



Bringing our Cultures Home:
FESTSCHRIFT FOR
BADE AJAYI AT 70

Ahmad Shehu Abdussalam (Editor-in-Chief)

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**Bringing our Cultures Home:
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**Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages
Faculty of Arts
University of Ilorin**

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FOREWORD

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to write a foreword to a book on one of my elderly colleagues in the Faculty, Professor 'Bade Ajayi. The book correctly titled "*Bringing Our Cultures Home: FESTSCHRIFT FOR BADE AJAYI AT 70*" is a welcome development in the annals of history of Yoruba scholarship in Nigeria. Professor 'Bade Ajayi, a legendary scholar, academic luminary and astute intelligentsia, turns seventy years of age in April 2014. It is therefore a good thing to celebrate this scholar on his seventieth birthday. Our prayer is that he will live long for us and his contributions to the academia and society will live forever.

To be a scholar on culture and cultural issues is not a simple thing. It is also not meant for lazy people who really do not want to lay their hands on any job whose profit is not immediate. The story of the recipient of this book is different. He grew up in his hometown, Oyo, where culture is held in high esteem up till today. This is why we are proud to say that Professor 'Bade Ajayi is in the forefront of "*Bringing Our Cultures Home*". In another dimension, the scholar in Bade Ajayi did not prevent him from being a practitioner. An astute drummer of the Yoruba talking drum, he held several audiences spell bound in Nigeria and abroad, whenever he is playing the talking drum. Hence he fulfills the saying "Do as I do" and not "Do as I say". But our elder Bade Ajayi has combined both with ease. He feels comfortable on whatever divide, whether theory or practice.

The book itself is an epoch in the area of Cultural Promotion and Development. There are thirty six articles in the book. One important issue about the book is that all articles are peer reviewed by scholars across the country. The editor-in-chief, Professor A. S. Abdussalam is a linguist of repute. He was assisted by Dr. Lere Adeyemi, Dr. H. O. Adeosun and Dr. (Mrs.) B. E. Arokoyo, three well known academics in the area of Linguistics and Yoruba language studies.

There are several topics and titles in the book that will make the book a good treasure of knowledge. They include "*Akitiyan Bade Ajayi Lorin Isatunpin Ihun Ese-Ifa*" which stated clearly the efforts of this scholar we are celebrating in categorizing Ifa Literary Corpus and bring into limelight and usage. The next article ventures into the relationship between Science and Yoruba Language and Culture in an article titled "*The Human Skeleton Derived from Ifa Corpus: the Unacknowledged Dynamics*". In this article, the relationship between Ifa and Science was clearly brought out. Yet in another article, we have the subjection of Alaafin's totem to the theory of Sociology of Literature in an article written by Olori Adeyemi who is also a budding scholar of Yoruba at the University of Ilorin.

You will agree with me that the book is an embodiment of knowledge, not only in Yoruba language and literature, but other disciplines whose relationship to Bade

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Ajayi's specialization is not far-fetched. This is what has made the book a necessary document for the society. To bring our cultures home is not a new proposition but one that has been in existence for long. The book therefore only helps us to re-enforce the dire need of not allowing Yoruba culture to go into abysmal slumber or sudden death.

I therefore recommend that the book be made a necessary need for all our Yoruba scholars as well as other members of the society who believe in the sustenance of Yoruba Culture for the betterment of our society.

Professor Ayo Akinwale
Professor of the Performing Arts
Dean, Faculty of Arts,
University of Ilorin

PREFACE

The first paper titled *Akitiyan Bádé Àjàyí Lóri Ísàtúnpin Ìhun Èsẹ̀ Ifá* is written by ADEOŞUN, Hezekiah Olúfẹ̀mi. The article written in Yoruba examines the re-classification of the structure of Ifa Corpus by Bade Ajayi. He concludes that Bade Ajayi's classification namely, the prologue, the narrative and the epilogue, makes the division of the Ifa corpus easier than what it used to be. ALAMU, Akiti Glory writing on *The Human Skeleton Derived from Ifa Corpus: The unacknowledged Dynamics* believes that Bade Ajayi and Sanni's work on the human skeleton derived from Ifa Corpus provides a scintillating periscope in the era of intertextual engagement in scholarship. He concludes that cultural dispensationalism and culture system theory serve as a palimpsest in the scheme of Yoruba oral genre.

In discussing *Lítirẹ̀şọ Yorùbá Nínú Ọ̀rọ̀ Ààbò Àtí Ífaradà Èsin: Àlàyẹ̀ Ránpẹ̀ Ní Ìlànà Tíọ̀rì Íṣàtakò-Ìmúnisin*, ADEYEMI Léré reveals the role that literature plays in security and religious tolerance. He argues that religious intolerance was not common in the olden days but that colonialism has brought about the mixture of politics, religion and security. He concludes that adherents of foreign religions should beware. In the same vein, OLOWONIBI Femi's article titled *Is Religion a Force for Peace or Conflict in Nigeria?* examines the malady constituted by religious conflict wearing religious garb in Nigeria. He adopts historical and systematic approach which states that although, conflicts are daunting religion is not the immediate cause of conflict because it preaches peace. He concludes that human practices, ethnicity and political factor put on religious attire to fan the ember of conflict and discord in the country. In another article, OGUNKUNLE, Caleb examines *A Comparative Analysis of the Right Hand of Yahweh in the Psalter and Yoruba Tradition*. He compares the significance of the right hand among the Israelites and the Yoruba people. He concludes that the importance attached to the right hand has helped biblical students and scholars to appreciate the similarity that exist between the biblical Israelites and the Yoruba people in the South Western part of Nigeria. OYETADE, M.O., in his paper titled *A Comparative Study of Yoruba and Biblical Concept of Children Upbringing* argues that the concept of children upbringing in the Yoruba traditional religion and biblical view is attended by multifarious perspectives. He finds that that biblical concept is a rider to Yoruba concept of children upbringing and reveals that an omoluabi is a correct man lacking only faith in Christ.

