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IKENGA, after which this journal of the Institute of African Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, has been named, is a cult object of the Igbo-speaking peoples to which traditionally is attributed success or good fortune in the professions or in life generally. It is also closely associated with the right arm with which a man hacks his way through life. IKENGA could, therefore, be briefly described as the Igbo god of achievement. The journal is dedicated to the critical study of the fortunes of the black man down the centuries, and of his contemporary problems and dilemmas. Its interest covers the entire spectrum of African Studies.

IKENGA is not committed to preaching any particular gospel but will accommodate all views based on the objective study and analysis of issues, whether historical or contemporary, which are of special relevance to the fortunes of the black man. Opinions expressed in the articles which *IKENGA* carries are entirely those of the authors.

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Reminiscences and Ruminations on the Life of a Colossal African Political Hero

Benjamin Chukwuma Ozumba

*Lecture delivered during the 30th Anniversary Celebration of
the Michael Okpara Foundation*

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, let me start by thanking the Management Committee and the Board of Trustees of Dr. Michael Okpara Foundation for inviting me to this epoch-making event. To celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the demise of one of the greatest leaders in Nigeria is a commendable exercise and one every Nigerian should be proud to be associated with.

I dare say, ladies and gentlemen, that there is an archetypal link between me and Dr. M.I. Okpara, and this may have accounted directly or indirectly to my being invited to perform this onerous task in today's event. Dr. Michael Ihconukara Okpara and I belong to the same profession, dedicated to acting with precision and fortitude, we are both indefatigable in our concept of leadership, we are both apostles of strategic planning, and we both relish the idea of creating an enviable structure that would constitute an appropriate way of keeping our society in constant state of good health, and inevitably pave the way for future development. We are both united in the task of creating order in the midst of disorder.

Anniversary lectures perform a bipartite role in our body politic. They are opportunities to take stock of the accomplishments of a particular hero, taking a provocative incursion into the interiority of his mind to evaluate the things that made him what he was. They constitute the appropriate way of honouring the hero by evaluating his strengths and weaknesses, his ups and downs. The aim, generally, is to use the past to evaluate the present and predict the future, and

preferably prepare a road map that would help the next generation in its quest for knowledge and excellence. That is why I have titled this piece "Reminiscences and Ruminations on the life of a Colossal African Political Hero".

The most intractable task of the anniversary lecture is the choice of a theme that links the hero in a seamless web, a theme that steers clear of paths taken by earlier speakers, but which remains nonetheless within the general parameter of the hero being remembered. The present lecture, it seems to me, meets and exceeds these expectations. The lecture is as comprehensive and informative as one would wish to hear in an occasion like this.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, as the guest speaker, I intend to lead you in an intellectual tour of the body and mind of the political hero, Dr. Michael Iheonukara Okpara. The intention is not to praise him, but to hint on quintessential events in the life of this extraordinary human being. Undoubtedly, we had an Okpara; an indefatigable statesman par excellence who touched our lives, created links of development, a type of development that would link that would be beneficial to all and sundry, a development that would be beneficial and significant contributions not only to our body politic but constituted an appeal to our psyche. Okpara's preoccupation with developments is embedded in the creation of statistics, economic modelling, demography, critical thinking, philosophy, political economy, and agricultural development in all its ramifications.

One question that really comes to mind is: why should anyone today take an interest in examining the issues relating to events, or series of events, which took place more than thirty years ago? The answer is simple. The proper and profoundly legitimate way of studying mankind is man. And history is one of man's most appropriate creations. History involves reminiscences and ruminations and takes us to that ultimate

vision that leads to rigorous ways of evaluating the past in order to create a better future by learning from past events.

Actually, why did it take us so long to understand the philosophy of this extraordinary statesman. The answer is simple. We listened with closed ears; In fact, we did not listen at all. Okpara was a superhuman species. He was an elephant and it is impossible for a people who were not critical thinkers to embrace the facts and attitudes of an elephant. In fact, it is more appropriate to say that Michael Okpara's society could be likened with the famous fable about the blind men encountering the elephant for the first time, and described the elephant variously as either a trunk or a snake. Sadly, each man, clutching a part of this colossal creature, publicly declared his limited comprehension of the nature of the beast. Being a man ahead of his times, Okpara's contemporaries did not understand the interiority of his person and actions.

Bill Butler, in *The Myth of the Hero*, seems to be talking about Michael Okpara when he states, in a voice filled with conviction and seriousness:

The hero is an archetypal figure, a paradigm who bears the possibilities of life, courage, love – the commonplaces, the indefinables which themselves define our human lives. Our reaction to the hero's life: his struggles, his victory or his defeat, are likely to be gut reactions, more comprised of intuition than intellect. Where he walks, the boundaries, and even the rules are forever subject to change (6).

Butler argues that the hero is a gift to his community, and constitute a tool or symbol of salvation, like Michael Okpara. To further situate the hero concept into the life of our subject, Butler sees the hero as "the solver of problems, whether they are his own or those of others"(10).

J.P. Clark, in his inaugural lecturer, *The Hero as Villain*, adds the quality of veneration and excellence as appropriate ingredients in the interpretation of the general character of the hero. Excellence, to Clark, is one of the qualities that

makes the hero "a person of honour to such an extent that other men or women, less endowed accept to hero-worship him" (28).

Even after his death, the hero's achievements are not swept under the dustbin of history. He becomes crystallized into an image that persists. And this is what leads to the profundity of today's event. George Santayana, in his renowned soliloquies, hinted significantly on the necessary transformation which comes after the death of the hero when he states that

While still alive and subject, like all existing things, to the undermining flux of his own substance, he has crystallized his soul into an idea, and more in pride than in sorrow he has offered up his life on the altar of the Muses (134).

Many interesting characteristics adorn the personality of the hero in all societies. He must be a person of remarkable accomplishment, and his life exhibits the aura of extraordinary courage, valour, and fortitude. And most importantly, he must be worthy of veneration and honour. Heroes are distinguished from other men through their remarkable bravery in taking decisions that would benefit the society, their superiority in certain activities, and they must be recognised as embodying the ideals and virtues of the society.

That Michael Iheonukara Okpara was a hero is not contestable. His life and activities bear testimonies to the making of a hero. His modest upbringing was quite strict and his intellectual exposure was thorough. He was born on a significant day, December 25, and in spite his modest background, he was able to attend mission schools where his performance was perceived in superlative dimensions. While still a student of Methodist College, Uzuakoli, he was awarded a scholarship to read Medicine, and he embarked on this study diligently. On graduation he worked briefly as a government Medical Officer, before returning to Umuahia to set up a private practice in order to help his people. It was in the course of his

private medical practice that he developed interest in the Zikist Movement, an interest that galvanized into serious participation in politics.

His political career was also garnished with the characteristics of an anointed hero. With the granting of internal rule by the British Administration in 1952, Dr. M.I. Okpara was elected into the Eastern Nigeria House of Assembly under the platform of the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC). From this period until 1959 when he was elected Premier of Eastern Nigeria, he had had a distinguished political career, holding Cabinet positions, the most prominent being his appointment as Minister of Health, and later Minister of Agriculture. It was as Minister of Agriculture that he established enviable and ground-breaking agricultural programmes unparalleled in the history of Nigeria particularly and Africa generally. He was the youngest political leader when he was elected Premier of Eastern Nigeria in 1959. As a political socialist, he believed that recourse to agriculture was the fuel needed by Nigeria to propel it to economic excellence. By 1960, he was elected leader of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons. (N.C.N.C.).

Dr. Okpara was an excellent advocate of the rights of women. He did not subscribe to the idea of gender discrimination, or join his contemporaries in the belief that women were powerless and needed the protection of men. Hence, when he took over the leadership of the N.C.N.C. in 1960, he encouraged women activists like Margaret Ekpo and Janet Muokelu to seek elective office and gave them the required political assistance to acquire seats in the Eastern House of Assembly.

Dr. Okpara had a unique mind, and this was reflected in his educational philosophy. He believed that knowledge was vital in human and material development of the country. To him, teaching should not constitute mere transmission of ready-made knowledge to the percipients but largely lies in the creation of a

new condition that fosters knowledge. This thought was the *raison-deter* of his educational policies. He believed, like great thinkers of his ilk, that knowledge is a system of beliefs and that a belief qualifies as knowledge when its acquisition fulfils its basic tenets, causing it to bear the stamp of high quality for beliefs. Knowledge, he insisted, should have a destination, appropriate utility and capable of changing the society. To him, the task of education is to make the recipients fit to live in a society by persuading them to learn and accept the rules and conventions that hold society together. As a result he draws an interesting contrast between education for social consciousness and education that gives the recipient a passive consciousness.

As the current Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nigeria, I am proud to acknowledge Dr. Okpara's contribution to the establishment of the University. Though the brain-child of the Right Honourable Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Okpara was a major factor in the educational policies utilized in the creation of the new university. Dr. Okpara, like Zik attached great importance to research and innovation and made this an important part of the University of Nigeria.

During the course of their ruminations on the establishment of the university, Dr. Okpara insisted on indigenous knowledge and admonished colonial education. The strong stress on Agriculture in the new university was a result of Okpara's penchant for the need to achieve agricultural contentment. To him, the colonial masters mis-educated Africans hence he advocated for the kind of education that would ensure mental emancipation so as to fit into the ideals of the typical Nigerian society. According to him, it was mis-education that made Africans unprogressive, stagnant, artificial, superficial, and retrospective. Mis-education, he insisted, promoted mediocrity and ignorance.

Today we talk of unemployed youths, even unemployed graduates. Had we followed Okpara's roadmap for educational development, the Nigerian educational system would not be in

its present state in contemporary Nigerian society. To increase the intellectual base of the region, he encouraged churches and voluntary agencies, even individuals, to establish schools, all of them working in tandem to fulfil the defined educational goals of the Okpara administration. With the flourishing of this educational venture, Dr. Okpara introduced scholarship awards to enable students who, as a result of impecuniosity, were unable to obtain tertiary education.

Michael Iheonukara Okpara instigated the promotion of indigenous entrepreneurial initiatives that led to the industrialization of former Eastern Nigeria. Self-reliance became the order of the day. This self-reliance was laid bare by the way the government of Eastern Nigeria operated during Dr. Okpara's watch and this gives us a clear indication that our hero practiced what he preached. There was no oil revenue to provide unlimited financial resources for the running of the government. What Dr. Okpara had were meagre earnings from palm oil, coal and limestone, and he used these limited resources to create a region that was the emulation of the rest of the country.

Dr. Okpara practiced selfless individualism, and wanted his followers to follow the same doctrine, especially in the then emerging period of reckless individualism where comfort was perceived as a personal acquisition, where the hedonistic philosophy that happiness is pleasure was practiced by politicians. Proponents of reckless individualism struggle to provide comfort for themselves. Hence, when there is no light, they resort to generators, and when there is no water, they sink boreholes in their palatial mansions built with money obtained from the national treasury. In Okpara's case he lived with the masses, and what concerned him personally was to be given less attention than what concerned the masses whose servants he perceived himself to be.

Unbelievably, Dr. Okpara did not have a house of his own or fleet of cars to his personal use. He was content with his

official residence and one official car. Compare his life-style then with the present dispensation where political office holders have private jets, palatial mansions in choice parts of the world, and a fleet of luxury cars within and outside the country. When the Nigerian civil war ended, Dr. Okpara went on exile in Ireland. When he gave indication of terminating his exile and returning to the country in 1979, his friends and associates took up the challenge, organised a collection from beneficiaries who understood what he stood for, and built a house for him in his village. What a man!

Sharing was Dr. Okpara's forte, and he practiced it with decorum and verisimilitude. It is significant that the resources then were limited to income generated from palm oil, coal, and limestone, and despite the fact that these products came from the Igbo hinterland; the gains of the resources were not confined to that part of the region. He did not hesitate to share it with other parts of Eastern Nigeria, giving equal attention to all aspects of development. It was this penchant for sharing that led to his buying over a substantial part of the shares of the Nkalagu Cement Factory which he sold to the masses who were capable of obtaining those shares.

Mentioning these few developmental achievements of Dr. Okpara will only scratch the surface and set the storm. To summarize them in a hurry would inevitably trivialize them, setting the members of this august assembly into a wilderness of insipidity. Where do we start, and where do we conclude? Is it the establishment of Niger-gas and Nigesteel industries? Or the completion of the Onitsha International Market which made Eastern Nigeria an international entity? Do we forget the establishment of the Pepsi Cola plant in Onitsha by the Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation? What about the Golden Guinea Breweries, the Modern Ceramic Industry, the Shoe Industry at Owerri, and the Textile mills at Aba. We should equally not ignore his gigantic dreams which did not materialize into fruition due to the beginning of hostilities in Nigeria.

These include the establishment of another textile factory and the planned building of the first motor manufacturing plant in Nigeria!

On the area of tourism, Dr. Okpara saw the need for relaxation and therefore established the Presidential Hotel in both Enugu and Port Harcourt, and ensured that they were raised to five-star status. During his regime, the hotels were centres of artistic creation, and venues for international conferences and conventions. He invited artists of different ramifications to perform in the hotels and organised training sessions on different professional areas to help school leavers come to terms with the need for utilitarian knowledge.

It was in agriculture that Dr. Okpara achieved the greatest feat, and his achievements were second to none. Using the Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation as the progenitor, Dr. Okpara conscientiously set up innovative farm settlements patterned after the Israeli method. Through this method young school leavers were trained to manage farms and produce agricultural products. Palm plantations were established incessantly and agriculture suddenly became a thing of pride in Eastern Region, and gradually began to spread to other parts of the nation and even the continent.

In order to ensure that products reached all areas of the society, Dr. Okpara set up Marketing Boards charged with the responsibility of buying the agricultural products harvested by farmers for distribution, sales to industries and even export. With these, the economy of the region continued to flourish tremendously. It was the success of Dr. Okpara's achievements in agriculture that prompted Malaysia and Ivory Coast to come to Nigeria to obtain palm seedlings for palm production. These countries have made tremendous economic progress through this method. The Nigerian initiative seems to have been interred with the bones of Dr. M.I. Okpara.

The thought forms of the Management Committee and the Board of Trustees in organising this Anniversary lecture is apt

to the situations in contemporary Nigeria where we hardly remember the impact of the past in shaping the present and predicting the future. The effects of Dr. Michael Okpara's regime are perceived directly and indirectly in different parts of Nigeria. Sadly, the progenitor of these marvellous ideas is left unmentioned. But happily, his contributions will not be swept into the dustbin of political and economic history.

Dr. Michael Okpara's influence on contemporary Nigerian society is emphatically great. Let me mention a few here. His establishment of the Steel plant paved the way to the federal government's establishment of steel plants in Ajaokuta and other parts of the country. The evolution of green revolution or the magnification of the defunct "Operation Feed the Nation" are all ideas picked from Dr. Okpara's indefatigable efforts.

Clearly, Dr. Michael Okpara has been immortalized in a number of ways, but much still remains to be done. Some of these honours include the Michael Okpara Square in Enugu and some other parts of the country, the Michael Okpara University of Agriculture at Umudike, and books and articles written on this extraordinary Nigerian.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, achievement is not a mouth-organ. It is indelible in our hearts and the right attitude to its realization is what causes humanity to sing in appreciation. Sometimes the hero faces relegation to the limbo of history. But only imaginative minds like the members of this Foundation can turn fiction into reality to bring the past to the present.

