occasion. Most importantly *Adamu-Orisa* as it were is a refinery for preservation and enrichment of the dialect spoken by the indigence of Lagos. Its texture and flavor are safely preserved in the classic language of *Adamu-Orisa*. This is a significance of the entirely urban situation like Lagos; in which western influence tend to out run its indigenous cultural heritage.

All the significance of *Eyo* festival can be viewed from the revitalization and rejuvenation of the Lagos culture. This has helped to put Lagos in a unique position in the Yoruba culture, the preservation of the entire Yoruba language and culture through the various dialects in the chant, such as the *Ijebu* dialect, *Awori* dialect, *Badagry* dialect and a host of other. It also helps in preserving the worship of some other divinities in Yoruba religion. The nourishment of one is the nourishment of others.

It is important to note that most African language find fulfillment in traditional festival in which oral tradition plays a vital role as it is in the Yoruba religion. *Adamu-orisa* is also significant as a bulwark of imperialism, which tends to regulate African culture; the *Adamu-orisa* festival re-activates the unique cultural heritage of indigenes of Lagos. The festival is depicted using hand embroidery technique through the use of needle in which patterns and African traditional motifs are used to represent a scene.



*Plate 2: Coat of Arm 24” by 24” Embroidery and Applique 2012,*

- b) **Embroidery and Applique:** Coat of Arm is representation of the National Coat of Arm made in year 2012 and measured 24 inches by 24 inches and it was carried out through mix-media embroidery and applique. The Nigeria Coat of Arm is a symbol of the national unity, state power, and authority which was officially adopted by the Nigeria government in 1955, before its adoption in 1975, each of the country’s constituent political units had its own coat of arms, this is because under a federal system of government, component states are allowed to have their own flag, coat of arm and anthem except printing their own currency or own armed forces.

Though the first designer of the Nigeria Coat of Arm is not officially documented, however, national symbols such as the national flag are known to have been designed by a student named M.T Akinkunmi, who won a national wide competition in 1959. The Nigeria Coat Arm is a unique heraldic design on a black shield which has two white lines that form ‘Y’ shape and two white horse- one on each side on top of the shield is a green and white band with an eagle standing on top of the band.

The Nigeria Coat of Arm has seven features each symbolizing the essence or virtue about the country. The features are as follows

- i) A black shield which represent Nigeria fertile soil.
- ii) Two white wavy bands on the shield which form the “Y” they represent the country’s main in-land waterways, the Niger and Benue rivers (which both meet to form a confluence at Lokoja)
- iii) Two horses on either side of the shield represent Nigeria’s dignity.
- iv) Some flowers at the base, the yellow flower at the base are cactus spectabilis, a type of flower found in all parts of the country representing the nation’s beauty and rich heritage.
- v) An eagle standing on the shield represents the strength and pride of Nigeria.
- vi) The wreath (with green and white bands) these represent the rich agricultural potentials of Nigeria.
- vii) The band around the base of the shield, this bears the Nigeria National motto “Unity, Faith, Peace, and Progress” which was adopted since 1978, before then the motto was formerly Peace, Unity and Freedom”



*Plate 3: Change 18” by 24” Embroidery 2011.*

- c) **Emilokan (Change):** This is ubiquitous in any society, particularly in that which strives to fulfill human needs, and it takes a committed leadership to accomplish a propitious change in a society. Nigeria short life has been packed with successions of social changes, there has been the shift from regions to states, from farm to cities, from agriculture to industries and how power shift from the north to the south, all these change have not been from the benefit of the common man. Only those in the corridor of power have gained from those with multiplicity of riches, while the ordinary citizens have remained in wallowing penury, in other words the masses have been pre-occupied with the struggle for daily survival.

Since independence in 1960, the nation has mostly been under the claws of the military. The prolongation of military rule in Nigeria combined with corruption to undermine due process, the rule of law transparency, accountability and efficiency in government. All the caps in this work of art stand for the governor of all western states where believe change has really touch, the person putting glasses stand as the godfather of all this governors. Leaders must activate existing institutions in pursuit of the society’s goal of when necessary; help redesign institutions to achieve that result, leaders must also help people know how they can be at their best.