ADÉKÉYÈ, Folúkẹ̀ Bóláńlẹ̀ in her contribution titled *Fágúnwà's Ọ̀gbójú Ọ̀dẹ̀ Nínú Igbó Irúnmalẹ̀: An Adaptation of Biblical Stories* believes that the different scenes of the book, *Ọ̀gbójú Ọ̀dẹ̀ Nínú Igbó Irúnmalẹ̀* are adaptation of Biblical stories. She believes that the author was able to write the book because of the new religion he embraced. She concludes that without these biblical stories the novel would not have been what it is. *The Symbolic Interpretation of Time and Place in the Yorùbá Indigenous Healing System* is the title of ORÍMÓÒGÚNJÉ, Ọ̀ládélé Caleb's contribution. He studies the roles symbolism plays in the verbal arts used in Yorùbá indigenous healthcare practices. He shows how the time, place and character in their health-related verbal arts make them to be in close contact with practical and applied cultural values of their society. He discusses symbolic analysis at the meta-symbolic, meto-symbolic and phono-aesthetic levels to bring out the usefulness of the autochthonous healthcare delivery system.

ADEYEMO, Olúfẹmi's article entitled *An Appraisal of Environmental Issues in the Selected Novels of D.O. Fágúnwá* examines the cultural responses of the Yorùbá people to environmental issues and how literature can play a role in environmental management. He concludes that Yorùbá written literature are capable of creating needed consciousness and awareness in the people on how to manage their physical environment to avert disasters in this age of climatic changes. In another article, HAMZAT, S. A. Qláyidé's *Ìfojú Tíòrì Ajẹmọ̀ Ìmọ̀ Itàn-Tuntun Wo Itàn, Ìṣẹ̀lú Àti Ìlò Agbára Nínú Ìwé Itàn Àròṣọ̀ Ọmọ̀ Olókùn Ẹ̀ṣin* employs New Historicism theory to examine the themes of history, politics and power in Faleti's *Ọmọ̀ Olókùn Ẹ̀ṣin*. She argues that power base in a society is dependent on historical and political factors. She concludes that as long as power is considered to be sacred among the Yoruba, the unscrupulous dominant class will continue to exploit and dominate the majority. ÒKÉWÁNDÉ Olúwólé Tẹ̀wọ̀gboyè's article is entitled *Àgbéyẹ̀wò Ètẹ̀ Ìṣewé́kú Nínú Ìwé Orin Ọ̀ḍẹ̀ Fún Àṣeyẹ̀*. He examines coherence as a stylistics tool to analyse Adeboye Babalola's *Orin Ọ̀ḍẹ̀ Fún Àṣeyẹ̀*. He concludes that coherence of some major poetic devices takes prominence in the selected text. In another vein, ÀJÚWỌ̀N-ADÉNÍRAN, Jùmòkẹ̀ in her paper titled *Àtubòtán Aáwọ̀ Àti Okùnfá Rẹ̀ Láwújọ̀: Ẹ̀ṣiṣe Àmúlò Àsàyàn Àwọ̀n Ewì Àpílẹ̀kọ̀ Yorùbá* dwells on the roles played by Yoruba written poetry/ poets in settling conflicts in the society. Ajuwon's paper x-rays the causes, effects and participants in conflicts. She concludes that Yoruba written poets play a vital role in using their works to preach peace and harmony in the society.

OGUNLOLA, Layo's paper is titled *Yorùbá Proverbs and Morality (Ìwà Ọ̀mọ́lúàbí): The Past, Present and the Future*. He examines the role that Yorùbá proverbs play in Yorùbá moral education (ẹ̀kọ̀ ìwà ọ̀mọ́lúàbí) in the past, present and possibly the future using the sociological theory as postulated by Carl Marx and Fredrick Engel. He concludes by suggesting ways forward. OJEDIRAN, Oludolapo studies the *Socio-Cultural Context of Julie 'Okoh's Edewede*'. Julie Okoh's *Edewede* (2000) is a book that explores harmful cultural practices among the Nigerian women, she depicts female characters that suffer and refuse to be victims of patriarchal cultural rites through linguistic behaviour. Ojediran concludes that women need to appreciate their positions not in a passive way, but as a way of creating a variety of recognisable identities for themselves.

ADÉYEMÍ, Roheemat Qlábímpé investigates the oriki of Àlaafin using the theory of sociology of literature. The article titled *Fifí Tíòrì Sosiólójí Lítírésò Ẹ̀ Àtupalẹ̀ Oríkí Àláàfin Ọ̀ba Lámídì Adéyemí Kẹ̀ta* concludes that efforts should be made to intensify the use of Yoruba panegyrics and other oral literatures so that our history would not be lost. In the same vein, IKHIBE, Solomon O. and BISIRIYU, Mojisola present *A Textual Analysis of Some Selected Asabioje Afenapa's Oriki Performance*. The paper appraises praise poetry as an element that adds aesthetics to Yoruba traditional music, how it contributes to the upliftment of the language and preserves its cultural heritage. They conclude that the rendition of any genre of chant or poetry should be done energetically no matter what voice quality a chanter has in order to add aesthetics and make the music maintain its structure. In another article titled *Oriki (Praise-Singing) Practice In Yoruba Culture*, IKHIBE, Solomon O. and BISIRIYU, Mojisola discuss the performance practice

of oriki, which is praise-poetry among the Yoruba people of Western Nigeria. They draw inferences from various literary sources, interviews and practitioners of the oriki as an oral poetic genre. They conclude that the practice of oriki as a musical-poetic genre be popularized and be made part of the school's curriculum. ATÓYÈBÍ, J. Adébáre examines the *Functions of Proverbs in Contemporary Yorùbá Society*. He observes that proverbs reflect the life and the beliefs of the speakers of a language as they are the words of wisdom handed down from one generation to the other. He concludes among others that Yorùbá proverbs are still used for instruction and counseling purposes. The last paper in section A is entitled *Yoruba Names as Reflection of People's Cultural Heritage* written by YUSUF, Noah, OLATUNJI, Abdulganiy and ISSA, Moshood. They focus on names which is a social identity that distinguishes individuals from each other. They adduce that names play a significant role in virtually all aspects of the people's lives. They also conclude that Yoruba names are reflections of the people's culture and that naming culture and practices could endure for long among the people as a means of preserving their cultural heritage.

The opening article in the second section of this book is written by FAKUADE, Gbenga and is titled *Linguistics and the Linguists in the 21st Century*. The author provides answers and explanatory notes to some of the questions often asked by colleagues who are non-linguists and who have little knowledge about what the discipline, linguistics, is all about. He argues that linguistics has significantly gone beyond the description of a linguistic system and the search for purely system-inherent explanations for linguistic phenomena. He concludes that there is a need to review our curriculum in conformity with the existing practice in other parts of the world.