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ReViewing Commitment in Third-Generation Nigerian Fiction

Oluwole Coker

Abstract

This paper examines the subject of commitment in third-generation Nigerian fiction writers. The intention is to show the synergy in the aspirations of critics of post-independence Nigerian literature, who are products of the same socio-historical experience like the writers they critique. Ultimately, with the advancement in the society, critics have demonstrated clear understanding of the ideological bent of the writers. The paper underscores commitment as the major motivation for the third-generation Nigerian novelists and the continued relevance of socio-historical engagement and identifies the various trends and dimensions prevalent in the critical enterprise as far as the corpus of twenty-first century Nigerian fiction is concerned. The paper observes that, the corpus of the writings continue to evince dynamic association with the realities of the enabling milieu of production thereby deepening the tradition of commitment in African literary historiography.

Introduction: African Literature: A Heritage of Commitment

It is necessary to examine the concept of commitment in literature and the imperative for the writer. To begin with the concern of Jean Paul Sartre, acknowledged as the father of engagement literature or *littérature engage*, the philosophy of commitment shows that human beings should appropriate the value of literature as a social institution, not only because it

possesses the ability to prescribe a future course of action, but the fact that it can help redefine what the future will be. In other words, literature can be a prescriptive agent for social direction. As Sartre declares:

The doctrine I am presenting ... is precisely the opposite of this, since it declares that there is no reality except in action. It goes further indeed, and adds, 'Man is nothing else but what he purposes, he exists only in so far as he realizes himself, he is therefore nothing else but the sums of his actions, nothing else but what his life is (14).

The above statement captures the enviable task of the creative writer in bringing about the much-expected change. What is clear from Sartre's position above is that the writer, as conscience of the society, cannot be divorced from the intricacies of the society. In effect, by engaging social realities, the writer, as represented by the hypothetical figure of "Man" by Sartre is interrogating a kind of self-realization. This self-evaluation, which can be viewed in terms of the literature of engagement, would have certainly taken into consideration the views of critics like Dan Izevbaye. He hopes that "as the literature becomes less preoccupied with social or national problems and more concerned with the problems of men as individuals in an African society, the considerations which influence critical judgment will be more human and literary than social ones" (30).

To appreciate Izevbaye's concern is to actually realise that literature is first and foremost an art form which must seek a balance between form and content. However, the position of Izevbaye, expressed above, may have to contend with the realities of the African creative imagination *vis-à-vis* the role of literature. This is because, as Abiola Irele points out,

... Literature is an aesthetic form, but it is also a social and cultural object. The idea that African writers have a social

role is based on the assumption that their writings can have real effects on the social environment. This social quality of literature, however, is dependent, among other things, on the human elements, material conditions, and history of the social space. (20).

What the foregoing implies is that, in Africa, literature has a definite role to discharge as the conscience of its enabling society. In a lecture, "The Writer in a Modern African State" delivered in Stockholm in 1967, Soyinka states that "the time has come when the African writer must have the courage to determine what alone can be salvaged from the recurrent circle of human stupidity" (8). One can reasonably assert that the African writers, beginning of course with Soyinka himself, have continued to discharge this role. In fact, writers like Christopher Okigbo and Ken Saro Wiwa took physical steps in their direct participation in political struggles. This perhaps relates to the tradition of commitment where a writer's duty to the society is essentially to reflect and engender a legacy of functionalism. The writer is therefore expected to be conscious of his duty to society and must necessarily reflect them in his thematic and aesthetic directions.

It can be well understood that literature has always served socio-historical purposes especially in Africa. This is in realisation by writers in Africa of the fact that "Art in the dawn of humanity had little to do with 'beauty' and nothing at all to do with any aesthetic desire. It was a magic tool weapon of the human collective in its struggle for survival" (Fischer 1963:16). An examination of the transformational stages of African society helps to shape the *raison d'être* of its literary output. For a continent birthed by the now denounced Berlin conference, it has been a long tortuous journey of self-assertion and identity quest. Following this forced marriage was the bitter experiences of colonialism which directly led to earlier works in African creative imagination addressing issues of identity and cultural affirmation. This development no doubt affected

the hitherto thriving artistic tradition where, for example, in the case of Nigeria, all the nationalities that make up contemporary Nigeria had thriving traditions of literature before they come into contact with Arabic and European influences. In essence, the motif of cultural renaissance in a classic like Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* attempts to alter the status quo.

It should be noted that Achebe's task of cultural education in this novel is a response to the challenge of negative images of Africa perpetrated by the Eurocentric writers on Africa. Two novels namely Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, some critics argue, appear to be regarded as strategic intertexts for *Things Fall Apart*. Examining Conrad's descriptions of the "savages," Achebe shows that the novel subverts imperialist constructions. Marlow, the story's narrator, describes the Africans as "not inhuman" and continues, "Well, you know, that was the worst of it—this suspicion of their not being inhuman." And yet the blacks in the novel are nameless and faceless, their language barely more than grunts; they are assumed to be cannibals. The only explanation for this, Achebe concludes, is "obvious racism." To further support Achebe, Kehinde (2008) remarks that:

As a writer, Chinua Achebe sees his primary role as that of a 'teacher' instructing the ignorant about the bewildering amalgam of African cultures. Therefore, his fiction established a firmly Afrocentric indigenous basis for African culture. Also, his initial texts were partly aimed at correcting some Eurocentric jaundiced stereotypes about Africa and Africans. (376).

The concept of commitment in African literature is related to the Mbari model which holds that there is a sort of alliance between the creative Muse and the community. In fact, this is the foundation of social realism in African literature. Achebe's contention of the synergy between the artist and collective consciousness also point in this direction. In other words, art

thus negotiates various angles and phases of history - anaphoric or cataphoric. Art is thus able to marshal the aspirations and angst of society given its inherent attribute of communion with a community's essence. The example thus can be said to transit from the traditional oral folktale narrator to the post-independence writer. Both discharge a duty to the society, which is actually a continuum. However, to achieve some objective perspective is to consider Eagleton's remarks about hermeneutic notions of history: "The unending 'dialogue' of human history is as often as not a monologue by the powerful to the powerless, or...if it is indeed a 'dialogue' then the partners—men and women Achebe (high culture) and the boy (popular culture)], for example - hardly occupy equal positions" (64).

In the above statement, Eagleton canvasses a more complex relationship in the socio-cultural perceptions of power. For the critic, the writer does not merely narrate, he/she is with some basic assumptions that position him as an interlocutor whose word is sacred. It can be reasonably argued that there are several ways in which the role of the African writer is closely linked to the intertwining constitution of the formative processes of artistic resources and the mandate they eventually discharge. The writer is therefore part of a larger process of creation, interpretation and interventions.

Therefore, early African writing took off on a culturally assertive note and this tendency bred vibrant nationalistic ethos both in critical and creative circles in solidarity with the essence of African identity. In essence, first generation, African writing comprises a strong reaction against negative stereotypes constructed during the colonial period. African writers had to dismantle myths of African inferiority and assert African cultures. Cultural activism therefore characterised first-generation Nigerian writing, a trend the second generation radically departs from. Osofisan (2005) further expatiates on the mission of this generation as follows:

... our focus was on the present state of our society, on unmasking the class forces at play within it, revealing the material sources of exploitation and injustices, demonstrating how the masses could liberate themselves [and] of greater pertinence now as the collective struggle, fought by the hero with a thousand faces, a thousand hands. (16).

The point to note is that critics have dwelt on the representations of neo-colonial decadence in African literature and specifically, the novel. It should be noted that across Africa, the story is similar. Following the jubilations that greeted attainment of independence by African countries, most African nations have not shown enough purposeful leadership. Corruption and bad governance dominate the public space. This has necessitated writers focusing attention on political themes while offering alternatives to the rot. An example in this regard is Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* which ends on a prophetic note. The transition to political activism in this novel also asserts a shift in focus in the post-independence writing. The fact that Chinua Achebe sees a military coup looming in the horizon in the Nigerian political landscape further demonstrates a commitment to society's affairs. This affirms Okuyade's statement on the Nigerian scenario that "...literature goes beyond exhuming a socio-political/historical past; it is not a personal expedition; it is a private statement about a collective existential angst, the angst of the Nigerian people..." (258). The import of this critical contention lies in the fact that literature is a lived experience. The experience highlighted in literature emanates either from the individual perspective or could be shared communal experiences. In other words, the character of post-independence literature is a witness to the developmental carnage and social petrification. This ultimately means that

the attempt by individual writers to comment and lampoon society is a deliberate effort at negotiating a better humanity.

Osofisan further advocates the measurable role in bringing about change in African milieus. This goes beyond mere mirror of socio-historical realities. According to him:

The reflective images of literature are ordained by what I will simply describe as the pressure of the author's ideological perspective. Even as he chronicles the life of the people of that age, the writer does so critically, both to comment on it, and also project on that image, a picture of the society's imagined destiny... That is why art is called a *refraction* of reality, and why the act of writing is fundamentally an act of moral commitment (64).

This critical position appears to have been informed largely by the experiences of the critic, a leading voice in the second generation of Nigerian literature. Similarly, Abiola Irele is of the view that, "it is this concern with historical and sociological reality that makes African literature a more accurate and comprehensive account of contemporary African reality than sociological or political documents" (1981,12). This suggests that African literature can be alternative sources of African history. With the faction mode gaining popularity in such works as Kole Omotosho's *Just Before Dawn*, Debo Kotun's *Abiku* and Frank Uche Mowah's *Eating By The Flesh*, the novelists from Nigeria, just like most post-independence African states, derive their artistic inspirations from the actual socio-political developments of their enabling societies, so much that a thin line now exists between African literature and its respective histories.

Third-Generation Nigerian Writing: A Critical Evaluation

Much of the studies on third-generation Nigerian literature have largely dwelt on the relationship between the political

climate and the renaissance it has generated in literary productions. It is however clear that third generation Nigerian writing has received robust critical attention. Notable examples in this regard include Adesanmi and Dunton (2005, 2008); Onukaogu and Onyerionwu (2009); Cooper (2008), as well as two issues of *African Literature Today* (Vols 25 and 27) are significant contributions in this regard. In the words of Adesanmi and Dunton,

In Nigeria there has been a marked ebb and flow in the relative rates of production and of perceived prestige of English-medium poetry, fiction, and drama, through the 1980s and '90s and the early years of the twenty-first century. Most recently, the novel has been at the forefront, with the appearance of highly acclaimed works by such emerging novelists as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Helon Habila, Sefi Atta... (7).

The above statement captures the trend and tendencies in the three literature genres, and emphatically privileges the novel genre. This clearly suggests that the novel, as a genre in third generation Nigerian literature, occupies a prominent space. Actually, critical efforts on the leading novelists of the age especially Chimamanda Adichie indicate that, by and large, there is a continuum between the present crop of writers and their first and second generation predecessors. It should be noted that despite the critical and popular euphoria that trailed the coming of age of third generation Nigerian writing, they have also been some measure of skeptical critical reception. An example is Nnolim (2005) who derides the texts as being between "debauchery and the kitchen" (3). This view is premised on what he considers as the pessimism of the generation and the lack of ideological grounding, owing, according to him, to the violence wrought on the generation by military rule. The critic has also come hard on the critics of the generation by describing them as "lazy". This is however in contradistinction to Andre Green's (2007) position that:

Whatever their faults, this new generation of Nigerian writers should be celebrated. They are just beginning to explore their literary powers, and their rendering of the ouroboros of globalization shows enormous promise. In a world where empathy and social responsibility require ad campaigns, and history is quickly forgotten or (in the case of Westerners' knowledge of African history) never learned, these writers remind us that stories can be powerful cultural barometers, exposing the agony of hijacked souls and leading us to places where we might not merely recover our own humanity, but rediscover it in one another (32).

Clearly, the contention above comfortably dislodges Nnolim's critical vituperations which appear misplaced. This is because writers are conditioned by the realities of their age, and it may take a critic who shares the sentiments and aspirations of the age to appreciate their ideological and overall thematic directions. In a 2005 interview with Abdul Rasheed Na'Allah Abiola Irele proves more accommodating and would rather see this as the "changing role of literature": He explained:

One of the interesting things has been the way the role of the writer has changed... Literature cannot promote development directly ...what it can do is to mould consciousness, and that is a major function of literature...moral, something to do with a creating a frame of mind that enables society to see itself and take some kind of measures that are necessary for improvement (9).

One aligns with the above postulation but with an addendum that real issues must be addressed by literary engagements in order to remain relevant as expected. It is thus clear that as writers of "a disillusioned Africanist enterprise, who are not naïve about international realities but have become more hesitant about blaming outsiders because they have experienced a lot of enemies within", post-independence African writers and their critics share the confounding realities of the immediate enabling environment. As such, critics subtly

identify with the post/neo-colonial challenges of the Nigerian state. One, therefore, finds the suggestion of a national literature that has an immediacy of engagement by Joanna (2001), apt and relevant. This would mean an approach which focuses total attention of prevailing socio-psychological exigencies of enabling conditions of literary activity. This means that literary preoccupation would transcend aesthetic venture or ideological promotion or apostasy, rather it will create characters whom Ibitokun (1995) declares: "African literature prominently feature characters who, through their strength of will...look for liberty in change and dismantle the barrage of supremacist whiteness in its colonial, neo-colonial and apartheid structures" (164).

It can be deduced from the foregoing that post-independence Nigerian writers share the angst of their enabling societies in all ramifications and are therefore faced with the challenge of a discourse that accentuates the strategy of socio-historical engagement in their works. This is based on the realisation of the fact that "the colonial experience, the post-independence era and the economic conditions of African states have bearing on the writers works...The writers are watchdogs of their societies whose values they often guard (Obi and Ojaide, 2002). This obviously would require a deliberate and conscious determination by writers to take on the challenge of nation-building, acting as the contemporary social and political satiric wit, reminiscent of English neo-classical literary tradition.

Conclusion

One contends that from the foregoing commitment as a critical paradigm is dominant in the corpus of third-generation Nigerian fiction. Given the fact that most of the novelists are products of similar social experiences, their outputs have been generally mindful of the realities of the circumstances of the Nigerian milieu. In essence, third-generation writers are

dynamic in their approaches of literary mimesis but certainly united in their desire to use their works to change the Nigerian milieu of production. Unlike the writers of the earlier generation, they are certainly strategically positioned as transnational agents to also champion the cause of a global order that would re-define the essence of the African self.

In effect, the critical reception of third-generation Nigerian writing acknowledges the dynamic spirit and resilience of the writers. In fact, the fact that the writers possess the capacity to reflect and engage the realities of their time, given the circumstances of their maturation is indubitable. As Hewett (2005) asserts, "The emerging account of this generation is one of triumph over adversity, a story of courageous individuals refusing to be silenced and the greater community supporting them. It is a remarkable story, one that is still being written by critics and the writers themselves" (74).

In fact, there seems to be a unity of voices across on either side the Atlantic in this regard. This is because the crop of emerging third-generation writers are in constant dialogue with the western world either as members of the "brain train" or as representatives of the generations permanently resident outside the shores of the country. Ben Okri, Chris Abani and Uzodimma Iweala fall into this category. This interaction has not only nurtured a vibrant tradition, it continues to enrich the thematic and stylistic directions of the literary productions. It also forges a thread of globalization of themes and ideas as the writers either resident in Nigeria or based outside or constantly moving in and out are exposed to similar realities which enable them emerge as archetypes of the third generation. This aligns with Bonnici's (2004) view on the effect of colonization on the creative space and how it affects the experience of colonized people. He links this with identity and affirms that "in most cases, identity and an actual place have been totally severed and all attempts to identify oneself with the original location have generally resulted in frustration and more displacement" (31).