*Plate 4: Agbelebu (The Cross) 18” by 24” Embroidery 2011.*

- d) **Agbelebu (The Cross):** The Christian cross seen as a representation of the instrument of the crucifixion of Jesus. The cross is the best known symbol of Christianity. The meaning of the cross is death from the 6<sup>th</sup> Century B.C until the 4<sup>th</sup> Century A.B the cross was an instrument of execution that resulted in the death by the most torturous and painful of ways, in the crucifixion a person was either tied or nailed to a wooden cross and left to hang until dead, death would be slow and excruciatingly painful, in fact, the word excruciating literally means “Out of Crucifying” however because of Christ and his death on the cross, the meaning of the cross today is completely different.

In Christianity, the cross is the intersection of God’s love and His justice, Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29), the reference to Jesus to the lamb of God points back to the institution of the Jewish Passover in Exodus 12. The overarching message of the Bible is the story of redemption, God created man and woman in his image and placed them in the Garden of Eden to be stewards on the earth, however due to the temptations of satan (the serpent) Adam and Eve sinned and fell from God’s grace, furthermore, they have passed the curse of sin on their children so that everyone inherits their sin and guilt. God’s love moved Him to send His one and only son to be the propitiation for sin.

The concept of cross bearing today has lost much of its original meaning, typically we use cross-bearing to denote an inconvenient or bothersome circumstance Christian must keep in mind that Jesus is calling His disciple to engage in radical self-denial.



*Plate 5: Argungun Festival 18” by 24” Embroidery 2011,*

- e) **Argungun Festival:** This is a Fishing Festival is one notable festival that is domiciled in the northern part of Nigeria. The festival is an annual 4-day event that is held in Argungun Council in Kebbi state between February and March after the conclusion of all farming works, Argungun



as a town became prominent in the 18<sup>th</sup> century after it was conquered by the Fulani and the Gwandu people, although none of their conquerors could completely control them.

The festival started initially in form of religious rights prior to the time of Surame Gungu of Kebbi Kingdom four (4) festivals namely Gyayan Ruwa, Fashin Ruwa, Gyayan and Shan Kabowa are believed to have made way for the present day Argungun fishing festival. There has been several report in many publications that the Argungun festival began in 1934. From 1934 to date the festival has attracted millions of people to its grounds and often graced by dignitaries including heads of states, during the time of Gen. Yakubu Gowon as Nigerian Head of state he attended the festival and also the former president Olusegun Obasanjo is said to have graced the occasion four (4) times. The attendance of these government officials is said to have led to an increase in governments' participation in festival.

The participants in the festival are not allowed to use modern fishing instruments or equipment, instead, they can chose to use their hands or gourds or the traditional fishing instruments for the fishing. The goal is to catch the biggest fish and be rewarded with a huge cash prize.



*Plate 6: Ile Oluwa (Mecca) 18" by 24" Embroidery 2014,*

- f) ***Ile Oluwa (Mecca):*** This is the most holy of Muslim cities Muhammad the founder of Islam was born in Mecca and it is toward this religious center that Muslims turn five (5) times daily in prayer. All devout Muslims attempt a hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca at least once in their lifetime, because it is sacred only Muslims are allowed to enter the city.

Mecca was long ruled by Muhammad's descendants, the Shaifs, acting either as independent rulers or as vassal to larger polities, in 1925 Mecca was conquered by Ibn Saud in its modern period; Mecca has been tremendous expansion in size and infrastructure, home to structure such as the Abraj Al Bait.



*Plate 7: Lagbaja 36" by 48" Embroidery 2010,*

- g) ***Lagbaja:*** Bisade Ologunde popularly known as Lagbaja is born in 1960 in Lagos state. He is a Nigerian Afrobeat musician, singer, and songwriter; he is from Odogun's compound, Ijagbo community in Oyun local government Area of Kwara state. Bisade Ologunde is a Baptist by birth and he is also a Globacom Ambassador. The word Lagbaja is from a Yoruba word which means somebody, nobody, anybody or everybody in particular. It perfectly depicts the anonymity of the so called "common man" the mask and then name symbolic the faceless, the voiceless in the society, particularly in Africa. Once you see Lagbaja's mask you are reminded of your own facelessness. Though the concept was developed much earlier, his first album was released to National acclaim in 1993. His music has continued to promote and fascinate with its interplay of traditional African drums and Western instruments which create a unique and enchanting soundscape, his music is a product of various influence ranging from Yoruba music to jazz. Often it is purely instrumental but when there are lyrics, they are primarily sung in Yoruba, English or blend of two as is colloquially spoken in Nigeria. Lagbaja has christened his music Africano, alluding mostly to central role of African drums and rhythms in his groovy fusion.