In his paper on *Anti-Theft Philosophy in Selected Yoruba Proverbs*, FRIDAY-OTUN, Joseph Omoniyi examines some proverbs whose philosophy is rooted in anti-theft attitudes and dispositions of the Yoruba. He employs Pragmatic theory to analyse the data. Friday-Otun concludes that if advice, warnings and cautions inherent in these proverbs were heeded by all, stealing and other misdemeanours in the society at large would be reduced to the barest minimum. MOSHOOD, Zakariyah also examines proverbs. His article titled *Proverb and Conflict Management: a Socio-Semiotic Approach* examines how proverbs can be used to resolve conflicts. He argues that conflict management deserves a special attention; he relies on Dell Hymes' Ethnography of Communication and Socio-semiotic approach to discourse studies as a theoretical framework. He concludes that conflicts can be averted or managed through the use of proverbs in social discourse.

French language in Nigeria is the focus of the article by AJIBOYE, Tunde. *Like Soil like Plant: Understanding the Milieu of French Language Learning in Nigeria* is an appraisal of the fortunes of any language in contact under the same conditions and within the same context. He assumes that whatever is the carpet laid by the socio-political or socio-economic milieu is the irreducible contextual condition to which all affected languages are bound to be subordinated. He points to the fact that learning French in Nigeria is taking up a new attitude, opening up one's mind and being ready to exploit the previously acquired linguistic culture in a dynamic way. ALABI, Taofiq Adedayo's preoccupation in his paper titled *A Contrastive Overview of English and Yoruba Consonantal Systems* is the contrastive analysis of English and Yoruba consonantal

systems. He highlights certain consonantal speech sounds which constitute effective spoken English hurdles to average Yoruba speakers of English. His attempt is aimed at assisting teachers of Oral English especially in making informed decisions on instructional packages and strategies and also closing the gap of the phonostuctural disparities between an 'indigenized' and an 'intelligible' varieties of English.

A Lexicostatistic Study of Some Extinct and near Extinct Words in Yoruba is the focus of RAFIU, K. Adewale and ADEYEMI, R. Olabimpe's paper. They examine the sudden disappearance of languages which occur through natural disasters and extermination through wars, among others. Their findings reveal that the younger generation of Yoruba speakers is not proficient in the language. This practice is worsened by the early exposure to English, especially by the elite class. They conclude that majority of words that are lost are not replaced with native words rather they are replaced with English words for items that are still in use. In the same vein, AROKOYO, Bolanle Elizabeth presents a preliminary report on an ongoing research work on Olùkùmi, titled *A Lexicostatistics Comparison of Yorùbá, Igbo and Olùkùmi Dialects*. She examines Olùkùmi as it is spoken today and concludes that it is an amorphous language on the verge of extinction.

QMÓLÉWU, Qlátúbòsún Christopher's article is entitled *Àlàyé Lóri Àwọn Kókó Inú Tíórì Gírámà*. He discusses the content of the following grammatical theories; Traditional Grammar, Structural, Systemic, Transformational Generative Grammar and Government and Binding Theory in Yoruba. He concludes that the work will provide an easy access to researchers who intend using any of the theories in Yoruba syntactic analyses. AMAECHI, Mary examines *Grammatical Structures in Yorùbá-Igbo Code-Switching*. She investigates the morphosyntactic features of Yorùbá-Igbo code-switching of multilingual Nigerian Igbo immigrants' children in Yorùbá speaking community. She discovers that the two languages supply the content morphemes in serial verb construction and ditransitive construction. In another article by QMÓLÉWU, Qlátúbòsún Christopher titled *Focus Constructions and Negation of Focused Constituents in Ègbá Dialect*, he analyses focusing and negation in Ègbá, a dialect of Yorùbá. He concludes that more than one transformational rule can be applied to syntactic structure in the dialect.

AROKOYO, Bolanle Elizabeth in another article titled *Acquisition of Complex Predicates by Yoruba Children* examines the acquisition of complex predicates by Yoruba-speaking children. She addresses the question of whether complex predicates are available to children in the early stages of grammatical development and also the types of complex predicates available. Serial verb constructions and splitting verbs are examined. She concludes that before the children can begin to use complex predicates, they must have acquired a good knowledge of the semantic classes of verbs and of thematic roles. Another paper on language acquisition titled *An Interface between Phonetics and Phonology in Yoruba Language Acquisition* is written by ISAIAH, Adebola Ayoola. Using optimality theory, she analyses the uniqueness of acquisitions. She states that just like the adult speakers of Yoruba language, the Yoruba child sets of sounds include the vowels, the consonants, and the tones. She shows the potential adequacy of the theory to Yoruba language acquisition. Another article that dwells on phonology using the Optimality Theory is BALOGUN, Nasrudeen Akanbi and ADEWALE, Hafsat Omolola's

paper. Titled *Vowel Harmony in Ekiti Dialect of Yoruba Language*, they show that vowel harmony in Ekiti is beyond lexical category unlike Standard Yoruba.

Function and Significance of Greetings in Igbo Tradition: a Sociolinguistic Study of Nnewi Community in Anambra State is the title of NWOSU, Florence Chika's article. She examines the function and sociolinguistic significance of greetings in Igbo tradition of Nnewi Community by employing Lawal's "Aspects of a Pragmatic Theory" (1997) for the analysis. She concludes that acceptable greeting attitudes should be inculcated into Nnewi youths and the future generations to maintain and enhance their cultural heritage.

The theme of comedy is examined in FILANI, Ibukun and ADEOYE, A. AbdulRasheed's articles. Looking at *A Semantic Analysis of Akpos Jokes*, Filani analyses jokes from an ESL context-Nigeria using a corpus of jokes, called Akpos Jokes in the Nigerian social media. He discovers among other things that the jokes portrayed its main character, Akpos, who is representative of Nigerian Niger-Delta youths as a trickster. Adeoye's *Comedy and the Comic Art in the Nigerian Theatre* examines the drama of comedy and the comic art in the Nigerian theatre. He enjoins artistic directors who will coordinate other designers in the theatre to be alive, creative and skilful while handling comedy. He concludes that comedy should be treated as a special drama because comedy is now witnessing a comical turn through the success of the Nigerian comedians in the special brand of stand-up comedy.