Post-independence African novels generally allow a broad perspective of the bizarre metamorphosis in the continents polity as manifested in the political landscape. Generally, in third-generation Nigerian novels, the authors attempt to illuminate the pain infested on the country's landscape by its defective brand of political governance thereby conditioning the novelists to evolve reasoning parameters towards pragmatic alternatives.

In clear terms, there is an ideological continuity that runs through the corpus of African literature. This link, simply put, is commitment to socio-historical issues as critics have established over time. As Mutisso (1974) notes "politics in literature is a healthy phenomenon because good literatures in the present Africa aim to, extrapolate the major social and political concepts that will be used for the socialization of present and future generations" (244). This implies that the political temperament of African literature is a direct response to the enabling socio-historical realities, as writers, especially novelists cannot afford to look away from the daunting realities prevalent in the African milieu. It is therefore apt to conclude that third generation Nigerian novelists are ever faithful to the larger calling as the voice and conscience of the society. This, to a large extent, affirms the fact that, as Onukogu and Onyerionwu emphasize, "Nigeria has been blessed with writers who have demonstrated not just very commendable creative talents, but also commensurate commitment and patriotism in making their art relevant to their immediate society by way of capturing its experiences" (57).

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Creative Dramatics in the Intellectual Development of the Gifted and Talented African Child

Emeka Nwabueze

Abstract

WHILE critical and pedagogical discourses on the gifted and talented child continue to swell, the implications of this subject in educational theatre still remains ambiguous. Opposing views have been expressed on the matter and manner of "giftedness" and 'talent', especially with regard to the characteristics of the gifted or talented child and the authenticity of the tests that give rise to such classifications. Finally and indeed more significantly is the existence of a nagging question about the mentally gifted. Is he a normal person who should be left to operate as such, or does he require as much attention as his antonymous counterpart, the mentally retarded. This paper will attempt to discuss the subject in two parts. The first part will define what constitutes the mentally gifted or the talented child, and posit possible generalisations on their inter-relationships. It will then situate the concept in the theoretical imperatives of the gifted and talented learner. The second part will deal specifically with the role of creative dramatics in the nurture and development of gifted and talented children.

Introduction

Paradoxically, Socrates the progenitor of pedagogics, generally stresses the impossibility of teaching, emphasizing the fact that "there is no such thing as teaching, only recollection" (3). Incidentally, another remarkable psychoanalyst and

pedagogue, Sigmund Freud concurs the submission of Socrates on the impossibility of teaching, stressing that education, healing and governing are impossible professions. If teaching is an impossible activity, how then do we educate the African child, especially the gifted and talented one. Clearly, it is generally believed that pedagogy is one of the most important human activities. It does appear, however, that since the concept of anti-pedagogy is non-existent, Creative Dramatics is an appropriate method because it is an important illocutory force.

This paper, therefore, seeks to examine the utility of creative dramatics in the nurture and development of gifted and talented children in Africa. Robert Con Davies and Ronald Schliefer lend credence to this lucid examination of pedagogy when, stressing the views of Shoshana Felman in "Psychoanalysis and Education: Teaching Terminable and Interminable" state as follows:

Teaching, like psychoanalysis, must deal not so much with lack of knowledge as with resistances to knowledge; the teacher, like the analyst must learn not to exchange knowledge with students but to "use" his or her knowledge to help students discover (or rediscover) their own (400).

It is necessary to examine, at this juncture, who constitutes the gifted or talented child. Is he the book-poring weakling, enigmatic, oblivious of the happenings in his environment; a child that basks in the vanity and illusion of his gigantic mind, but who crumbles in confrontation with the realities of existence?

One of the most significant and early contributions to the study of the gifted and talented child was developed by a French scholar, Alfred Binet in 1905. Since the development of this successful intelligence test, this method of testing has faced an avalanche of revisions and innovations. The most constant measurement, however, has been the categorization of children into possible intellectual cadres. The dull children were considered slow in their development while the bright ones,

who are described as gifted or talented, were considered advanced beyond their years. With the introduction of the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) as an index for measuring mental development, the idea of expressing intelligence as a ratio of Mental Age (MA) to Chronological Age (CA) became a standard procedure.

Defining the Situation

Defining the gifted child has been executed with interest and fortitude by scholars dealing with this area of intellectual development. For instance, to William E Cole and Roy L. Cox the gifted child should be succinctly described in the following words: "Persons with an IQ of 130 to 140 are usually looked upon as superior or gifted and those with IQ of over 140 as geniuses or near geniuses" (100).

In the report of their research started in 1921, involving more than 1500 gifted children, and covering the period from their early school years through their mid-years of adulthood, L.M. Terman and M.H. Oden (417) made the interesting discovery that heredity and environment contributed immensely to the intellectual development of the gifted and talented child. They also identified some attributes of superiority in their physical development. They were found to be an inch taller than others members of their age in elementary school, their birth weights were considered above normal, they walked and talked early and are usually intellectually ahead of their peers in class. They are also believed to have read higher number of books than their peers, though the findings reveal that reading hardly interfered with the superiority of their leadership qualities and the uniqueness of their social adaptability. Interestingly they were neither considered social weaklings nor societal misfits. Superior intelligence was also associated with good health, social adaptability, and leadership potentiality.

One interesting question arises from the discussion so far. Is intellectual superiority the ultimate ingredient of assessing

the gifted? Renowned psychologist, Sir Cyril Burt believes so. To him, "All cognitive capacities are correlated positively. Hence the gifted child is usually gifted all round" (60). However, one wonders if mechanical or pseudo-intellectual talent or creativity cannot occur in isolation of obvious attachment to the intellect. In other words, can one be a talented or creative actor without being equally versed with the theoretical and intellectual exigencies of drama and theatre? Can giftedness, talent and creativity manifest as a single cognitive quality divorced from identical uniform co-efficient manifestations? In a source book developed by the American Association for Gifted Children, a more comprehensive analysis of this concept is more carefully demonstrated. This interesting source book insists that

Giftedness may show itself in the possession of a high level of general intelligence as measured by traditional tests. Or it may be characterized by special abilities of a higher order which are not necessarily associated with a high intelligence quotient. In any program concerned with the identification of gifted children, therefore, it is important to develop methods of detecting individuals of high intellectual ability as well as those who exhibit special gifts in such areas as the arts, music, mechanics, science, social relations, leadership, and organization (Witty10)

One can, therefore, conclude that gifted children are characterized by superior intelligence and talent. But superior intelligence is no assurance of success in life. While it is clear that gifted children usually make superlative achievements in their chosen profession, some still end up misfits and partial failures in adult life, even when their intelligence scores remain unchanged.

Developmental Antecedents

The causes of the differences in achievement, or even outright failure of the gifted or talented child, have been traced to such factors like heredity, environment, social and mental adjustment, perseverance, self-confidence and integration towards goals. Clearly, these have nothing to do with the intellect. They are mainly concerned with personality and motivational traits. Wherever they are certain characteristics seem obvious. As renowned psychologist, Robert Rosenthal points out, the gifted child is "more interesting, more curious, and happier...slightly more appealing, better adjusted, and more affectionate, and with less need for social approval" (467).

One major misconception held by the casual researcher, and sadly re-echoed by some educationists, is that the gifted child should not be given any special attention since he is capable of solving his own problems because of his superior intelligence. Some educationalists even posit that the school should create special problems for the gifted to give him more challenges and save him from the frustration of feeling that education is easy and therefore not appreciable.

The gifted and talented child needs a carefully-planned classroom experience in order to prevent him from being an intellectual isolate. Regular classroom situation is unsuitable for him because it is a battle between content and method. It hardly measures accurately the expected terminal behaviour of the children. The traditional classroom experience leaves the erroneous impression that knowledge dwells in the act of listening to, or internalizing what the teacher says in class, and the ability to reproduce them with accuracy during examinations.

What, then, is the constituent of a traditional classroom experience? Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner give a penetrating answer to this significant question:

...Mostly they sit and listen to the teacher. Mostly they are required to believe in authorities, or at least pretend to such belief when they take tests. Mostly they are required to remember. They are almost never required to make observations, formulate definitions, or perform any intellectual operations that go beyond repeating what someone else says is true. They are rarely encouraged to ask substantive questions, although they are permitted to ask about administrative and technical details (19).

To Postman and Weingartner, the traditional classroom experience is a repetitive ritual of students guessing what the teacher wants them to say, not exhibiting their actual feelings on the subject, or even aware that such exhibitions are desirable. But this is not the case with the gifted child. He abhors lectures because they merely celebrate the viewpoint of the teacher. He is not a passive member of the class but an interested inquirer. He asks questions, sometimes even questioning how the author of a text or opinion arrived at his/her conclusions. Recourse to creative dramatics is very necessary because it saves the student from the frustration of the traditional classroom experience and gives him an opportunity to exercise his intellectual quest for excellence.

Language is a very important factor in creative dramatics. This is because language is a subject of study as well as a unique way of perceiving reality. Many students erroneously believe that language is a process of memorizing principles, but ability to demonstrate knowledge of the principles through communication is more important. For instance, one cannot write writing. One has to write about something. And that something must be written in a language appropriate to the event being communicated.

Communication is the soul of language. The gifted child is not content with the definition of a noun, for instance, but with demonstrating the appropriate use of a noun. In short, he should be encouraged to demonstrate his ability to communicate

clearly. Words are vehicles through which meaning is communicated. But words also convey different connotations, and the gifted child should be encouraged to recognize the power of words in yielding a multiplicity of meanings, and be capable of placing each word within the particular context of an event. Since he is usually a voracious reader, encounter with different meanings of a word helps him in understanding the contextual power of words in interpreting experience. He should be encouraged to use language for the development of his intellect, not as a means of memorizing terminologies.

In the Visual Arts, the emphasis should not be on principles alone. Principles are, no doubt, important but they do not constitute the ultimate. Clearly, the significance of art is concretized if the child is nurtured to perceive art not as mere decoration or as pretty pictures hung on walls, because art is not always pretty or hung on walls. Art should be seen as a personal means of expressive communication, as ideas or combination of ideas, as a means of seeing life through the temperament of the individual artist. It should be seen as an honest statement expressed in the ideas and feelings of the author. An artist is a part of a society, and his work is strongly influenced by that society. Through Visual Arts, we are led into the interiority of the artist's character and personality.

Creative dramatics is a unique method of instruction considered advantageous in the nurture of the gifted and talented child. Creative drama is not drama in the literary sense of the word. It refers to the process of informal or improvised drama which is created by participants. Its main goal is not dramatic production for an external audience but dramatization of events, stories, tales, poems and other necessary situations from academic areas which the teacher wants his students to understand better and remember more vividly. In this type of drama, learning takes place while the children are actively involved in improvised, process-centred drama which is not

meant for an external audience. The *play* is exclusively meant for the children involved in the classroom experience.

In Creative Drama the rigours of production are non-existent. There are no rehearsals since the little practice sometimes encountered serves as a part of the learning process. The classroom space serves as the stage as well as the auditorium. There is no need for theatrical settings or decorations, no costumes, no special lighting. Properties are sometimes used but their use is limited to the basic essentials, especially when they add to the understanding of the creative processes involved.

Scholars are harmonious in their estimation that creative drama plays an invaluable role in a child's developmental erudition. This is supported by the fact that social maturation can be facilitated by experience and that what a child physically does creates a greater impact on him than what he is told. Furthermore, the process of creative drama exposes the child to the learning process without the tight rigours of the traditional classroom situation, thus enabling him to better internalize and demonstrate the experience acquired during the process.

Creative drama, as a tool for nurturing the gifted, has some relationship with the concept of role playing. Role playing is a teaching style which concerns the method of setting up situations in which students are asked to improvise roles which fit into their conception of the responsibility in which they have been assigned. It is like drama where participants are assigned characters to portray but where no lines are learned. The students' verbal responses are designed to match their conception of the character assigned to them. Through this method, the gifted child maximizes his creativity.

Wilbert J. McKeachie one of the proponents of the use of role playing in teaching has identified seven purposes of role playing: to give students practice in using what they have learned, to illustrate principles from the course content; to develop insight into human relations problems; to provide

concrete basis for discussion, to maintain or arouse interest; to provide a channel in which feelings can be expressed under the guise of make-believe; and to develop increased awareness of one's own and other's feelings (136-7). McKeachie maintains that students generally prefer role playing that allows them the opportunity to express dissatisfaction, anger, or rudeness, and that the situation should be familiar enough for the students to understand the roles properly as well as their potential responses to the identified problem.

Drama is largely concerned with experience. It is a situation where participants experience particular aspects of human life which they, in turn, communicate to the audience. Communication is generally imperative. One cannot *not* communicate. Invariably, one cannot communicate effectively without enough acquaintance with the situation being transmitted through the communication process.

Creative Drama helps to resuscitate and revitalize tired and jaded minds. It is particularly beneficial to the talented child who could be easily bored by the traditional classroom experience. It creates an adequate opportunity for activities which help the students to internalize what has been experienced. Since it is a way of living, it aids a child's study and achievement rather than interfere with it. Furthermore, since Creative Drama is concerned with direct experience it aids in the advancement of the intuitive knowledge of the students.

There are two ways of responding to an academic question: information and direct experience. Information belongs to the realms of academic education, while direct experience belongs to the category of Creative Drama. Explaining this process further, a renowned Creative Drama exponent, Brain Way, exemplifies the situation by posing and responding to a simple question, "What is a blind person?" He goes on to expatiate on the answer:

The reply could be: "A blind person is a person who cannot see". Alternatively, the reply could be: "Close your eyes and keeping them closed all the time, try to find your way out of this room. The first answer contains concise and accurate information; the mind is possibly satisfied. But the second answer leads the inquirer to moments of direct experience, transcending mere knowledge, enriching the imagination, possibly touching the heart and the soul as well as the mind (1).

Creative Drama, therefore, helps the child to develop practical and creative skills through the enhancement of his own mimetic instinct. Through creative drama, a tired or bored mind can be completely reactivated. The period spent in listening to boring explanations and copious rhetoric could be better spent learning through direct experience.

There are four components in the process of creative dramatics. The first component is the material which the teacher tries to teach. The second component involves the discussion-questioning segment. After motivating the child, the teacher raises a spontaneous discussion on the selected material through questioning. The aim of the questions is to enhance the understanding of the material being studied. Component three involves the actual playing of an idea. The pupils are encouraged to convey thoughts and ideas through pantomime, gestures, facial expression, and body communication. The fourth component deals with evaluation. In Creative Drama there are two types of evaluation - concurrent and terminal. Concurrent evaluation occurs when the teacher, on observing the children, notes those that successfully capture and convey the ideas being communicated and encourages them through positive comments. Terminal evaluation arises at the end of each session when the teacher sums up the merits and demerits of the exercise, and explains what remains to be accomplished. In terminal evaluation, the teacher and the children effectively

discuss the drama, with the teacher keeping in mind the expected terminal behaviour.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is necessary to point out that gifted and talented children are unique in the sense that they believe in and do what other learners fail to believe in and do. They are confident in their ability to learn; they enjoy solving problems; they have a high degree of respect for facts, and ostensibly rely on their judgments rather than re-echoing clichés or out-dated information. Giving them special attention is an apt way of improving their intellect and nurturing their talent and creativity, especially in Africa where teaching is devoid of appropriate innovative activities.

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Of Male Playwrights and Female Characters: A Gynandrists Investigation of Wole Soyinka and Emeka Nwabueze

Uche-Chinemere Nwaozuzu

A feminist approach to anything means paying attention to women. It means paying attention when women appear as characters and noticing when they do not. It means paying attention to women as writers and as readers or audience members. It means taking nothing for granted because the things we often take for granted are usually those that were constructed from the most powerful point of view in a culture-dominated by men, and that often is not the point of view of women.