While many of his songs simply entertain, most are about serious social issues, he passes impactful serious message in humorous ways and continues to use his music as a catalyst for the emergence of a better society, Lagbaja has taken his music beyond the shores of Nigeria, performing in festivals and venues around the world.



**Plate 8: Boju-Boju (Mask)12” by 18” Embroidery 2017,**

- h) **Boju-Boju:** is a personal journey towards exploring the concept of identity, perception, duality and the multi-faceted layers of human reality. The influence of this *Boju-Boju* mask is gotten from the *Oro* festival culture of the western people of Nigeria. The word *Boju-Boju* is been used by children when they are playing and it means “Hide and Seek”, this game usually enjoyed with friends while the other was the dreadful moment when we hid behind windows while the *Oro* was in procession.

*Boju-Boju* is a game of hide and seek played on moonlit night, it played as a call and response the part in italics is *response*. The *Oro* festival is one of the gods in Yoruba religion. The *Oro* also refers to a masquerade in his honor where men disguise themselves as spirits, women are not allowed to see the *Oro* masquerade, that who referred to in the song. The translated *Oloro* as chief masquerader.

In playing of the game *Boju-Boju* one person covers their eyes while singing the song everyone else hides on the line “Se ki n si? (Should I open my eyes) if everyone replies “*si si sinsii* (you can open) then he can open or uncover his eyes and search for them.



**Plate 9: Arinu Rode24” by 30” Embroidery 2010,**

- i) **Arinu Rode:** People of all cultures, personal backgrounds and walks of life come seek knowledge or direction through divination every day. One such traditional divination system is the method known as *Ifa*. *Arenu Rode* allows you to access hidden knowledge about life, trusting the inherent knowing that we all possess allow us to take back our own personal power, in which is according to *Ifa* and Yoruba philosophy our given birthright. The *Ifa* divination method provides with greater knowledge of self and utilizes various tools and rituals to assist with actualizing and manifesting The represent the (*Ifa* divination), the *Ifa* religion and the system of divination refers to the verses of the literary corpus known as the *Odu Ifa*. *Orunmila* is identified as the grand priest as he is who revealed divinity and prophecy to the world, in yorubaland divination gives priests unreserved access to the teachings of *Orunmila*. The *Ifa* divination is been used for provision of direction or clarification of counsel, the *Ifa* divination rites provides an avenue of communication to the spiritual realm the intent of one’s destiny. In *Igbo*land, *Ifa* is known as *Afa* and is performed by specialist called *Dibia*. The *Dibia* is considered a doctor and someone who specializes in the use of herbs for healing and transformation.



**Plate 10: Igbeyawo (Marriage)12” by 18” Mix-Media 2010,**

- j) **Igbeyawo (Marriage):** Marriage can be defines as a formal union of a man and a woman typically recognized by law or tradition by which they become husband and wife. It could also be the process by which two people who love each other make their relationship public, official and permanent.



Marriage makes an incomplete human being a complete one, it makes a citizen matured and gives the man or woman responsibilities whether those responsibilities are to feed and cloths the wife or to assist the husband. Marriage is supposed to take a person out of the hectic lifestyle that one is in and place him or her in an organized environment giving them a path to follow in life and also a shoulder to lean on, marriage helps to safeguard ones faith, it stops one from committing such acts by which he or she could be considered immoral. Marriage is an essential element in the proper up-bringing of children and it plays a large part in saving one from the sins of fornication, homosexuality and masturbation. Marriage takes away the possibilities of these things because after marriage a man is supposed to occupy himself with a woman he has married and vice-versa. Until the world realize the importance of marriage as well as its benefits, it would be faced with endless problems caused by neglecting marriage.



*Plate 11: Iyin Rere (Gospel news) 24" by 36" 2013,*

- k) **Iyin Rere (Gospel news):** Speaks about the coming of the kingdom of God, according to Mark 14-15 it talks about preaching of the gospel to every living thing about the second coming of Christ. The message of the good news is described as theology in many of the New Testament letters it relates to the saving act of God due to the work of Jesus on the cross and Jesus resurrection from the dead which bring reconciliation (which is called atonement between people and God). The first four gospels of the New Testament which are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the main source of information on the life of Jesus Christ, the book of Matthew reinterprets Mark stressing Jesus teachings much as his acts and making subtle changes to the narrative in order to stress his divine nature. The synoptic gospel represents Jesus as an exorcist and healer who preached in parables about the coming kingdom of His Father (God).