ARINDE, Tayo Simeon's article is titled *Breaking the Barrier of Imprecision in Play Making in Bayo Oduneye's 'Draft Interchange' Directorial Approach*. He examines Bayo Oduneye's 'Draft Interchange' and reveals that the art of play directing and nifty directing approaches, such as Oduneye's "Draft Interchange", enhances precision in movement, time management and the achievement of an aesthetically rewarding play performance. He concludes by commending Bayo Oduneye's model for fulfilling play productions. Linking the present with the future is what LEWU, Mary Yetunde did in her contribution entitled *Nupe Incursion and Okun Resistance in 19th century Yoruba Land*. She adopts a historical approach using primary and secondary sources to attempt an appraisal of the failed Okun resistance to Nupe incursion and the attendant refugee issues in 19th century Okunland. She discovers that the Nupe raids plundered Okunland between 1833 and 1897 for political and economic reasons. She concludes that Okun people were not passive but rather very active during the Nupe incursion in Okunland but could not attain victory because of the superior Nupe fire power obtained from their trade with the British and the fragmented nature of Okun independent mini-states which prevented a coordinated joint effort to confront the common enemy until the intervention of the Ogidi grand alliance and the British Royal Niger Company forces brought about the collapse of the Nupe hegemony in 1897.

The last article is the honoree's inaugural lecture included here for readers to have a glimpse of his contributions to knowledge. Titled *Yorùbá Cosmology and Aesthetics: The Cultural Confluence of Divination, Incantation and Drum-Talking*, AJAYI, Yekeen Ajibade takes a panoramic but integrative look at his humble contributions to insights into and understanding of Yorùbá cosmology and aesthetics through the intersection of the cultural values of divination, incantation and drum-talking which dominated his research efforts in the last 30 years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is a great privilege for me to be opportuned to honour Professor Ajibade Yekini Ajayi with this book, *Bringing our Cultures Home: Festschrift for Bade Ajayi at 70*. Prof Ajayi, an erudite scholar of Literature, culture and religion, has contributed his quota to the development of the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, the Faculty of Arts and the University of Ilorin. He has impacted positively many human lives. He is a mentor that very many fondly call *baba*.

This book, which is peer-reviewed, is written by thirty seven scholars with thirty eight articles arranged into two sections. Section A comprises of articles on *literature, culture and religion* while section B comprises of articles on *language and linguistics*. The book is a compendium of rich articles on different areas of culture, literature, language and linguistics. Also included is the inaugural lecture of the honoree. This is to enable us have a glimpse of some of the works he has done.

I would like to express my profound gratitude to the various authors who contributed articles to this book, without them there would not have been a book. A special thanks to Dr. Bolanle Arokoyo and Dr. H. O. Adeosun for initiating the idea for this festschrift and for also coordinating the process. Their dedication has made this book possible. I appreciate Professor G. Fakuade and Dr. Lere Adeyemi for their insightful final editing. Furthermore, I also appreciate every member of the academic staff of the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages and all who have contributed in one way or the other in making this festschrift the success it is. Thank you for your invaluable roles in making sure that this book sees the light of the day. Finally, I sincerely want to appreciate the Dean of Arts, Professor Ayo Akinwale for writing the foreword to this book.

Professor A. S. Abdussalam
Editor-in-Chief

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE RIGHT HAND OF YAHWEH IN THE PSALTER AND YORUBA TRADITION

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Abstract

The Book of Psalms makes several references to the right hand of Yahweh while His left hand is hardly mentioned. Also, in the Yoruba tradition so much significance is attached to the right hand to the point that majority of the people frown at the use of the left hand. The purpose of this paper is to do a comparative analysis of the significance of the right hand among the Israelites and the Yoruba people. A multiple method of historical, exegetical, survey and comparative approaches is utilized. The analysis revealed that both the Psalmists in the Psalter and the Yoruba people of Nigeria see the right hand as the place of honour, respect and victory. Indeed, an understanding of the importance attached to the right hand has helped biblical students and scholars to appreciate the similarity that exist between the biblical Israelites and the Yoruba people in the South Western part of Nigeria.

Key words: Right Hand, Yahweh, Psalter, Yoruba tradition

Introduction

God created human beings perfect with every part of the body functioning properly especially the two hands. Both the right and the left hands complement each other in doing any task. Thus, the Yoruba adage says: "*Ki otun we osi, ki osi we otun ni owo fi n mo*" which literally means (when the two hands wash each other, they are clean). But then, there seems to be an understanding among the Israelites and Yoruba which gives much respect to the right hand than the left hand. A good example is the case of Jacob in Gen 48 who when he was about to bless the children of Joseph placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim, who was younger to Manasseh. Joseph quickly changed the hand and placed it on the head of Manasseh, the elder brother.

The thrust of this paper is that several references are made to the right hand both in the Psalter and in the Yoruba tradition while little emphasis is placed on the left hand in the two traditions. The pertinent questions which the paper seeks to answer include: why should the Israelite and Yoruba traditions attach so much importance to the right hand? What is the perceived significance of the right hand?

A multiple method of historical, analytical, comparative and empirical approaches is utilized in the process of highlighting the significance of the right hand of Yahweh in the psalter and the Yoruba tradition. The concept of the right hand of God is found throughout the Bible. However, the focus of the paper is on the right hand of Yahweh in the Psalter. The words Yahweh and God are used inter-changeably in the paper. Also, the researcher is aware of several tribes in Nigeria in particular and Africa in

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general. However, the focus of the paper is on the Yoruba tradition. This is because the researcher belongs to the Yoruba tribe and he has been able to conduct interviews and administer questionnaires with some stakeholders. It is therefore believed that a good understanding of the right hand of God among the Yoruba will help us to appreciate the perspective of other cultures/traditions in Africa.

Hand is the key part of the human body that performs different functions. The Hebrew feminine word *yad* has a number of meanings which include: "hand, side border, alongside, hand-measure, portion, arm, monument, manhood (male sex organ), power and rule (Unger & White, 1980, 169). It occurs over 1600 times in the Hebrew Bible. Writing on the functions of hands, Fredrick Matthewson Denny (1987:188) says:

Hands are a key factor in what it means to be human because they interact with the intelligence in probing, manipulating, and transforming matter for cultural ends. The hands are also the most expensive and versatile members of the body for symbolic and ritual gestures and tasks, whether social, religious or magical. Hands give and receive, grasp and relinquish; they strike, protect, punish, and caress. Hands beckon, greet and wave goodbye; they warn, admonish, and direct; they also pull apart and dismantle, heal and repair, assemble, divide and gather.