Feminist theories have been produced in many fields of study as Charles Nnolim observes, "In feminist movement, politics and ideology collapse and merge". Going further he says that, "In simple terms feminism urges for the recognition of the claims of Women for equal rights with men in all spheres" (248 – 249). However the nature of some of those claims have been questioned by some scholars. For instance Obioma Nnaemeka (1995) documents her deep concerns about the blatant distortions of the works of African women writers by western critics. By the same token, Anthonia Kalu in "Those Left out in the Rain: African Literary theory and the Re-invention of the African Woman" (1994) articulates the concept of social death as the basis for the reinvention of the African woman.

A critical examination of most of the pioneering feminist tendencies in contemporary African drama, shows that, in many plays, feminism was evinced as a concept not as a movement. Hence, we find female characters who refuse to be relegated to the background or to be suppressed and dictated to. A good

example here is *Veronica my Daughter*, by Ogali A. Ogali. This play is centred around a strong willed female – Veronica – who is willing to defy her father's orders and marry the man she wants. The play dates back to 1956. Beside this, there have been female playwrights like Zulu Sofola, Tess Onwueme, Ama Ata Aidoo, and others who have portrayed the feminist issue in their writings. There have also been male playwrights who have one way or the other portrayed positive female images, among these are: Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Wole Soyinka, Emeka Nwabueze, Femi Osofisan, among others.

Despite the much critical energy and views generated by the feminist movement in Nigeria, critics still find some of their polemics fragmented. Charles Nnolim for instance terms it 'a house divided'. There are several views on the issue of feminism in Nigeria. You have those who feel feminism is a Western ideology that cannot fit into traditional African society, there are also some who feel that one does not have to know of the term 'feminism' to struggle against oppression, and as such these people believe that feminists include all those who one time or the other, have questioned gender-based oppression and segregation. This school of thought is perhaps native to the African society. There are also conflicting views on how this liberation from gender-based oppression, can be attained. We have some who believe it is something that can be achieved only through collective effort or the assistance of a stronger person. There are also those who advocate individual struggle, either through the attainment of education, financial independence, self-assertion or all. Another school of thought is of the opinion that the need for liberation does not arise. Liberation, they feel is there for the taking. If only women will prove their worth, and excel in their endeavours, then, they will have no cause to fight gender-based oppression. There is also the view that the feminist struggle is just a façade to cover the manipulations of men by women.

In the school of thought which advocates bold action by women folks, we have plays like, Imeka Nwabueze's *The Dragon's Funeral*. J.P. Clark's *The Wives Revolt* and Tess Onwueme's *The Reign of Wazobia*. In these three plays we find groups of women revolting. The revolt in the play, *The Dragon's Funeral*, reflects the Aba women's riot of 1926. The aim of this revolt as Adaugo the women leader says is, "Not to confront men unnecessarily. Our aim is not to fail in our duties as daughters, as wives, as mothers, as epitomes of peace in our community. Our aim is to fight injustice, to fight for our rights, to fight for our children" (71).

Looking at the aim of this riot which was for the collective benefit of the women, we then see that it had to be fought collectively. In J.P. Clark's *The Wives Revolts*, the women revolted against husbands by moving together out of the town leaving their children and wifely responsibilities behind. This is in reaction to the action of the elders, who ban rearing of goats, which is a major occupation of the women. Here again we see the need for coalition of the women in order to achieve their aim. The third play sharing this view is Tess Onwueme's *The Reign of Wazobia*. The revolution here is headed by Wazobia who has to convince the women of the need for liberation, because even though she has the initiative, she believes there is a need for collective effort.

Another school of thought sees the road to female liberation in education, financial independence and self-assertion. Plays in this group portray women who have their way by virtue of their education or financial standing. The play *Veronica my Daughter* for instance, shows us an educated girl who insists on marrying the man she chooses as against the man her father imposes on her. This group believes that the struggle for liberation depends on the individual, one has to do it alone. Aidoo presents this kind of female character in her play *Anowa*. Anowa faces all her oppositions alone, her mother's opposition and her husband's

opposition. Anowa achieves this not through economic empowerment or education but through self-assertion.

Wole Soyinka and Ngugi wa Thiong'o in another frame of reference, present us with female characters that do not need to struggle for recognition. Iyaloja in *"Death and the King's Horseman"* has her function and does not need to fight for any rights. In this they seem to tell us that there is no need for the feminist cause. Femi Osofisan in his play *Morountodun* portrays a strong character in "Tutubi" who makes her own judgments and wins her own battles.

We can deduce from all these that there are diverse presentations on this one concept of feminism, of which we have cited a few. There is no end to the number of views yet to come. In the words of Nnolim,

The contours of the feminist literary landscape in Africa, in general and Nigeria in particular, present a panorama of undulating topography. It is a house divided against itself and at present looks uncomfortably like the leaning tower of Pisa... A close observer would quickly notice that the feminist house in African literature is divided into so many camps (250).

Nnolim goes on to identify some of these camps as, Feminists, Womanist/Accommodationists, Reactionaries and Middle of the Roaders and Gynandrists. (250-252). The feminists he describes as falling into two categories that are united by the predilection towards radicalism and espousing the feminist mantra of equality with men. Highlights of this group include, Chinyere Ogunyemi, Omolara Ogundipe-Leslie, Juliet Okonkwo, Helen Chukwuma and Rose Achulonu. Other members of this group whom Nnolim terms janus-faced who project the same feminist sentiments in their works yet denying the fact of involvement in the feminist movement include, Mariama Ba, Flora Nwapa, Buchi Emecheta, Tess Onwueme and Ama Ata Aidoo. (251). The second group known as the womanist or accommodationists are made up of writers like, Ifeoma Okoye, Zaynab Alkali,

Helen Oybiagele and Flora Nwapa. The womanists define womanism as black-centred and accommodationist. It believes in the freedom and independence of women, like feminism, but unlike radical feminism, wants meaningful union between men, women and children where respect will be reciprocal (251). While they advocate some measure of equality, they concede a leadership role to the man. The Reactionaries according to Nnoli are those writers and critics who either prefer to stand and wait. They align with the men folks frowning at the belligerence of the feminists while celebrating the love and bond that nurtures the traditional family. Major proponents of this group are Zulu Sofola and Rebecca Njau (252). The Gynandrists are male writers at the periphery who are deemed by radical feminist to be sympathetic to their cause. They are said to cast African women in very good light. This group is populated by male writers such as Isidore Okpewho, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Elechi Amadi, Ernest Emenyonu, Ousmane Sembene and Femi Ojo Ade (253). So far, we have tried to explore the variegated world of feminist theories. In the following pages, we shall isolate the Gynandrists tendency for brief examination. Two plays will form the fulcrum of our inquiry here. They are Wole Soyinka's *i* and Imeka Nwabueze's *The Dragon's Funeral*. We shall begin our analysis with Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*.

The play *Death and the King's Horseman* (1982) is a historical drama based on real events that took place in Oyo, the ancient Yoruba city of Nigeria, in 1946. The plot revolves around 'Elesin' the Horseman of the king who is due to commit ritual suicide following the demise of the king, as tradition demands. Elesin takes a new wife, who had been betrothed to another, the son of 'Iyalaja', one of the acts reasoned to be the course of the turn of events in the play. The local officer Sergeant Awusa, alerts Simon Pilkings', the District Officer, of the happenings. Simon Pilkings consequently orders the arrest of Elesin, thereby preventing him from performing his duty to

his king. Olunde, the eldest son of Elesin who had returned from England where he was studying, supposedly to bury his father, is disappointed at the turn of things and so commits suicide in place of his father. Iyaloja, the leader of the women, presents Elesin with the corpse of his son, blaming him and Pilings for Olunde's death. Seeing Olunde's corpse, Elesin kills himself out of depression and shame.

The focus of our discourse here is the playwright's construct of the female character – Iyaloja. Through her, we see a perspective on feminism. As the mother of the market, her office is not limited to the affairs of women only; it extends to as crucial a matter as the ritual suicide of the king's Horseman. Iyaloja is very outspoken in matters such as the future of the community, which she considers of paramount value. Her approach is however subtle. She does not vehemently oppose Elesin even when he makes the absurd request of asking for a bride already betrothed to her son on the day he is to die. When the other women of the market urge her to explain to Elesin, instead she says "the loss can be remedied" (p. 21) and she gives reasons for granting this request in these words:

Iyaloja: Only the curses of the departed are to be feared. The claims of one whose foot is on the threshold of their abode surpasses even the claims of Blood. It is impiety even to place hindrance in their ways (21).

Here she acknowledges the fact that she has the right to refuse Elesin his request, but she grants it because she believes her refusal of request of the one, whose foot is on the threshold of death, could attract a curse. This does not stop her, however from warning him severally about the implications of his demands. She stresses that the implications of his actions could be heavier than the action itself. And when eventually the repercussions of Elesin's actions become visible, she confronts him with his grievous crime. She further says: "You have betrayed us. We fed you sweetmeats, such as we hoped awaited you

on the other side. But you said No, I must eat the world's leftovers ...” (6).

The lines above show a strong character who could have refused Elesin's entreaties right from the beginning, if she had so chosen to. She asserts herself in the performance of her duties even though she is not forceful. We also see this self-assertion in the way she relates with Mr. Pilkings who is a white man in charge of the local district. When Pilkings intrudes in her conversation with Elesin she just brushes him off with words that portray her as a non-respecter of people in the discharge of her duties. In comparing Iyaloja with Jane, the wife of Pilkings, we find Jane to be outspoken but, her only function is being the wife of the District Officer. And when she as much as says something her husband finds unpleasant, he hushes her and in one instance he shuts her up and she does not utter another word thereafter (p. 74). In placing these two female characters side by side, Iyaloja, commands more respect and visibility despite her seeming position of disadvantage in the colonial society.

Our deduction from the analysis of her character shows that woman played significant roles in social and cultural affairs in traditional African society. Ifi Amadiume concurs with this when she observes the existence of dual-sex governance in Africa, before the advent of the colonialists (1995). Amadiume posits that a few months before independence, on July 1, 1960, the colonialists in the Eastern Region shifted control of virtually all legislative, judicial and executive powers to Nigerian men. In her words: “In filling government administrative offices, preference for and dominance of men was either stated or implied. The position of women was therefore marginalized in all social fields as a result of the rigidity of gender embodied in Western ideologies and institutions” (148).

The views above perhaps suggest that the total relegation of women to the background had not been the norm in traditional societies. It also questions the opinion of scholars such as

Florence Stratton who doubt the place of women in a male dominated world. According to Filomena Steady (1981), a cultural constant in the lives of women is patriarchy. She observes that despite cultural, historical, psychological and spatial boundaries, women worldwide share similar experiences (p.143). In fact in Soyinka's play examined above, women do not have to fight to attain their position in society. This is to say that women who are outstanding in the duties allotted to them will gain respect and a place of prominence in the society if they so wish. This perspective tallies with Helen Churkwoman's view on feminism which rejects inferiority, strives for recognition, and seeks to give women a sense of self as worthy, effectual and contributing human beings (1994:1). These will suffice for Soyinka's *Iyaloja*. We shall devote the next paragraphs to discuss Adaugo Nwanyeruwa, the female hero of Imeka Nwabueze's *The Dragon's Funeral*.

The Dragon's Funeral, recounts the heroic uprising of Aba women against the oppressive colonial administration. Getting wind of an impending taxation of women in the whole Eastern Province, the women, led by their fiery leader Adaugo Nwanyeruwa, mobilize and confront the colonial officials and their cronies. In the course of their revolt, the local surrogate of the British colonial administration like Chief Okeugo, Chief Idike and Chief Adaka are humiliated. Chief Okeugo in particular, had his staff of office and royal cap desecrated and destroyed by the women. Recalcitrant accomplices of the colonial administration like Teacher Imeruwa and Dr. Hunter of the Aba General Hospital also tasted the wrath of the women's anger. In a volte-face, the District Officer was forced to review his stand on women's taxation and Chief Okeugo sentenced to three years imprisonment with hard labour.

Elsewhere, I have argued that thematically, *The Dragon's Funeral* is not only about the Aba women's riot. The women's bravery and success is counter-pointed by the Warrant Chiefs' cowardice. The men in their attempt to stop their wives lack

colour and heroism. Like August Strindberg's *Miss Julie*, Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and Tess Onwueme's *The Reign of Wazobia*, the play highlights the age old battle of the sexes. The women in their resolve to confront the colonial forces are viewed with suspicion and contempt by their men folk. They see in the women's action a volatile catalyst that may lead to the dislocation and disintegration of the traditional society (2008). "This idea of women holding their own meeting is bound to destroy this community"(52) Dike cautions his wife Ikodie. The women's altruistic motive however, is best captured in these words of admonition from their leader, Adaugo,

Our aim is not to confront the men unnecessarily. Our aim is not to show that we are indispensable to men. In executing our actions, we should ensure that we don't fail in our duties as wives, as daughters, as mothers, as the epitome of peace in our community...Our aim is to fight injustice, to fight for our rights, to fight for our children (24).

The personality of the principal female characters like Adaugo Nwanyeruwa and Ikodie exemplifies the conflict between gender assertion, social cohesion and integrity. It also highlights the fact that one should preserve one's gender integrity at all cost. Adaugo admonishes her fellow women:

Cruelty occurs when a person deliberately inflicts suffering on another person and relishes it, especially when he considers the person less advantaged than himself. Only cruel people can take delight in inflicting suffering for its own sake. Look at what government is doing to us... They confiscate our land, they impose their administration on us, and now they want to tax us when we don't even have enough to eat or feed our children. They have pushed us to the wall and there is no going back (64).

On the opposite side however, are the men and the Warrant Chiefs who have no integrity and who are ready to compromise principles in order to save themselves and maintain the status quo. The subject of the play in this comparison has heroic

implications. The female heroes have stature. They do not cower or expire but endure their trials and ultimately attain their goals. In this vein, Adaugo Nwanyeruwa is presented to us as a forerunner of the modern day feminist agitation in Nigeria.

Both Iyaloja and Adugo confronted brutal colonial forces when it seemed the men who were better placed by the society to do so shirked in their duty. These two female characters accomplished their tasks with much grace and finesse that they serve as eloquent models of the female kind in traditional African society. It is to the credit of the playwrights that the strength and wisdom with which these two women are imbued with were vividly brought to fore in the works. In doing this Soyinka and Nwabueze, achieved the feat of showcasing the innate and abiding strength of character exhibited by women in traditional African society especially in the area of conflict resolution and social harmony. Iyaloja was cast in the image of a matriarch whose power resides in the pristine traditions of the people. In the play she wielded this power with much reverence and restraint, giving very little opportunity to the colonial authority or the fallen Elesin to mar her stature and persona. Soyinka created a character who bestrode the plot of his play as the 'moral personified' and metaphor of social cohesion. Although Nwabueze's Adaugo does not have the privilege of Iyaloja's, urbane matriarchy yet, she evokes a candid aura of strength of character and wisdom. While Iyaloja perhaps took her leadership for granted given the socio-ritual hue of her position as the market leader and the queen mother image, Adaugo worked for her stature. Although a leader of the women, given the Igbo republicanism, she was constrained at each point to argue her case and convince even the women to toe her line of action. We can perhaps conclude that while Adaugo is a feminist of the radical type, Iyaloja's feminist proclivity is deeply rooted in conservative social institutions.