In 1 Corinthians 15:18 the Bible summarizes the most basic ingredients of the gospel message namely the death, resurrection and appearances of the resurrected Christ these verses which were an early Christian confession give us the heart of the gospel and show that the resurrection is an integral part of the gospel.



*Plate 12: Ile Loju 18" by 24" 2007,*

- l) **Ile Loju:** A Form tile was made in year 2007, and the measurement is 18 inches by 24 inches and it was carried out on embroidery. This is an African traditional proverb from the western people of Nigeria, this proverb is been used to promote something productive it can also be used to pass an information for warning, giving advice to a particular person to be careful.

Most time this African traditional proverb is been used to pass a message or information that are secretive and also can be used to tell a particular person or people sensitive about where they stay or what to say because it is believe that people are always looking at them even when is seen like nobody is around he or she.



*Plate 13: Amuludu (Celebration) 24" by 36" 2008,*

- m) **Amuludun (Celebration)**; Felix, (2015) Music is a spirit; you do not have to get anybody's consent to go into it. Music is part of the Nigerian culture and that of Africa as a whole, music has always had its place in the lives of the peoples of various ethnic groups of Nigeria. Music is the food to the soul that provides a sort of tolerated tonic that soothes the heart, aching and troubled mind, and music is a refresher tonic to the troubled mind and the hurting; a spiritual appetizer, and an antidote to melancholic condition it also drives away anger, discouragement and frustration and replaces same with happiness, joy and encouragement.

In Nigeria like any other African countries drums and the art of drumming (music) represent a vivid aspect of the peoples cultural heritage and during any occasion this drums are been used for music in other to entertaining people or guest.



**Plate 14:Seke-Seke Mamii 12” by 18”Mix- Media 2012,**

- n) **Seke Seke Mamii**: *Sekere* can be seen as source of celebration because it is said to be a musical instrument that is always present anywhere celebration his. Indeed music rather serves to alleviate suffering and drudgery, it energizes the warriors for action in the battle field and also it allows people to forget their sorrows. Even in the sporting activities music plays a significant role well as traditional ceremonies of historically notable events in the country.

*Sekere* is been played where enjoyment and joy his. The cowries stand for wealth and the Nigerian currency used stand for the joyful celebration and also means of exchange with riches. The drums always go with the *sekere* anywhere there is occasion or celebration. Talking drum is a typical important various ethnic groups of Nigeria, forebear in Nigeria drums which speak the language of the communities, express their feelings, circumstance, situation and events of life the talking drum speaks without tongue and the audience hears and understand the message or information content without any hearing impairment.



**Plate 15:Ajin 18” by 24”Mix- Media 2012,**

- o) **Ajin (Working together)**: This is made in year 2012, and measured 18 inches by 24 inches and it was carried out through mix-media embroidery and buttons. *Ajin* talks about the philosophy of life that is only God Almighty that knows everything and the person who will succeed in life. This particular proverb is been to encourage people to be hardworking and never look down on their selves and any anyone, the person seen today or looked down on today can be the person God Almighty will use to bless or take others to the top.

Looking at this particular work of art the person in front can be said to be the rich person among his friends, because he is well dress and decorated with buttons, the African traditional motifs used speaks about him alone, the motifs are been kept or design under him the money bag stand for prosperity help in promoting him more than his friends. The use of colour in this particular work of art is purple and purple stand for prosperity which means the person that is well decorated is rich. In conclusion *Ajin* gives reasons why we should not look down on anyone; we should respect ourselves and live life not just for ourselves only but for others as well.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

This paper has presented the art of embroidery using different stitches, medium, styles and motifs to depict African traditional proverbs and Yoruba philosophy and all these artworks produced by Lasisi Lateef Adedayo are suitable for decoration and wall hanging. Much more than these, the works are creative depiction of the traditional, religious and socio-cultural history and issues of our time. There is no doubt that this research has documented the works of Lasisi Lateef Adedayo who has specialized in using the uncommon medium of embroidery as a recorder of our time. This paper has succeeded in providing a history and analysis of my works as a contribution to the history of contemporary art in Nigeria.

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