Theologically, hand is used in different ways and contexts which include hand as an aggression (Num 20:10-11; Deut 32:27; 2 Sam 18:28; 20:21 and Job 31:21); the hand as ethical stature (1 Sam 24:11; 2 Sam 22:21; 1 Chro 12:17; Job 11:14; Pss 7:3; 18:24; 26:10); the hand as an expression of a state of mind (Num 24:10; 2 Sam 13:19; Neh 8:6; Pss 28:2; 77:2; 134:2); the hand as honour (1 Kgs 2:19; Ps 45:9; Gal 2:9); the hand as intention (Deut 15:8; Josh 8:26); the hand as judgement (Deut 17:7; 1 Sam 18:17; 1 Sam 24:42; Ps 89:25); the hand as power (Deut 8:17; 28:32; Judges 3:10; 4:24; Job 32:2; Ps 76:5; Isa 10:13; 45:9 and Lam 3:8); and the hand as protection (Pss 16:8; 73:23; 109:31; 110:5; 121:5; Isa 41:13; 45:1 and 2 Cor 6:7) (Elwell, 2012, 328-30).

The Hebrew word for the right hand is *yadyemino* and it has so many references to its use in the Old Testament (Gen 48:17; Jud 7:20; 2 Sam 20:9; Jer 22:24; Ezek 39:3; Pss 73:23; 121:5). The Hebrew phrase for a left handed person is *'ityadyemino* (Jud 3:15; 20:16). The Hebrew word *yadayin* is used when the two hands are meant (Gen 27:22; 2 Kgs 3:11) (Brown, Driver & Briggs, 1979:388-90).

Majority of the world population between 70-90% is made up of right-handed people who are more dexterous with their right hands when performing tasks (<http://www.en.wikipedia.com>). On the other hands, there are few individuals approximately 10% of the world population who are born and more dexterous with their left hands when performing tasks. Chris McManus argues that the proportion of left handers is increasing and that the left-handed people as a people have historically produced an above average quota of high achievers. He stated further that left handers' brains are structured differently and the genes that determine left-handedness also govern development of the language centres on the brain (<http://www.en.wikipedia.com>).

Composition, Authorship and Theology of the Psalter

The book of Psalms belongs to the third division of the Hebrew Canon and it occupies a unique position in the section in particular and in the whole Bible in general. The fact that the Hebrew Bible places the Psalm first among books of the Writings shows its importance in the third division. The uniqueness of the Psalms among the Writings is further established with the expression of Jesus in Luke 24:44 "...Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

The final form of the Psalter that comprises of 150 songs took a long time to complete its composition. Traditionally, the Psalter has been structured according to its internal evidences of titles and authorship among others. A careful analysis of the Psalter shows that there were earlier collections within the Psalter as evidenced in four ways: One, the Psalter contains a number of doublets e.g. Pss 14-53; 40:13-17-70:1-5; etc. Two, there are preferences in the use of names of God e.g. in Pss 1-41, 'the LORD' occurs some 278 times while 'God' occurs 15 times; while in Pss 42-83; the figures are 44 and 201 respectively. Three, Ps 72:20 seem to be the end of a book. Four, some of the Psalms have titles while others have none.⁷ Also, apart from the said earlier or smaller collections within the Psalter, there are five notable divisions that are clearly marked in the Psalter. There are Book 1 comprising of Pss 1-41; Book 2 comprising of Pss 42-72; Book 3 consisting of Pss 73-89; Book 4 comprising of Pss 90-106; and Book 5 comprising of Pss 107-150. Interestingly, each book ends with a doxology (Pss 41:13; 72:18-19; 89:52; 106:48; and 150).

Another critical issue connected with the Psalter is the authorship of the Psalms. The term *l'david* occurs seventy-three times in the Psalter thereby ascribing most of the Psalms to David. (Craigie, 1983:28) The Hebrew preposition *l'* has different meanings such as 'for', 'to', 'by' and 'in honour of' among others which implies that the title 'Psalm of David' is subject to various interpretations. Other individuals involved in the authorship of the Psalter include: sons of Korah to whom Pss 42-49 and 84-88 (with the exceptions of Pss 43 and 86 respectively) are ascribed; Asaph to whom Pss 73-83 are ascribed; Moses, to whom Ps 90 is attributed; Solomon to whom Pss 72 and 127 are ascribed; Heman, the Ezrahite to whom Ps 88 is ascribed; Ethan, the Ezrahite to whom Ps 89 is ascribed; and Jeduthum to whom Pss 39, 62 and 77 are ascribed. There are some Psalms whose titles contain historical information, (Harrison, 1979: 978) musical and liturgical information (Kidner, 1973: 36-43).

While the traditional literary structure of the Psalms is through the inductive study of the text; the modern literary structure of the Psalms is through the deductive study of the text which is based on the form-critical approach. This modern literary genre of the Psalter was championed by Herman Gunkel who attempted to classify the Psalms according to their literary types and to reconstruct their life situation. He argues that the Psalms have their origin in the cultic situations. He came up with five main types of Psalms namely: hymns (Pss 104 and 105), community laments (Pss 44, 74, 79, 80, 83 and 89), thanksgiving songs of the individuals (Pss 66, 116, 138 etc), spiritual laments of the individuals which form the largest group in the Psalter (Pss 22, 35, 69 among others), and mixed types which comprises of 'Royal Psalms' like Ps 97, 'wisdom Psalms' like Ps 32 and others (Gunkel, 1967: 30-39). The study of the Psalter has never remained the same

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since the time of Hermann Gunkel as several other scholars have been greatly influenced by him (Weiser, 1962: 52-90).

Theologically, the Psalter has much to say about Yahweh who has revealed Himself to the people of Israel in different forms. Yahweh demonstrates Himself as the all-powerful, all-knowing and everywhere present God. He demonstrates His faithfulness, holiness, mercy and righteousness to the Israelites. Also, He is a covenant God who has revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses whom He used to deliver the Israelites from Egypt.

Obviously, the Psalmists have a very deep and personal knowledge of God. Their intimacy and high conception of God make them to have a good picture of Yahweh whose attributes and characters they describe vividly in each of the Psalms in the Psalter. It is within this context that the picture of the right hand of Yahweh can be understood and appreciated.

The Right hand of Yahweh in the Psalter

As mentioned earlier, the emphasis placed on the right hand of Yahweh in the Psalter is the focus of the paper. Therefore, attempt is made at this point to do an analytical study of some of the Psalms with a view to understanding the context in which the right hand of Yahweh is used and understood.