Nwabueze's portraiture of Adaugo in this play is perhaps informed by his disposition towards unmasking the lie of male

superiority over female in certain matters of intellect. Nwabueze traces the origin of female subordination and argues that education was the most important factor that changed the concept in Africa. He goes further to say that formal education brought men and women under the same roof and competing for the same thing - knowledge, adding that the classroom provided an important avenue where the intellectual abilities of both male and female were tested. The result, he continues, was the amazing discovery that intellect was not achieved through the demonstration of muscle power. With this discovery, he added, the stereotypical idea of man's superiority over woman began to change. (1998). On the part of Soyinka perhaps he presented a female character in the mould of Iyaloja who interrogates both the spiritual and the temporal realm of social relations and presents herself as the patroness of communal sanity and stability. This design is akin to the sentiments expressed by Alice Walker in her study of African American women. Walker in *In Search of Our Mother's Garden* states: "I am preoccupied with the spiritual survival, the survival whole of my people. But beyond that, I am committed to exploring the oppressions, the insanities, the loyalties and the triumphs of black women" (250). Walker's vision finds eloquent realization in Soyinka's Iyaloja who is cast in the image of a matron, spiritual and temporal, a guardian of the sacred values of the community.

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Covenant and Spirituality in Israel and Igboland: A Comparative Study

Uzonna F. Echeta

Abstract

Covenant ritual is an integral part of the religious and social lives of the Israelite and Igbo communities. In this ritual, spirit beings play fundamental and inevitable roles. They supervise, regulate, and determine the effectiveness of the agreement. The study examined the reasons, typologies, and the components of covenants in these communities. Data for the study was gathered through oral and secondary sources. Over eighty Igbo communities from different culture areas were consulted. Data analysis was carried out using historical and comparative methods. Findings showed that covenants can be effective for generations. The effect of covenants can either be positive or negative and this is dependent on the responses of the parties to the contract. Positive effects of covenants are manifested in blessings if the terms of the covenant are kept. On the contrary, any act of violation attracts severe problems.

Introduction

Covenant means any solemn agreement that is binding on two or more parties. It could be made by two individuals or two nations or communities and can be between humans and deities. These deities may be God, gods, or evil spirits. Covenant ritual is a perpetual exercise, mostly futuristic in nature and may occasionally be solidified with an oath. This ancient practice is found in most traditional societies, not just in Israel and Igboland, and they generally display identical patterns. The covenantal patterns of the Israelites are quite similar to those of the Igbo people though slight differences may be deciphered.

The nationality and existence of the Israelites is tied to covenant (Exo19:6). In fact, they are known and addressed as “covenant people of God” by virtue of Yahweh’s divine election, as Ugwu and Echeta have pointed out. God rescued Israel from Egyptian bondage and as a result, Israel continues to show eternal gratitude to Him and this gratitude is simply manifested in faithfulness to the demands of the covenant.

Among the Igbo, covenant or *Igba ndu* is an age-long practice. It began with the fear of the unknown and the fact that evil is inherent in man. The Igbo people reason that cutting a covenant would help in checking the wiles of men. Covenant can be instrumental in maintaining peace, orderliness and harmonious living among members of the community. The concept of *igbandu* is tied to the Igbo’s belief in the existence of the Supreme Being and the divinities that serve as his intermediaries. Through *Igba ndu*, it is believed that these spiritual beings are attracted into human affairs and inter-relationships as man socializes in his environment. Spiritual parties in covenants may include the ancestors/ *Ndichie*, chief priest, *eze muo* and medicine men as the case may be (Duru 2009). Covenants are enacted at family, kindred and community levels and the factors that warrant the making of covenants vary with places and cultures. Items used for covenant are blood, Kaolin (nzu), kola nut, local beads, Cockerel, Ofo (staff of office) to mention these few.

Traditional Igbo societies fought a lot of inter-tribal and intra-tribal wars. Covenants were mostly cut with certain deities to solicit their assistance to enable them win their enemies with a firm promise that they would offer certain gifts if success was granted them. The immortality of the spirits invariably implies that the covenant terms continue to run for as long as the spirits exist. The spiritual beings are executors of blessings to the compliant or punishment to the defaulters.

The fact that covenants have generational undertone is true of most covenants. This fact is exemplified in Jacob’s encounter

with the God of his fathers. It was Abraham that cut covenant with God prior to this time many years before Jacob was born, yet God appeared to Jacob on the basis of his covenant with his grandfather (Gen 28). Here God reminded Jacob of his commitment to that covenant. This is a principle that underlies Igbo covenants. The experience of Jacob in this story portrays that covenant blessings are transferrable even as the curses are. Curses may occur in form of violent and mysterious deaths, incurable diseases, backwardness (both for individuals and communities) and cases with no physical solution. The problem with covenants is not in the enactment but the annulment especially when it is no longer pleasant. Ancient covenants are not easily broken (Dan 2016, Gen 9: 12-17, Joshua 9).

It is the challenge of how to annul a covenant and the way out of its negative effects on humans that informed this paper. Attempt would therefore be made through this study to proffer solution to this problem. The main aim of this paper is to examine the concept of covenant and the extent of its effect on the people of Israel and Igbo land. The study in this regard would examine the following: the Israelites' concept and typologies of covenant, the Igbo concept and typologies of covenant, comparison of covenant and spirituality in Israel and Igbo land and a comparison of the consequences of covenants in Israel and Igbo land.

The Israelites' concept and typologies of covenant

The historical origin of Israel is traced back to the call of Abraham about 2000 BC or shortly after he left his home in Mesopotamia to journey to Canaan (Palestine). Abraham the Hebrew (Gen 14:13) is the great progenitor of Israel and Jacob whose name was changed to Israel (Gen 32:28, 35:10) their common ancestor. The Old Testament (this implies the first 39 books of the Bible) is exclusively our primary source of information for any study of the history and religious practices of the Israelites. There may be gaps in the stories, yet they

provide us with more accurate information about the people of Israel (Anderson 1966). The Old Testament is essentially the story of the Israelites and therefore the expressions Israel and Old Testament are used interchangeably in this paper. The strategic position of Israel in world history is made clear from its very beginnings where Israel is designed as God's instrument for reaching other nations of the world. Hence Genesis 12:3 states "I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves" (Gen 12:3RSV).

The concept of covenant in the Old Testament originated with the creation of man and became stronger when God later entered into a covenant relationship with Israel on the basis of his love and choice of them (Exo 19:4-6, Deut 7:6). Election and covenant motifs are therefore the underlying factors that explain God's intimate relationship with Israel. Various in the Old Testament the Israelites related to God fundamentally through covenant and this became a term of reference for Israel. Hence they are regarded as covenanted people of God (Eicheta 2014). For Rubenstein Israel as a nation was borne out of a covenant relationship. "I the Lord am your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. God prohibits them from royalty to any rival power. He stipulates the benefits that accrue to fidelity to the covenant and the dire penalties that follow infidelity. To this Israel agree 'all that the Lord commanded we will do (Exo 20:2-6, 19:8 & 24:3). God made it clear to them that no other God could have done what he did for them and his choice of them was not because they were better than other nations (Deut 7:6-8). Both Eichrodt (1961) and Dryness (1978) reiterate that covenant is the fundamental root of Israel's relationship with God. In this contract, every party has a role to play.

Israel's covenantal pattern has a semblance with Hittite covenants where the superior party (God) himself recounted his past benefits to the inferior party (Israelites). The ancient

kingdoms and empires like the Sumerians, Akkadians, (later known as Babylonians), Egyptians, Hittites and Persians made treaties (treaties are equivalents of covenants). These treaties were similar to those of the Israelites. Wolf (1991:38) supports that there exist similarities between biblical covenants and international treaties, especially the suzerainty treaty of the second millennium B.C. G.E. Mendenhall's work on ancient Near Eastern covenants is outstanding. He carried out an extensive study on Ancient Near Eastern covenants and identifies six basic parts in every covenant. These six parts are: the preamble or the introduction in which the higher party declares who he is ii historical prologue which establishes reasons for the covenant relationship iii Stipulations iv Provision for the depository of the treaty/ Documentation v. list of gods who witnessed the treaty vi curses for violation and blessings for obedience. In addition to these parts, Mendenhall suggests that the vassals should take oath of obedience and procedure for handling rebellious vassals. Mendenhall argues that the Israelite covenant follows this pattern especially the account in Joshua 24.

Typologies of Israel's covenants:

Many occasions and circumstances necessitated covenants in the land of Israel. Some covenants between humans would be discussed in this section.

Covenants of Peace and security: This covenant was necessitated by Jacob's need for protection against Laban's antagonism. Prior to this exercise, Jacob had fled from his uncle Laban who caught up with him at Mizpah. At this point it became necessary for them to enact a covenant of peaceful relationship for the future. The covenant term was that none of them should cross Galced /Mizpah to harm the other. A stone heap/altar was erected as a witness to them. They ate together at the place. It was in search of peace and security that Abraham and Abimelech had a covenant /treaty at Beersheba. The

covenanters swore oath of kindness to each other using the animals which Abraham offered as their witness (Gen 21:22-34). Also in Genesis 26:38, a covenant was used to settle the dispute about a well of water.

Covenant of faithfulness/fidelity: Covenant of love and friendship existed between Jonathan and David (1Sam18:14, 20:1-17, 41-42; 23:15-18). Jonathan pledged to remain faithful to David as his friend and to support him when he becomes the king of Israel in succession of Saul, his father. The covenant between these two people was reaffirmed and later a second covenant was made. This second covenant reaffirmed the original agreement and extended the terms to include Jonathan's descendants. Jonathan pleads in these words "And do not cut off your kindness from my family, not even when the Lord has cut off every one of David's enemies from the earth". In reply David said, go in peace for we have sworn friendship to each other... the Lord is witness between me and you and between your descendants and my descendants forever (1Sam20:42). Guenther (1990) discerns a tone of perpetuity in this covenant Jonathan gave David his robe, tunic, sword bow and belt as symbols of the covenant. This commitment bonded Jonathan closely to David.

Covenants of Alliance: The people of Israel established alliances for business or political reasons. Solomon had a business alliance with Hiram. David had covenant with Abner and through the exercise the war between the families of Saul and those of David ended. The Gibeonites made a political covenant with Israel (Jos 9).

Marriage covenant was identified in the Old Testament as well. An explicit mention of this covenantal union is found in Malachi 2:14. The relationship between a man and woman who are married to each other can best be described as a covenant relationship. Marriage by nature is a strong bond. This is why some Igbo indulge in blood covenanting. The prophet Malachi blamed the suffering of some men to covenant infidelity to the

wives of their youth. The story of Ruth further exemplified marriage as a typology of covenant (Ruth 1:16).

The Igbo and the concept of Covenant

The Igbo people are one of the largest three ethnic groups in Nigeria and their spoken language is generally Igbo language and a wide range of dialects. The Igbo culture area covers the settlements of Agbor, Kwalle (west Niger), Diobu, Umuabayi (Port Harcourt), Arochukwu, Afikpo, Isiagu (Abakaliki Area), Enugu Ezike, (Nsukka Area) and Ebu- West (Niger Igbo: Onwuejogu (1981).

Onunwa (2005) adds that the Igbo people share a common boundary with Edo state in the West, Ijaw and Kalabari in the South, the Idoma and Igala in the Northwest, Tiv and Ogoja in the North. They are therefore found in Rivers, Delta and part of Akwa Ibom states. The people so discussed here are the occupants of South eastern Nigeria who have a total land area of about 15000sq miles about 41000kmls.

History has it that the Igbo people are believed to originate from Nri, a cultural group that shares a strong religious and cultural ideology with the Igbo in general. In fact, it is impossible to isolate what derives from Nri culture from what derives from other Igbo cultures. Nri people are known as both the progenitors and the priests of the whole Igbo race and as such they are high priests and king makers (Onwuejogu1981).The Igbo live in patrilineages called Umunna. Patrilineages grow to form villages and groups of villages form towns known as *Obodo*. Even though Onwuejogu (2000) holds firmly to the fact that Igbo origin is traceable to Nri Kingdom and claims that this is the only argument that has oral tradition back up, the question of the origin of Igbo people still remains a topic of debate. The origin of the Igbo people is a mystery according to Nweke (2011) and much uncertainty surrounds it Iweadighi (2013). In fact, some scholars have versions they propounded in an attempt to unravel

this mystery. Iweadighi has The Middle East version, Awka Orlu version, Idah, Benin, Nri, and the Israeli versions. The version of Israeli/Hebrew origin of the Igbo is generally held by scholars like Alaezi (2006) and Iweadighi (2013).

The researcher sees a more convincing report from Acholonu's extensive research on the Igbo race. In her speech during her book presentation *They Lived before Adam-Prehistoric Origins of the Igbo: Never Been Ruled*, glaringly and convincingly gave the historical origin of the Igbo people (Acholonu 2009). Her report emerged from a research of over twenty years and scientific discoveries in the area of archaeology. The historian gathered her data through palaeontology (study of human fossils), genetic and DNA Engineering, Linguistics and also through esoteric records of lost scriptures. She traces the origin of the Igbo as far back as the time of the early man/homo erectus, who is the direct ancestor of the homo sapiens (modern man). From her investigation, She claims that the Igbo seeded other races of the world and gave them culture and civilization Their language also is traceable to the one world language/mother tongue of humanity before God confused their tongue at Babel. Her work reveals that the Igbo are the oldest single group of people on planet earth. To confirm her claims about Igbo people's early presence on earth, she states that the Yoruba god Obatanla has the inscription of the "Father of the Igbo nation" and this god is revered in Yorubaland. On the whole, this study being a later study than that of Onwuejogwu with facts before us should be considered authentic and should supersede the claims made earlier by Onwuejogwu.

Igbo people indulge in making covenants because of the fear of the unknown. Human existence on the earth is shrouded with uncertainties and people are unpredictable. The Igbo people reason that covenants could be used to guarantee safety and fair treatment in their social interactions. People of equal and non equal status can get covenanted. Individuals, families, married

people, kindreds, groups or cults, business people to mention but these few can make covenants. Items commonly used for covenants include kola-nut, alligator pepper, palm wine, hot drink, kaolin (nzu), cockerel, *ofo* (staff of office), local beads and blood even though the list is not exhausted and also varies with communities.

Typologies of covenants

Covenant of protection: Often times people seek protection from deities because of the feeling of insecurity. They therefore covenant with deities to guarantee them protection. Igbo people have a migration tendency. They are core migrants and in fact do it to an extreme level (Dike 2000, Ikpeanyibe 2005) mostly because of their enterprising nature. They however migrate for security reasons in order to find a safer place to settle as Nwoye (2011) adds. When a community moves to another place with the intention to settle there, it was common practice to attempt to displace the original occupants of the land so they sought the assistance of powerful deities. They therefore made covenant with the deity to help them secure the new place for which they agree on what should be offered to the deity every year. The ancient peoples fought a lot of inter-tribal and intra-tribal wars. Whole communities could covenant with certain strong deities. This is done at the instance of re-settlement due to migration from one settlement to another. Usually the services of the deities go with some demands on individuals or communities. The deity may demand sacrifices of animals or human beings. George (2016) gave an instance of Iheakpu-Awka people who migrated from elsewhere and needed to settle in the midst of four villages namely Ovoko, Ibagwa-Aka, Uhunowere and Obukpa. Since it was humanly difficult for them to displace these communities, they solicited help from a deity called Awka nóbara and he became their communal god. The covenant was to be accompanied with a yearly sacrifice involving human

lives. Secondly, Awka n'obara should be made their generic name.

Disputes: Land disputes are rampant in Igbo communities and may be within a family or among neighbours that share a common boundary. This type of dispute usually develops into some ugly incidents and even claims lives and therefore is another occasion that requires covenanting. In such covenants, people agree not to harm the opposing party. Such may involve oath taking. For serious family disputes, oath may also be administered by a priest or medicine man, or any other sacred personage. Oath is important here because people are expected to pledge innocence. The sacred person pronounces the woes that would befall any defaulter in the presence of all. The same is true of covenants for partnership in business.