Psalm 16:11

Psalm 16 is described as a *miktan* of David. A *miktan* is a term found in six Psalms (16, 56-60). The term seems to mean a Psalm of atonement (Anderson, 1983:47). Psalm 16 is a song of confidence in Yahweh. The Psalm may have been written by David when he was confronted with great danger in the wilderness. The Psalmist was convinced that because of his trust and confidence in Yahweh, he would enjoy everlasting pleasures and joy in his right hand. The Hebrew word for pleasure is *n^{ec}imot*. It also means pleasantness, delightful or lovely. In this context, it speaks of the Psalmist's spiritual enjoyment at the right hand of Yahweh (Brown, Driver & Briggs, 1979:653).

Psalm 17:7

Psalm 17 is a prayer for justice though it has elements of individual laments (vv 1-2, 6-9). The language of Ps 17:7 mirrors that of the song of the sea in Exod 15:1-18 in which Israel celebrated its deliverance from the Pharaoh in Exodus. There are three words in Ps 17:7 that are directly taken from Exod 15:11-13. These are *hap^{he}leh* (show the wonder), *hasadeka* (your loving kindness) and *bimineka* (by your right hand). Even though the Psalmist was surrounded by enemies, he was conscious of his own integrity and the righteousness of God. Thus, he prayed for mercy and deliverance from the evil world that oppressed him. The right hand of Yahweh in this context is associated with the loving kindness of God. The Hebrew word *hesed* is a masculine noun which means goodness or kindness. The word is used of human beings, that is, kindness of human beings towards one another. The word is equally used of the kindness of God in condescending to the needs of His creatures. In Ps 17:7, it is used in the context of the loving kindness of God in the redemption of His people from enemies and troubles cf. Gen 19:19; 39:21; Exod 15:13; Jer 31:3; Pss 21:8; 31:17, 22; 32:10 among others

(Brown, Driver & Briggs, 1979:388-9). Therefore, in his prayer for the protection of God, the Psalmist had confidence that his deliverance would come through the right hand of Yahweh.

Psalm 18:35

Psalm 18 has been transmitted into two versions, the second being found in 2 Sam 22 with slight variations. The Psalm is described as an individual Psalm of thanksgiving. The fact that the speaker is the king, the Psalm also belongs to the Royal Psalm (Anderson, 1983:153). There are two possible suggestions to the historical setting of the Psalm. It could have been recited by the King on his return from the battlefield, at a service of thanksgiving for victory, or it may have been part of the dramatic ritual performed at one of the yearly festivals, most likely at the Feast of Tabernacle (Anderson, 1983:153-4). The right hand of Yahweh in Ps 18:35 is connected to the support which the Psalmist received. In other words, the right hand of Yahweh has sustained and upheld him cf. Pss 63:8; 73:23 and 139:10.

Psalm 20:6

Psalm 20 is the prayer of the king for victory in battle. Historically, it was a good tradition for the king to pray before embarking on any war (1 Sam 7:9; 13:9-12). Thus having prayed, the King expressed the assurance he had received from the Lord. The phrase *yady'mino* which is translated 'right hand' in Ps 20:6 is connected with salvation cf. Pss 17:7; 44:6; 60:5; 106:6; 138:7). The right hand is usually more active and therefore more significant. The right hand is the instrument by which human beings execute their purposes; and by constant use, it becomes more developed and stronger than the left hand. The right hand denotes the strength, might and power of a person (Pss 89:25; 118:15-16) or of a people (Ps 89:42). Significantly, the Psalmist in this context is delivered through the right hand of Yahweh. The verb *yasha* means to save or deliver from external evils (Brown, Driver & Briggs, 1979:446).

Psalm 44:3

Psalm 44 is a lament of the nation in a time of serious disaster. The nation prayed to Yahweh for victory in the light of previous deliverance. The right hand of Yahweh in Ps 44:3 is a symbol of deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt (Exod 15:6; Pss 17:7 and 118:16). The Psalmist in this context made it clear that the people did not possess the land of Canaan as a result of their own strength and power but as a result of the favour of God who with His right hand delivered them.

Psalm 45:4-9

Psalm 45 is a Royal Psalm which celebrates the wedding of the mighty King. Although marriage was a private and legal affair, a royal wedding must have a great national significance because the king was not only the most important political figure of the realm, but also the religious head of the people (Anderson, 1983:346). Thus, the Psalm contains a lavish praise to the royal groom for all his splendour, majesty and righteousness.

A Comparative Analysis of the Right Hand of Yahweh in the Psalter

The right hand of Yahweh in the poem is connected with **teaching, instruction** and direction. The verb *yarah* which means to throw or shoot is used in different contexts. It is used of throwing or casting lots (Josh 18:60). It is used of shooting of arrows (Exod 19:13). It is also used of throwing of water (Hos 6:3). **Lastly, it is used of giving instruction or teaching** (Exod 35:34, Ps 45:4; Prov 4:4) (Brown, Driver & Briggs, 1979:434-5). Therefore, it is generally assumed and understood **that instruction would come to the Psalmist through right hand of Yahweh**. Also, Ps 45:9 shows that the right hand of Yahweh is a place of honour and dignity (cf. 1 Kgs 2:19; Jer 13:18).

Psalm 48:10

Psalm 48 is a song about Zion, city of God, the **great king**. The Psalm is particularly connected with Psalms 46 and 47 as the three Psalms **that speak about the praise of God for His kingship and love for the holy city of Jerusalem**. The right hand of God in Ps 48:10 is said to be full of righteousness. The Hebrew word *sedeq* is a masculine noun which means rightness or righteousness. The word is used in different ways:

1. What is right, just or normal (Deut 25:15).
2. Righteousness in government i.e. the righteousness of judges, rulers, kings (Lev 19:15; Pro 8:15).
3. Righteousness or justice in a case (Job 6:29; Ps 35:27).
4. Righteousness in speech (Ps 52:5).
5. Righteousness as ethically right (Job 35:2; Pss 17:15; 45:8).
6. Righteousness as justification in controversy **with enemies and troubles** (Pss 45:8; 51:5) (Brown, Driver & Briggs, 1979:841).

In the context of Psalm 48:10, the right hand of Yahweh is connected with God's administration of justice cf. Job 8:3; Jer 11:20; Pss 7:18; 50:6; 97:6. This means that everything He does is perfect.

Psalm 60:5

Psalm 60 is community lament used in times of **great national distress**. The Psalmist prayed for deliverance and he expressed **great faith in God that he would be delivered**. The right hand of Yahweh in the Psalm is **connected with salvation** as in Pss 108:6 and 138:7. Incidentally, in spite of the Psalmist's distress and disgrace in battle, he still considered his people as the beloved of God cf. Deut 33:12; Isa 5:1 and Jer 11:51.

Psalm 63:8

Psalm 63 is an individual lament. It was ascribed to David who composed it while in the wilderness of Judah, when fleeing from Absalom and his army. The right hand of Yahweh in Ps 63:8 is particularly connected with the sustenance which the Psalmist received while seeking for refuge. He affirmed that his soul clings to Yahweh and that he was ready to follow him. The Hebrew verb *samak* means to lean, lay, rest, support. It is broadly explained in two ways; one, to lean or lay hand upon (Am 5:19); two, to support, uphold and sustain cf. Pss 51:14; 3:6; 37:17, 24; 54:6 among others (Brown, Driver & Briggs, 1979:701-2). In this context, the Psalmist experienced the sustenance of Yahweh by His right hand. The fact that God was his strength, David made

up his mind to stay close to Him in the shadow of His winds (17:8; 36:7; 57:1; 61:4; 91:4).

Psalm 98:1

Psalm 98 is closely connected with Psalm 96. It is a hymn of praise for the deliverance which Yahweh wrought for His people. The right hand of Yahweh in Ps 98:1 speaks of His great salvation of Israel (Exod 15:6; Deut 4:34). The right hand of Yahweh and His holy arm emphasize that He has triumphed by the reason of His own strength with any essential help (Ps 44:3; Isa 59:16; 63:5).

Psalm 110:1, 5

Psalm 110 is a Royal Psalm and it is interpreted mechanically. The early Christian church interpreted the psalm christologically with verses 1 and 4 quoted in the New Testament (Anderson, 1983b:767-8). The Psalmist heard a heavenly conversation between Yahweh and David's Lord. The verb *n'um*, which means "says" used in verse 1 is a word often used to show an oracle or a revelation. Thus, in this revelation, the Lord is seated at the right hand of Yahweh. This is an indication of a place of honour and authority (110:5) until the consummation of ages (Ps 2:8-9). Yahweh will send the Messiah to make His enemies subject to Him. A footstool indicates a complete subjugation. In other words, the Messiah will rule over His enemies with a sceptre.

Psalm 118:15-16

Psalm 118 forms the conclusion to the group of Hallel songs, that is, Pss 113-118. The Psalmist summons the people of God to join him in praising Yahweh for His deliverance. The phrase "I shall not die" is a description of a near-death experience of the Psalmist cf. Ps 16:9-11. The right hand of Yahweh, which is repeated here, is a slogan of deliverance. The phrase has its origin in the song of Moses (Exod 15:6). The right hand of Yahweh here shows God using His limitless strength to save the Psalmist from a life threatening situation.

The Yoruba People of Nigeria

Nigeria whose population is over 160 million people is one of the countries in West Africa (Onuba, 2012). Nigeria is generally regarded as the giant of Africa and it has the largest concentration of black people worldwide. The Yoruba tribe is one of the major tribes in Nigeria. The tribe is located in the South-Western part of the country. They are predominantly found in Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti and Lagos states. A substantial population of Kwara and Kogi states is Yoruba. The Yoruba are regarded as one of the most advanced communities in West Africa especially in religion, agriculture, commerce, education, art, intelligence, government and warfare (Awolalu & Dopamu, 1979:2). The Yoruba people have a long history and they trace their ancestral home to Ile-Ife where they believe that the art of creation started. The Yoruba claim to have a common ancestor, Oduduwa. They speak the same language although there are dialectal variations. Among the dialectal groups are the Egba, Ekiti, Ibadan, Ife, Ijebu, Ijesa, Ikale, Ondo, Owo and Oyo. The language is rich with almost over-supply of proverbs, folklore, folktales and pithy sayings (Awolalu & Dopamu, 1979:2).

A Comparative Analysis of the Right Hand of Yahweh in the Psalter

The significance role of hands in the Yoruba culture is demonstrated through several Yoruba proverbs. Three of them are: (1) *Bi a ba fowo otun ba omo wi, a a fi tosi fa a mora*. This literally means when we rebuke a child with the right hand, the left hand is used to draw him/her closer. (2) *Owo eni kii tan nije*. This literally means an individual's hand will not deceive him/her. (3) *Owo ara eni la a fi tun iwa ara eni se*. This literally means that every individual uses his/her hand to improve his/her lots.

In the Yoruba traditional setting, much importance is particularly attached to the right hand which is believed to signify power, authority, honour and respect among others. Also, the right hand signifies fellowship as it is used in handshake and greetings. The Yoruba believe that only those in occult or secret society use their left hand to greet one another. Kingship occupies an important position in the administration of government in Yoruba land. It is pertinent to note that the Yoruba do not choose a person using the left hand as their king. Also, *irukere*, which is a symbol of authority for the king is usually kept in his right hand. Furthermore, the king has several chiefs with whom he governs the people and administers justice. Among the chiefs are *Otun* (the right hand man of the king) and *Osi* (the left hand man of the king). It is a fact that the *Otun* occupies an important position than *Osi*. *Otun* is the second in command while the *Osi* is the third in command. The king delegates more assignments to the *Otun* than *Osi* and it is the *Otun* that he consults when taking important decisions (Adeyemi, Personal Interview, 6 March 2013 & Ajayi, Personal Interview, 15 April 2013).

Generally and ethically, the Yoruba believe that it is an insult to give and receive something from another person using the left hand. This explains why most Yoruba parents discourage their children that have the tendency of using the left hand. Some of the adult do not take it lightly when a younger one uses his/her left hand to give or receive something from them. The Yoruba people believe that giving out an item with the left hand is a sign of pride and arrogance. Generally, the left hand seems to have a negative connotation among the Yoruba people. In fact, the Yoruba frown at making reference to the left hand as "*owo osi*" (left hand) but instead, many of them will refer to "*owo osi*" (left hand) as "*owo alaafia*" (hand of peace). Also, part of the negative concept which the Yoruba have of the left hand is reflected in the Yoruba proverb which says "*omo ale ni n fi owo osi juwe ile baba re*" which means (it is only a bastard that will use his left hand to point to or describe his father's house). Furthermore, the Yoruba simile which says *o ba je bi owo osi* is used of an individual who is as corrupt/ spoilt as the left hand.

The Yoruba believe that the right hand is a sign of favour. When an individual is closed to the person in authority, people say that the individual is at the right hand of Mr. A or B who is well connected in the community. In other words, a favoured individual is said to be at the right hand of his/her master. The significance of the right hand is further established with the bridegroom standing at the right side of his bride. Perhaps, this is to enable the groom to defend and protect his bride with his right hand when the need arises.