Covenant of fidelity/Business Alliance: As a very enterprising people individuals sometimes require to do business together. Many business partnerships among the Igbo are run under a covenantal union at a strong altar and aided by a chief priest of the deity. An altar is a sacred place that is set apart for communication between human beings and god/deities. In the traditional society, it is housed by a shrine and maintained by a priest. Two people who desire to go into business partnership can easily get into a covenant relationship. The parties should pledge faithfulness to each other. The effect of non-compliance is usually very disastrous.

Marriage: Marriage covenants are strong covenants that are not easily broken. It involves exchange of blood by the two who pledge faithfulness to each other. It could be done before or after marriage is contracted. Some people refer to it as blood covenant. The covenanters usually make a cut on the body to extract blood which is taken with a piece of kola nut and eaten.

Community covenant: Covenants can be enacted among members of a community to uphold a certain lifestyle. A particular village in Ezinifite in Aguata Local Government Area covenanted among themselves not to partake in any act of

stealing either within or outside the town. The covenant remains binding on them. In fact, if anyone from the village steals anywhere he is usually caught and killed (Joel, Umejiegbe: 2007).

Communal Meal as covenant: Communal eating could sometimes be regarded as covenant with the gods or ancestors. As is believed in Igbo land it is also a fact among the Israelites. Many Igbo communities have covenant with their gods especially during the yearly new yam festival *Emume Iri ji Ohu*. Madu (1997) cited in Onyenweaku (2012) in this connection classifies the new yam festival as a covenant type. It is a covenant between the soil and man for man is dependent on the soil for his existence and survival.

Comparative analysis of Covenant and Spirituality in Israel and Igbo land

So far the discourses in this paper ex-ray the fact that covenant is a spiritual exercise. That is to say that covenants are not mere agreements between two or more parties but have spiritual undertones. Spirituality of covenants is brought about by the participation of the spirits in the exercise.

Spirit, from the Hebrew root *ruach* means spirit or wind and also signifies the breath of God. In the Old Testament, the spirit is an irresistible, unpredictable and uncontrollable force that comes from God. It can come upon a man and fill him but man cannot claim to possess the spirit always. The spirit therefore can also be taken away from a man. Principally, Yahweh has possession of the spirit and communicates it to living beings. In Igbo worldview, spirits are abstract, invisible and intangible and not restricted by time or space. Igbo people believe that the world is infested with spirits. These spirits can inhabit human beings and/or objects. Writing about the concept of spirits in African/Igbo religion, Ugwu and Ugwueye maintain that every creature has its spirit (Ugwu and Ugwueye 2004). Spirits are both benevolent and malevolent and are relevant in

human activities. It is in recognition of this fact that the supernatural/spiritual being is invoked during important ceremonies like covenants.

Spirit beings both in Israel and Igbo cultures act as supervising agents and regulate the covenants. Just as the Israelites believe in the Almighty God even though they have knowledge of other gods, the Igbo people also believe in a supreme being. Ugwu, Ugwueye 2004 and Amposa (1977) all affirm that the Igbo believe in the Supreme Being, the creator of the universe who is immanent and transcendent. Other deities and the ancestors exist in the Igbo religious cosmology as mediators between the Supreme Being and humans. The role of the spirits in covenant making is invaluable. The Igbos acknowledge this by the way they name their children- *Chinonso* (God is near), *Chimuanya* (God is awake), *Chukwudi* (God exists) and *Chidindu* (God is alive), the list is not exhausted.

Both in the traditional societies of Israel and the Igbo, one major role of the spirit beings /God/gods is to act as witness during enactment of covenants. Jonathan made reference to God as the witness of his covenant with David (1Sam 20:42). By so saying, he invariably drew the attention of David to the fact that their agreement went beyond a physical exercise. The immortal one would immortalize the covenant of mortals. In Malachi the prophet records that God acts as a witness in marriage covenants. The same applies to Igbo people. The Igbo covenanted for business partnerships quite similar to that of Solomon and Hiram. The Igbo business partnership quite often goes with oath taking. However, no oath was sworn in the Solomon-Hiram covenant.

The use of blood during covenants was a very common feature. Blood seals and solidifies covenants implying a life-long and binding contract. God told Moses to sprinkle blood at the base of the altar. Therefore ...Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls and the other half he sprinkled on the altar:

Then he took the book of the covenant and read it to the people who responded, 'we will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey' (Ex, 24:6-7). In fact, in Igbo land as in most traditional societies, blood is used to conclude a covenant. There are no records of blood bonds/covenants between two intending couples in the Old Testament as is practiced by Igbo people. It is the blood of sacrificed animals that is sprinkled at the altar.

Caelum and Ivory consider blood to be very important as a component of covenant. They note that traditional societies in the Middle East, just like the Igbo, use blood to bring covenants to appropriate conclusion. For them the blood symbolizes initiation and makes one become an associate of a certain totem, god or a new society (Caelum and Ivory 2007).

Eating together in covenant meals featured in both cultures even though occasions and reasons may differ. For the Israelites, the Passover meal was a strong covenant which was actually renewed in the New Testament. This is one of the key celebrations in Israel. At other occasions meals were eaten to establish innocence and friendship (Gen 18 and 31). Covenant meals were eaten in the Bible at instances of covenants. In Israel they were used as seals for the rituals. A covenant meal was taken in the covenant of Jacob and Laban. In Igbo land, covenant meals are taken for settlements of disputes. Communing together during the new yam celebration is a way of covenanting with the gods. Communal meals mean a lot in Igboland and that is why eating together is used in settling family disputes. Some elders dine with their ancestors regularly by pouring libations and while sacrificing. The more elaborate covenantal meal is the new yam festival which many Igbo communities celebrate.

Since spirits are not expected to partake in meals physically, sacrifices are offered to them as a way of involving them. These sacrifices offered at the instances of covenants manifest the

spirituality of covenants. In both communities, sacrifice is an essential component of covenant (Gen 9:20; 15, George 2016).

Comparison of the Consequences of Covenants in Israel and Igbo Land

The effects of covenants can either be favorable or disastrous depending on the responses of the parties. Furthermore, these consequences are generationally experienced far outliving the parties that cut the covenant. In fact Ozoko (2016) notes that the violation of a covenant does not imply the annulment of it. What is worrisome about the consequences is that they seem to be inescapable. Reports collected orally show that the diseases inflicted on those who default in a covenant are either non diagnosable or incurable. It includes madness, swollen stomach, paralysis epilepsy, blindness, barrenness and the like.

The effect could manifest in some one having mysterious setbacks and inexplicable attacks like loss of money, properties, health and constant misfortunes. The more fearful occurrences happen when some deities extend the punishment to the relatives of the offender'. This is particularly true of *Ulasì Okija*. Mogbo (2016) wrote a report of the excesses of this deity which include attacks on the relatives of an offender. This deity demands that if someone goes contrary to their agreement and is stricken to death, both the dead body and his personal properties will be carried to the shrine. If this is not done, the survivors would begin to experience deaths and mysteries. He vividly outlined instances of the properties discovered in the bush where the idol resides. The items were deposited by the surviving family members of the deceased.

God warned the Israelites that he would bring diverse problems their way if they show unfaithfulness to his covenant (Josh, Jer, 11:1ff). In fact, the concept of sin and punishment underlies every problem or disease suffered by the Israelites. When the Israelites are attacked by disease, they relate it to

covenant unfaithfulness. This theological concept underscores the teachings and the prophetic messages in the Old Testament (Ikecheta 2012). God established everlasting covenants with Abraham and David and the benefits and curses are equally everlasting (Gen 17, Ps 89:24-34). God promises to inflict his people with curses. Most of the devastating problems that the Israelites

The Igbo people associate chronic problems with covenant unfaithfulness. Like the Israelites, national disasters could be explained to be caused by violation of covenant with the gods. In individual cases, madness, swollen stomach, epilepsy, blindness, backwardness in business, barrenness and even delay in marriage are also possible consequences.

From the analyses of the concept of covenants, especially among the Igbo people, one can conveniently posit that since traditional Igbo covenants are not easily annulled, individuals and communities should not hastily get involved in such deals. People should involve themselves more in covenants that are more positive and promising like covenanting with the God of Israel who is capable of showing love and mercy if a defaulter repents. *Furthermore*, blood covenants (marriage covenants) are very strong and delicate and should be avoided. Obviously, problems that emanate from covenants defy physical solution but needs a stronger spiritual power to unravel and therefore repentance and appeal to God is recommended.

Conclusion

In this study, covenant making/cutting among the Israelites and the Igbo peoples was comparatively examined. The phenomenon is a crucial act with very long lasting effects. Reasons why people indulged in the act were discussed. For the Igbo people the reasons include-guaranteeing lasting love relationships both for intending couples and for settling marital disputes. The Igbo also have covenants for settling land disputes, family relationships, for ensuring protection and

security in interpersonal relationships and for business partnerships. Communities on the one hand covenant within themselves to keep away from certain immoral or amoral acts. On the other hand they covenant with deities to assist them in fighting wars and enable them settle comfortably as they migrate into new lands. For these occasions for covenants a compromise is usually reached and regular sacrifices mandated by the deities.

The Old Testament which presents a record of the Israelites can simply be described as a book of covenant. This is because it contains numerous stories of covenants both between God and Israel, God and humans and between humans themselves. In fact, God never related closely with any man except on the basis of covenant. Most covenant types found in Igbo society have striking similarities with those in Igbo land but with slight differences. However, the Sinaitic covenant which inaugurated the nation of Israel (a fulfillment of his covenant with Abraham in Gen 12:1-3) is very unique. God was the sole initiator and designator of the terms of those covenants. For Spencer though (1977) this unilateral covenant was imposing and overbearing on Israel. Spencer's view notwithstanding, God's caring love for Israel is unequalled and unprecedented. Like the Igbo deities, who pronounced the curses that would befall those who default, God in plain terms warned the Israelites about the consequences of not keeping his covenant demands (Jer. 11 1-6). One outstanding fact that surfaced from this study is that covenants remain valid even if they are erroneously or deceitfully contracted (Jos 9:3, 12-15).

It was discovered in the study that the long lasting consequences of covenants can only be explained by the spirit participation during covenants. Since spirits do not die, they continue to implement the terms reached by the covenanters even when the initial covenanters are dead. To curb these unpleasant negative effects of covenants experienced by individuals or societies, people should seek spiritual recourse.

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Lexico-Semantic Analysis of Igbo Folk Songs

Gloria N. Chimezie-Egwuonwu

Abstract

The lexico-semantic level of language analysis deals with the study of words and meaning. Possible meanings of two Igbo folk songs "Nwa nnnn ukwu, nwa nnnn nta" and "Mbe ayaba" were considered using semantic theories. The intuitive knowledge of the language also helped the researcher in data analysis because the researcher is a native speaker of Igbo language. These two folk songs were chosen because they are the most popular among others. Exploring the meaning and the uses of Igbo folk songs has not been very popular and thus, this prompted the researcher to embark on the study. This study attempts to unearth the semantic illusions in the two folk songs. It also highlights the importance of Igbo folk songs as an instrument for education in the contemporary society. The study also concludes that the meaningless description given to refrains in Igbo folk songs is erroneous. Usually each sound has a definite connotation or specific meaning.

Introduction

Effective language use is a basis for communication. Language is a system of symbols which include morphemes and words. Words make up sentences that in turn form a discourse. Language defines our lives, heralds our existence and also formulates our thoughts. Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007) define language as the system of sounds and words used by humans to express their thoughts and feelings. The concept of language encompasses facial expressions, gestures, postures, whistling, hand sign, writing and so forth. A language is to a large extent, the embodiment of people's world view.

This study will mainly concern itself with lexicology and semantics as parts of the levels of language. These levels will in turn be used in analyzing our data. The concept of word is central to the study of lexicology and semantics. Lexicology deals with the study of the form, meaning, use and behavior of words. *Encyclopedia Americana* states that lexicology studies words, their nature and meaning, word elements, relations between words, word groups and the whole lexicon. The term first occurred in the 1820's. Semantics is the study of meaning. It studies the ways in which words and sentences of various grammatical constructions are used and understood by native and fluent speakers of a language. The term is derived from the French word 'semantique' and was coined from a Greek verb meaning to 'signify' by Mr. Breal in the late nineteen century (Agbedo 2000:49).

The lexico-semantic level of language analysis deals with the study of word and meaning. This work deals with the use of words and meaning relations that are internal to the vocabulary of Igbo language using two selected Igbo folk songs as case study. In the field of Igbo folk songs, exploring the meaning of the text has not been very popular, meaning is a concept usually influenced by different factors. An utterance can be interpreted in diverse ways depending on the emotional disposition of the speaker at the time of making the utterance. As a result of this, the intended meaning of the utterance may be different from the meaning perceived by the receiver of the message. Text used in Igbo folk songs is very important to be studied to see the extent of flow of the language used and how well the meaning is communicated to the audience.

Folk songs are very simple songs that are rendered orally, have some sort of lessons and it also deserves consciousness and systematic attention. Thus Asigbo states "folklore and oral performance are aspects of culture and tradition which aim to teach morals, expose follies, extol the praiseworthy and create amusement" (5).

Many folksongs have been around so long that nobody is entirely sure who their composers were. Often these songs are passed down within a community and they evolve over time to address the issue of the day. They are mainly used for pleasure, such as when lullabies are sung by parents to their children; to bring about a historically sacred ambiance at church services, funerals and eulogies and also to enhance celebration, such as during the new year, wedding, birthday parties, childbirth and naming ceremonies.

There are stylistic ways of rendering Igbo folk songs which one of them is the use of chorus. Mostly the audiences chorus the refrain without understanding their meaning. Through the use of semantic theory, the researcher attempts to unearth exegetically semantic illusions of three selected Igbo folk songs. This paper therefore concludes that Igbo folksongs and its refrains have semantic content and it is very important on the part of the people that are involved to understand the meaning.

Literary/Theoretical Review

An analysis of word and sentence meaning cannot be done without the consideration of various theories of lexicology and semantics in the study of language. These two levels of language contribute to the description of words, sentences and their meanings. *Encyclopedia Americana* opines that lexicology is a part of linguistics which studies words. This may include their nature and function as symbols, their meaning, the relationship of their meaning, the relationship of their meaning to epistemology in general, and the rules of their composition from the smaller elements (morphemes and phonemes). It also involves relations between words, which may involve semantics, derivation usage and sociolinguistic distinctions and any other issues involved in analyzing the whole lexicon of a language.

The term first appeared in 1980s, though there are lexicologists in essence before the term was coined. Jackson

and Amvela (2007) also state that lexicology deals not only with simple words in all their aspects but also with complex and compound words, the meaning units of language since these units must be analyzed in respect of both their form and their meaning. Lexicology relies on information derived from morphology, semantics and etymology for its analysis of words.

Jackendoff (1990) and Ndimele (1997) define semantics as the subfield that is devoted to the study of meaning, as inherent at the levels of words, phrases, sentences and larger units of discourse. Chukwuma (2010) is of the view that scholars from different disciplines like philosophy, logic, anthropology, psychology and linguistics are interested in exploring the nature of meaning. He says that linguistics is different from these disciplines since it investigates meaning in a systematic and objective pattern. Jackendoff (1990) also gives three perspectives on meaning as follows: the first which is lexical semantics discusses the meaning of individual words. The second is formal semantics (or compositional or sentential semantics) which discusses how those meanings combine to make meanings for individual sentences or utterances. The third is discourse or pragmatics which studies how these meanings combine with each other and with other facts about various kinds of context to make meanings for a text or discourse. The argument of this paper is also made based on these perspectives.

Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007:181) acknowledge that the meaning of an expression is not always obvious, even to a native speaker of the language. Meaning may be obscured in many ways, or at least may require some imagination or special knowledge to be apprehended. Agbedo (2000:150) notes that in the study of word meaning, a number of theories of meaning which aim at accounting for all aspects of semantic functioning, have emerged. They are ideational, referential and behaviorist. Traditionally, the meaning of a word was regarded as a relation between a word form and the extra linguistic entity it represents that is, its referent. The meaning of a word is its referent, which

is the thing or things in the real world that it refers to. Ullman (1957:72) also states that the meaning of a word is the concept or image associated with it. His theory of meaning is one of those known as ideational theories which means that every meaningful expression has an image or concept associated with it, and that this image or concept is called forth very time the expression is meaningfully employed. These two theories have shortcomings, one of which is that it is not always the case that words refer to thing or have tangible referents.

One way of getting rid of mental entities is Bloomfield's attempt to account for meaning in behavioral terms. This approach is far more better than the referential or ideational approaches because it would be very difficult to identify constant behavioral correlates of words. Nonetheless, behind the ideational, referential and behaviorist theories lies some important truths. The first one is that language and thoughts are intimately connected, secondly, language is used to say things about the world and thirdly, language is an aspect of behavior. None of these theories has succeeded as a general theory of linguistic meaning. This prompted some linguists to conceive the proper object of semantic study to be the sense of words, Agbede (2000). The modes of meaning relations are synonymy, anatomy, polysemy, homonymy, hyponymy, ambiguity and tautology. Although no theory of word meaning is complete but speakers of any language have considerable knowledge about the meaning relationships among different words in their mental lexicons, and any theory must take that knowledge into account.

Following Jackendoff (1990) three perspectives on meaning, it will be pertinent to give a little insight on the linguistic pragmatic theory. According to Mey (1993), pragmatics is a subfield of linguistics which studies the ways in which context contributes to meaning. Pragmatics encompasses speech act theory, conversational implicature, talk in-interaction and other approaches to language behavior in

philosophy, sociology, linguistics and anthropology. Daejin (2002) explains pragmatics to include studies on how the transmission of meaning depends not only on structural and linguistic knowledge of the speaker and listener but also on the context of the utterance and any pre-existing knowledge about those involved.

According to Crystal (1997:48), context is the environment in which communication takes place. It is central in accounting for inference, implicatures and presuppositions in an utterance. The context of any utterance can be situational, linguistic, psychological or socio-cultural. Linguistic context is the relationship that exists among words in an utterance, while the socio-cultural context refers to how the social and cultural beliefs affect the meaning of an utterance. On the other hand, situational context refers to the situations in which an expression can be employed.

Empirical Review

Some researchers have embarked on researches in semantics and it will be crucial to study what some of them found out. Oluwaseun (2011) analyses five selected speeches of Ishaq .O. Oloyede, the vice chancellor of University of Ilorin: "Charity Begins at Home", "The future is here", "it is a goal", "The means justifies the end" and "seeing is believing" using lexico-semantic features as tools. It was found that Ishaq Oloyede uses more noun in the open class: more preposition in the closed class and the use of different modes of meaning relations to achieve liveliness and to introduce the different grammatical senses of words, and lastly the use of cohesive devices to enhance relationship between words and sentences.

Aremu (2011) also works on the socio-pragmatic usage of language in obituaries in Nigerian English using data from the combined sources of oral interviews of respondent selected from Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba ethnic groups in Nigeria, electronic and newspaper media. He analyses texts of obituary

announcement in Nigeria English and found out that it characterized by euphemisms, lexical borrowings, hedges, metaphors, code-mixing, code-switching and idioms. Also announcers of obituaries in Nigerian English employ socio-cultural metalanguage and politeness which the audience easily construes as a result of the shared socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds between participants.

Agbedo (2008) examines parallelism in Ezikeoba Igbo praise songs: Evidence from Imaryima text. He discusses the literary concept of parallelism and its manifestations in Oshagenyi Azeegba Imaryima. He focuses on the structural and semantic parallelism which holds between the sections of Imaryima text and determines the extent to which the parallel parts at structural level are syntactic, morphological or phonological and whether the parallel meanings, involve two most common kinds that is, similarity of meaning and opposition of meaning. He concludes that parallelism is a widespread feature of the verbal arts of the ancient and contemporary societies and it is seen as a basic structuring principle in Imaryims text. Agbedo also notes that apart from drawing attention to instances of parallelisms as basic organizing and structuring principles of the language, it is achieved through repetitions of words, phrases which provide the compass with which to locate the contrasting and parallel pairs in the cultural mindset of Elugwu Ezikeoba society.

Hua, Wang, Wang, Zheng and Zhou (2012) examine short text understanding thorough lexical-semantic analysis. They observe that short texts do not always observe the syntax of a written language; as a result, traditional natural language processing methods cannot be easily applied. Second, short texts usually do not contain sufficient statistical signals to support many state of the art approaches for text processing such as topic modeling. Third, short texts are usually more ambiguous. They conclude that knowledge is needed in order to better understand short texts using lexical semantics provided

by a well known semantic network for short text understanding. Knowledge of intensive approach disrupts traditional methods for task such as text segmentation, part of speech tagging, and concept labeling in the sense that they focus on semantics in all the tasks.

Acquah, Anan and Tse ma fo-Arthur (2015) work on the synchronic study of semantics in selected Akan choral compositions in Ghana. They assert that music performed in Ghana is predominantly vocal. Understanding the text of the music is but one facet of extremely important aspect in performance but unfortunately, some of the texts of some recent choral music compositions lack linguistic semantic representations. Performers are only mindful of the rhythm, melody and its associated harmony without knowing if the meaning of the song is clear. Some of these songs lack meaning at the levels of sentential cohesion as well as the larger units of the text juxtaposed with the music. Through linguistic pragmatic theory, the authors attempt to unearth semantic illusions of five purposively sampled Akan choral music compositions by some Ghananian composers and analyzed for their sensitivity to linguistic semantics. They conclude that the inherent semantic problems in the songs make it difficult to provide any clear, objective data about how many songs have problems with the positioning of song personas or clarifications with regard to the perspective of sentential cohesion. Considering all these research works, none of the researchers has particularly analyzed Igbo folk songs using lexico-semantic as a tool for the analysis.

Data Analysis

DatumI

English Translation

Nwa nnnnx ukwu, nwa nnnnx nta	Big birds small birds
Txx zam zam, txx zam	- <i>refrain</i> Txx zam zam, txx zam
Nwa nnnnx ukwu, nwa nnnnx nta	Big birds small bird
Txx zam zam, txx zam	- <i>refrain</i> Txx zam zam, txx zam

!nq cbc ahx eme g[n[?	what are you doing there?
Ana m atxrx nne m ose	I am picking pepper for my mother
T'xkene ka isi atx	Pick as you use to pick
T'x[tx[, tx nwoke n'ike n'ike	Tx[tx[, tx males pick very fast
T'x nwany[n'ike n'ike	Females pick very fast
Xmx nnnx p[p[rq, p[rq p[rqrq p[[All birds p[p[rq, p[rq p[rqrq p[[

This folk song is used to create amusement by the parents to their children. Children normally enjoy the refrains which are ideophones. Some of the meaning relations that exist in "*Nwa nnnx ukwu, nwa nnnx nta* are:

Hyponymy: Hyponymy refers to the situation where the meaning of a word is included on the meaning of another, udofot (2004: 51) refers to hyponymy as class membership and the items which constitute the class are co-hyponyms. Hyponymy also involves a superordinate term which includes hyponyms.

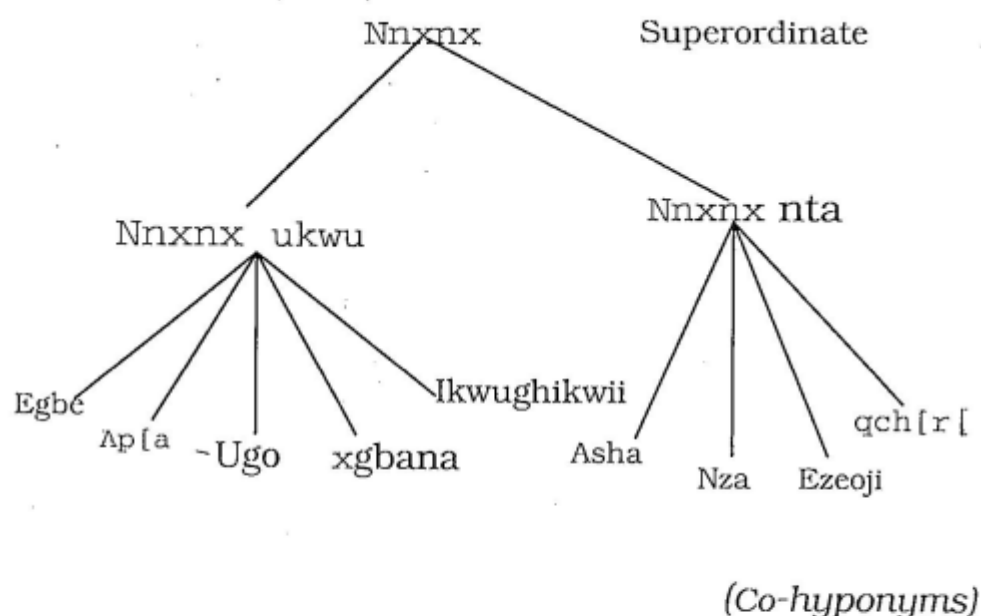


Figure 1

Here, the meaning of *nnxn ukwu* (big bird) and *nnxn nta* (small bird) are inclusive in the meaning of birds. Also, the meaning of *egbe*, *ap[a*, *ugo*, *ikwughikwui* and *xgbana* are inclusive in *nnxn ukwu* (big bird). Whereas the meanings of *asha*, *nza*, *ezeoji*, *qch[r[* are inclusive in the meaning of *nnxn nta* (small birds), these in turn give vivid description about the hyponym.

Antonymy: Antonymy is when two words are opposite in meaning. In datum I, lines 8 and a contain words that are opposite in meaning: *nwoke/nwaany[* ‘male/female’ and it also signifies all birds. Antonym also occurs in line 1, *nnxn ukwu* (big bird) / *nnxn nta* (small bird).

The refrain of the song is full of ideophones. Ideophone according to Ekere (1990) is a descriptive word that ... creates an emotion. It creates a picture, which enables the listener to identify a feeling, a sound, colour, texture, expression, movement for silence through his own senses. Igbo folk songs use ideophones to add emotion and vividness to a description. The ideophone *tx[, tx[* creates the image of picking of pepper. Also the ideophone in the last line of the song helps to create rhythm which will in turn attract the attention of the children to fancy the song. *P[[* signifies the completion of the picking of the pepper. The use of repetition in the song could be to catch the attention of the audience and also create emphasis.

‘Mbe agaba’ is an instructional folk song. It is used to teach children addition and multiplication. The first palm tree told the tortoise that it has five heads of ripe fruits while the second palm tree said that it has ten heads of ripe fruits. The tortoise did not acknowledge that any of the palm trees has yield fruits, it then went further to ask the third palm tree how many heads of ripe fruits it has. The third palm tree told the tortoise that it has fifteen heads of ripe fruits. Thus, multiplying what the first palm tree has by three or adding what the first palm tree has to what the second palm tree had to get what the third palm tree has. The addition and multiplication could be done continuously

and systematically in the same order as the song progresses in order to get the actual figure of the number of heads of ripe fruits which the fourth, fifth or even the sixth palm tree suppose to have. During the instructional process, the performer of the folk song could reduce the figure to 2 or 3 heads of ripe fruits depending on the age of the children that are involved. For example; the first palm tree could say that it has two heads of ripe fruits while the second one will say that it has four heads of ripe fruit thus, multiplying what the first palm tree has by two. The refrain 'Ajambele' could mean something that is not true or something that is meaningless. Linguistically the word 'ajambele' has been used by Igbo people to denote something that it is unacceptable or nonsense. This could be seen in this Igbo expression, '{na-akq ajambele' meaning that what the person saying is not acceptable or nonsense'. The 'ajambele' in the song could be that it is unacceptable to term a palm tree which has up to five or more heads of palm fruits infertile as indicated by the tortoise in the song. The responsorial and antiphonal nature of the song makes it not just entertaining but easy to understand and because the atmosphere is jovial and informal, the audience who are usually, mostly children learn the difficult lessons without constraints of a formal learning environment.

The song also makes use of cohesive devices. Cruse (1990: 228) refers to cohesion as non – structural resources for discourse. He identifies four resources of cohesion in English which are reference, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical organization. These are used to guide readers and show how the parts of a text relate to one another. There is ellipsis in the fifth, ninth and eleventh lines of the song. According to Jackson and Amvela (2007:180), ellipsis is the set of resources by which full repetition of a clause or clause element can be avoided and by which it can be signaled to readers that they should repeat the wording from a previous clause.

Another cohesive device that is present in the song is the use of reference. Reference is the set of grammatical resources which permit the speaker to indicate whether something has been repeated from somewhere earlier in the text or it has not yet appeared in the text. Jackson Amvela (2007:181) opines that reference can be either exophoric (pointing outwards the text) or endophoric (pointing inwards the text). Endophoric reference includes anaphoric reference (pointing backwards) and cataphoric reference (pointing forwards). The pronouns in the song (ya, o []) are all referring to the nkwx 'palm tree'.

The statement in line fifteen Gawa na [bxgh[nkwx is ambiguous, it could mean that the tree is another type of tree which is not palm tree or that the palm tree is unproductive. Considering the situation on ground and where the tortoise referred the palm tree as "qkpqtqkpq ala", show that what the tortoise has in mind is that the palm tree is unproductive.

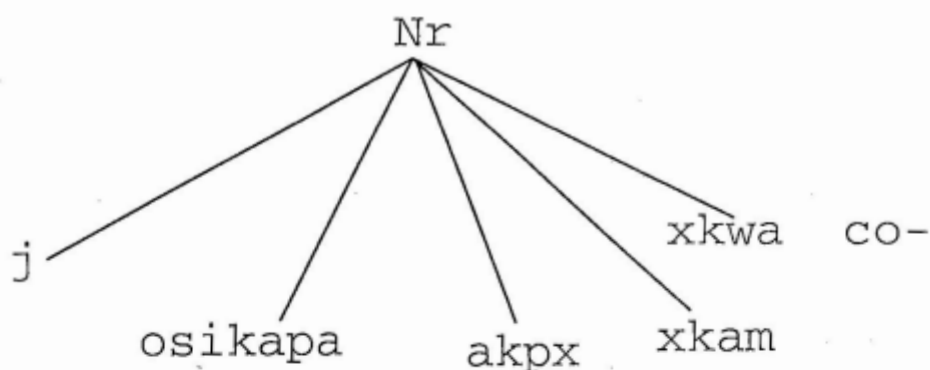


Figure 2

Conclusion

Meaning is a concept usually influenced by different factors. An utterance can be interpreted in diverse ways. Some folk songs which we regard as entertaining can also serve as a medium for instruction. Some also have semantic implications

which the performer and the audience may not be aware of, because they are only mindful of the rhythm of the songs. It will be pertinent that, performers of Igbo folk songs should be conscious of its meanings and also guide the audience in the understanding of the meaning of such folk songs. The folk song 'Mbe agaba' should be added into curriculum as an instructional song which will aid children in the understanding of addition and multiplication. This folk song also confirms that though our forefathers do not practice informal education, they have ways of teaching their children formally.