The Yoruba people are music loving people. They sing different songs to express their various moods and emotions. One Yoruba Christian chorus says: *owo otun Olorun n sagbara*- meaning (the right hand of God does powerful things).

In an attempt to have a comprehensive knowledge of the right hand of Yahweh in Yoruba tradition, an empirical research was carried out among the students of UMCA

Theological College, Ilorin. Majority of the students in the institution are Yoruba by tribe. Questions 1-6 deal with demographic information from the respondents like age, tribe, denomination, sex, marital status and educational qualification. Questions 7-11 deal with issues relating to the use and importance of the right hand. 85 questionnaires were widely distributed among the sandwich students of the College, whose programme ranges from Bachelor of Theology to Master of Divinity. Even though the United Missionary Church of Africa is the proprietor of the College, yet its admission is opened to all irrespective of denominations or ethnic groups. Also, the College is an affiliate of the University of Ibadan for her Diploma in Religious Studies and Bachelor of Arts programme. The choice of population is borne out of the fact that majority of them belong to the Yoruba ethnic group and they have been involved in pastoral works for years in their various denominations. In other words, these people have a good understanding of the Yoruba culture as well as the understanding of what the Psalmist says in the Psalter. At the end of the exercise, 60 questionnaires were analysed by simple percentage.

Questionnaire Analysis

1. Age Distribution

Age	Number	Percentage (%)
25 – 35	9	15
36 – 45	17	28
46 – 55	28	47
56 and above	6	10
Total	60	100

The above table indicates that matured individuals were involved in the questionnaire. Majority of the respondents, 47% are between 46 -55 years of age.

2. Tribe

	Number	Percentage (%)
Yoruba	47	78
Nupe	5	8
Dukkawa	4	7
Others	4	7
Total	60	100

The above table indicates that majority of the respondents are Yoruba by tribe.

A Comparative Analysis of the Right Hand of Yahweh in the Psalter

3. Denomination

	Number	Percentage (%)
UMCA	16	27
CAC	13	22
Baptist	12	20
ECWA	7	11
Others	12	20
Total	60	100

The above table indicates that majority of the respondents are UMCA by denomination. Also, a significant percentage of respondents come from the CAC, Baptist and ECWA denominations. This shows that the view expressed represents several denominations.

4. Highest Level of Education

Level of Education	Number	Percentage (%)
Secondary	0	0
Diploma	10	16
Degree	22	37
Postgraduate	28	47
Total	60	100

The above table shows that the least education of the respondents is Diploma. Majority of the respondents are Postgraduate students. This shows that the respondents are well educated individuals whose judgement on the subject matter should be taken seriously.

5. Which hand do you normally use?

Hand	Number	Percentage (%)
Right Hand	55	92
Left Hand	5	8
Total	60	100

The above table indicates that majority of the respondents normally use their right hand. This confirms the findings made earlier in the paper.

6. Left hand signifies evil or has a negative connotation

	Number	Percentage (%)
True	34	57
False	26	43
Total	60	100

The above table indicates that majority of the respondents are of the view that left hand signifies evil or negative connotation. At the same time a significant percentage of the respondents feel otherwise.

7. Right hand signifies power and authority

	Number	Percentage (%)
True	53	88
False	7	12
Total	60	100

The above table indicates that majority of the respondents believe that right hand signifies power and authority.

8. Right hand signifies victory

	Number	Percentage (%)
True	53	88
False	7	12
Total	60	100

The above table indicates that majority of the respondents believe that right hand signifies victory.

9. It is culturally wrong to give or receive something with left hand

	Number	Percentage (%)
True	59	98
False	1	2
Total	60	100

The above table indicates that virtually all the respondents believe that it is culturally wrong to give or receive something with left hand.

A Comparative Analysis of the Right Hand of Yahweh in the Psalter and Yoruba Tradition

The paper has shown that there are areas of similarities as well as points of departure in the two traditions.

Areas of Similarities:

The two traditions portray the right hand of Yahweh as the place of honour, power, authority, victory, justice and deliverance among others. As for the Psalter, Ps 16:11 sees the right hand of Yahweh as the place of enjoyment while Ps 17:7 associates it with loving kindness of God. In Ps 18:35, it is connected with the support received by the Psalmist while in Ps 20:6 and 44:3 it is associated with deliverance from external evils.

A Comparative Analysis of the Right Hand of Yahweh in the Psalter

The right hand of Yahweh in Ps 45:4-9 is connected with the teaching and instruction to the Psalmist while in Ps 48:10 it is associated with Yahweh's administration of justice which is perfect. In the Messianic Psalm 110:1, Yahweh asked the Messiah to sit at his right hand until the enemies are defeated. Thus, the right hand of Yahweh is associated with victory.

Similarly, the Yoruba tradition has attached so much importance to the right hand which is believed to signify honour and authority. For example, the *irukere* which is the symbol of authority for the king is usually kept in his right hand. Also, among the several chiefs that are assisting the king, the *Otun* (the right hand man of the king) is the most powerful of them all. He sits at the right hand side of the king and he is given more responsibilities than others.

Points of Departure

The left hand is hardly mentioned in the Psalter. This is not so in the Yoruba tradition. The empirical research shows that majority of the respondents (57%) affirmed that left has a negative connotation. In fact, it is believed in the Yoruba tradition that when a person is going out for a function and he hit his left leg on a stone, the journey or business for the day may not be successful. However, a significant percentage of the respondents, (43%) believed that left hand does not have any evil connotation.

The Bible is silent on the issue of giving or receiving something with left or right hand. However, the Yoruba culture is very strong at this point as 98% of the respondent are of the view that it is cultural wrong to give or receive something with the left hand. Generally, the Yoruba believe that the left hand is used for menial and 'insignificant dirty' job.

Conclusion

The paper has demonstrated the similarities that exist in both the Jewish and Yoruba traditions. Much importance is attached to the right hand in the Ancient Israel as shown in the selected Psalms where the right hand of Yahweh signifies power, honour, favour among others. The same is applicable in the Yoruba tradition where so much emphasis is given to the right hand which symbolizes authority, power, honour among others.

In conclusion, in spite of the emphasis placed on the right hand in both traditions, it should be mentioned that those who are used to the left hand from birth and are naturally good at it should not be intimidated in any way. After all, there are few of our leaders today who are left handed and they have made significant contribution to the growth and development in their respective nations and continents.

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