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Contents of Calabar Carnival: Celebrating Cannibalized Cultures in the Age of Transculturalism

Bernard Eze-Orji

Abstract

The world keeps shrinking, the same way cultures have become even more coalesced as a result of technology of media convergence in the age of internet explosion. The one culture that has seen eclectic infusion of other cultures from time past is the culture of carnival which its carnivalesque street style celebration by African slaves at the brave New World resonated through music, dance, masquerade and role-play; features of nearly all street festivals including Carnival Calabar. Using the Carnival Calabar as a case study, this paper employed Performance Analysis and non-participant observation methods of research and subjected the contents of the carnival into investigation through watching of videos of past Carnival Calabar events. The attraction and focus of the paper were in the areas of masquerade appearance and its audience, dance procession, live music bands by DJs, formation of floats seen in Trinidad & Tobago and in Notting Hill carnivals, carnival masks and costume designs like those of Venice carnival. These were analysed within the culture of cannibalization as a result of transculturalism which has become prevalent in today's performance space including but not limited to Carnival Calabar. The conclusion of the paper is that the distinctive parts of Carnival Calabar serving as its contents are a celebration of cannibalized (hybridized) cultures on the global stage of transculturalism.

Introduction

Nothing has brought the world closer to each other after technology occasioned by the digital age and the internet, like performance. Performance has seen cultures constellate, submerge and intertwine. There are distinct cultural identities all over the world. With the aid of performance, these cultures converge and interact globally. Cultures have become more fluid, intercultural, transcultural and leading to hybridity in performance, a situation that made Victor Turner to declare that "a performance is declarative of our shared humanity, yet it utters the uniqueness of particular cultures. We will know one another better by entering one another's performances and learning their grammars and vocabularies" (8).

However, transculturalism is understood as an adoption of aspects of other cultures: the change in a culture brought about by the diffusion within it of aspects from other cultures. A situation one sees oneself in the other; not one single culture but an accretion of cultures. Multiculturalism on the other hand, is in the same vein seen as cultural diversity, the celebration or acknowledgement of multiplicity of cultures in a given society. Whitehead views multiculturalism as being the celebration of cultural tolerance and human diversity as well as positively expanding smaller units of the society and setting the pace or showing them a broader perspective of cultural heritage (233). Notably, it considers desirable different peoples living in the same territory and sharing the same state for the purpose of development. Thus, it can be said that the promotion and development of all the cultures are the essential concern of the people, who would feel satisfied that their languages and ways of life are not forgotten and made extinct in the society they live in. For Wallerstein, it was the move to break the barrier of exclusion among diverse cultural entities, that the French revolution instituted the policy of inclusion (650).

Against this background, it is a known fact at least among performance enthusiast that there is no culture of performance

that has enjoyed a constellation of different cultures like the carnival performance. Carnival which is the rave of the moment provides avenues where cultures meet and interact on the performance space. Not only are local communities formed and sustained by carnival, carnival brings together performance events that do not necessarily belong together. Bakhtin's 'Carnival and the Carnavalesque' captures this position succinctly:

Carnival is not a performance, and does not differentiate the spectator from the performer. All people who take part in the carnival "live it" but it is not an extension of the "real world" or "real life" but rather, as Bakhtin puts it, "the world standing on its head", the world upside down. The carnival for Bakhtin is an event in which all rules, inhibitions, restrictions and regulations which determine the course of everyday life are suspended, and especially all form of hierarchy in society (182).

Bakhtin offers four categories of what he calls the "carnivalistic sense of the world: Free and familiar interaction between people: in the carnival normally separated people can interact and freely express themselves to one another. The Eccentric behavior: behavior that was otherwise unacceptable is legitimate in carnival, and human nature's hidden sides are revealed. Carnivalistic misalliances: the free and familiar attitude of the carnival enables everything which is normally separated to connect – the sacred with the profane, the new and old, the high and low. Sacrilegious: the carnival for Bakhtin is a site of ungodliness, of blasphemy, profanity and parodies on things that are sacred. For Bakhtin, these categories are abstract notions of freedom and equality, but rather a lived experience of the world manifested in sensual forms of ritualistic acts that are played out as if they were a part of life itself (251).

The carnival is an annual celebration of life and freedom of expression found in many countries of the world; Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, Venice in Italy, Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Notting

Hill in England, Cadiz carnival in Spain, Oruro carnival in Bolivia, Cologne carnival in Germany, Montevideo in Uruguay, and Trinidad and Tobago in Port of Spain. This paper is more concerned with T&T carnival because of its place in history, the history of slavery and of Africa and African diaspora. Carnival in these Caribbean Islands reflects their multicultural and transcultural heritage. People of African, European, Amerindian, Indian, Middle Eastern and Chinese descent join in the festivities, but especially the African slaves and Indian indentured servants who were originally excluded from French plantation owner's carnival celebrations have created their own traditions (a mimicry of the 'Other'). It is against this background that this paper believes that when a performance with such expressive freedom (freedom to borrow and even cannibalize) like carnival transcends and is transposed, it becomes cannibalized, multicultural and hybridized. A culture that is mixed, is a diluted culture, devoid of originality. In carnival culture, it is almost impossible to perform without cannibalization. Cannibalization according to ChukwumaOkoye is a situation:

African communities scrutinize their contact with foreign cultures, accepting, rejecting, and appropriating practices and artifacts according to their needs, while still maintaining an underlying loyalty to their indigenous processes. This tradition *has also become evident in carnival performance*, which adopts an expropriatory strategy by which it subjects Euro-American cultural forms to a process of indigenization, stripping them of their original symbolic equipment and immersing them in entirely local ones (19).

Cultures of the world congregate and rub along at carnivals. It follows that, by learning more about carnival we can learn more about ourselves and a lot about accepting and understanding other cultures since the culture of carnival performance is based on cultures marrying each other in a world that has become in the words of McLuhan 'a global village.'

Besides cultural diversity, carnival has become a platform for the celebration of cannibalized cultures of disparate entities. Cannibalization of cultures has become in the words of ChukwumaOkoye “a popular tradition” and carnival is one culture that has become popular. The popular tradition of carnival was believed by Bakhtin to carry a particular wisdom which can be traced back to ancient world. For Bakhtin, carnival and the carnivalesque create an alternative social space, characterised by freedom, equality and abundance. During carnival, rank (otherwise pervasive in medieval society) is abolished and everyone is equal. A carnival is a moment when everything except maybe (violence) is permitted. It occurs on the border between art and life, and is a kind of life shaped according to a pattern of play. It is usually marked by displays of excess and grotesqueness. It is a type of performance, but this performance is communal, with no boundary between performers and audience.

Background to Carnival Calabar

The exact origin of modern day carnival is speculative. However, contemporary research experience locates its roots in primitive festivals honouring the beginning of anew year and the rebirth of nature. Much like the merrymaking and festivity that characterize the last days of the Lenten season in the Catholic doctrine, the carnival art emphasizes revelry and conviviality. In recent times, carnival has assumed an eclectic thrust. Thus, it has incorporated the varying cultures of different towns, cities and countries thereby commanding tourist attraction across transnational divides in celebration and in geniality.

However, Carnival Calabar in Cross River state, Nigeria, is an annual event that has become so huge with a global presence that it has attracted foreigners as tourists and revellers where cultural exchanges are permissible. Calabar Carnival also known as Carnival Calabar is an offshoot of the yearly

Christmas festivities that ushered in the new millennium, year 2000, by the then Cross River State governor, Mr Donald Duke termed Calabar Festivals. This brand and change in nomenclature was as a result of the global awareness created by the festival in its yearly outings and by 2005, Carnival Calabar was added to the 31 days event culminating in celebration of life, culture, cuisines, costumes and masquerades of the peoples of Cross River. According to Jacob Udayi in a personal conversation he had with Mr Atueke, the deputy director of administration of Carnival Commission in Cross River State of Nigeria in 2009, he said:

Carnival Calabar can be traced back to the 1980s where visitors and indigenes alike rushed to the roundabout to watch cultural displays performed by the Ekpe masquerades which was tagged "Ekpe festival". He said that the event which came up every December each year was an event that every true sons and daughters of the Efik kingdom in Nigeria looked forward to. Carnival Calabar therefore, according to him, is a gradual progression of the Ekpe dance to a bigger event that is being put together by the state government for the celebration of both Christmas and end of year (7).

Tracing the history of Carnival Calabar is not an effort in futility technically speaking. It is against this background that this paper has set out to investigate and analyse the contents of Carnival Calabar. Cultures all over the world especially cultures of performance have become coalesced into one culture that has left the disparate entities (cultures) gaping for recognition and denying the natal culture its roots. In every performance, instances of cultures coming together in the performance abound. We can identify an aspect of our culture in any performance in the global space; be it dances, music, costume, masking, or other decorations. This has led to hybridity of performance and or culture of hybridity. And it is in carnival performance more than any other performance that cultures find their relevance and expression. One of the most celebrated

features of hybridity is its supposed characteristic to cross cultural and national boundaries and its ability to translate oppositional cultural spheres into innovative expressions of the so-called postmodern era. This era is apparently based on free circulation and intermingling of ideas and significations in a world increasingly shaped and reshaped by different forces and different meanings of globalisation and migration.

Contents of Carnival Calabar

This paper has set out to trace and reveal what the contents of Carnival Calabar are, how it has tried to celebrate cultures termed 'cannibalized' and what are the roots of these cultures that are referred to as cannibalized which adumbrate the Carnival Calabar performance. Tracing the history of carnival to the brave New World, Esiaba Irobi contends that:

The whole tradition of African festival and ritual theater, we must bear in mind, with all its complex music, drum language, dance, architecture, songs, spectacle, spatial configurations, choreography, and masking, has always been transferred from generation to generation, before and after slavery (900).

Trinidad and Tobago carnival which is an offshoot of the experiences of the African and the African diaspora in the plantation of enslavement in Europe emerged in the 19th century from the celebrations of liberated African slaves embodying African ways and values; Trinidad carnival according to MillaRiggio has become "both a centripetal hub and centrifugal force for carnival, musical, and masking styles that flow inward to the Islands of Trinidad and Tobago and radiate outward from them to the world at large"(79). A close look at Irobi's and Riggio's expositions above reveal the makeup (contents) of Calabar Carnival and that of Trinidad and Tobago; *music, drumming, dance, songs, spectacle through mask and costume design*, all forming part of African festival and by extension carnival as performed by African slaves at the plantation in the

brave New World. The implication of this revelation is the fact that African cultures were translocated to the Western worlds and performed in different platforms during their excruciating experiences as slaves, one such medium of presenting their culture was the carnival. Esiaba Irobi captured it elaborately thus:

This is all so evident in different parts of the African Diaspora where Carnival, a hybridized derivative of African festival and ritual theatre, has come to represent a performative retheorizing of individualism and alienation - the twin ethos and punishment of Western capitalist ontology. Africans, translocated to the West Indies, Britain, North America, Canada, and South America, have consistently used carnival performance to defy, mock, reject, interrogate, and deconstruct individualism and Western naturalistic, closed-door, mouse-tongue-of-a-stage, middle-class theatre for centuries. They have been able to do this because Carnival opens up spaces for communality and mass participation despite societal differences in terms of class, race, colour, income, intellectual pretensions, or the memories from the lacerations of history (901).

Carnival is a product of culture and one cannot do without the other. The centrality of carnival to cultural sustenance of Trinidad and Tobago has been stressed in the various Carnival/Calabar pre-event publications. However, these publications have opened a new window on carnival, highlighting carnival as a space in which history as memory and national heritage are continually being made and remade.

Music in both carnival traditions are supplied by band groups whose membership cuts across social status, politics and economy. In Trinidad and Tobago carnival for instance, a music truck entertains the crowd on the streets. Trucks are integral part of the street parade featuring live performance. Carnival Music evolved together with Carnival which was strongly influenced

by the role the Africans, French and the Europeans played in the history of Trinidad and Tobago.

Music in Carnival Calabar is supplied by carefully decorated carnival trucks which hold the musical troupe of each band that continuously reel out harmonious tunes for each band groups. It is a live performance, mostly from hip pop (with its mixed genres), R&B stars from home and abroad featuring sax and trumpets, bands of varied sizes and shapes producing all manner of cacophonous sound that accompany the celebratory mood of the carnival along the carnival routes. According to Babson, "the yearly musical concert timetable has brought international musicians like Third World, Shaggy, Akon, Sean Kingston, Rick Ross, Kool and the Gang, Kirk Franklin, Don Meon, among many others" (12). Other music stars ranging from 2Face, P-Square, Pato-Ranking, Flavour, to Iyanya, Waje, Wizkid (amongst our Nigerian super stars) have also featured in the Carnival Calabar celebration to give it the glamour, frills and thrills of the ceremony. The floats and bands from the carnival also play live music and band accompaniment to support their groups towards the competition among bands and float groups. Music serves a major role in carnivals and Calabar carnival is no exception. Music in Calabar carnival is boisterous and encompassing. The 2015 Calabar Carnival lived up to its expectations as the costumes and celebrities on display added colour and panache to the event regarded as Africa's biggest street party.

Mask and costume designs take weeks and at times months of preparations; cutting, sewing, gluing and decorating of different types of raw materials from beads, cowries, paper, raffia, cloth-fabric, feathers, cans, stones, woods, bottle corks, etc. This presents an avenue for individual and communal involvement, attachment and showcasing that gestalt and collaborative spirit that is African. Irobi's position on this is illuminating as it is nostalgic:

Through the elaborate pre-performance processes of building masks, costumes, and musical arrangements, choreography practices, composing new tunes, and sculpting masks, props, and floats, the actants and participants of Carnival literally, performatively and philosophically, transcend themselves. They enter into a realm of imaginative and experiential possibilities often denied them by their everyday social, economic, political, and religious reality. Carnival thus becomes the festive and secular variation of the more serious and cultic traditions of ritual performances translocated from Africa such as Candomble, Santeria, Lucumi, Orishaworship, Macumba, the Haitian omphor, Abakua, and so on (902).

In carnival Calabar, as band members and floats bury themselves in designing to fit into the carnival theme of the yearly event. Feathers have become prevalent raw material for use on masks and headdresses of carnival revellers. This serves its significance and enhances the visual spectacle of the celebration. To the African, it is a symbol of their ability as humans to rise above problems, pains, heartbreaks and illness. Today feathers are used in many variant forms in creating carnival costumes and floats.

The next conspicuous component of Carnival Calabar celebration is floats and or bands formation. Bands have been an age long feature of carnival celebration that in Trinidad and Tobago it was in the ingenuity and creativity of bands that carnival competition was won and lost. As far back as 1920, Lutchman recorded that Band of the year titles existed in Trinidad and Tobago carnival. Such titles included; "Wonders of Buccoo Reef, Know your Country, Bards of traditional Mas Characters, Hail La Trinity, for example was led by Irvin McWilliams and was among the first bands with local theme. He also led Cleopatra and the Kings of Europe in 1971. He won the Band of the Year title with 'Hail La Trinity' in 1970. 'China, the forbidden City' and 'We kind Ah People' was led by Stephen Lee Heung from 1964-1975 (24). Bands in Carnival

Calabar are also a recurrent decimal as no bands means no carnival theme and conversely no carnival Calabar. The bands usually design their floats to reflect the carnival theme. The formation of carnival bands started formally in 2004 when the carnival became more organised in revelry and costume. According to Babson:

The carnival is built around five bands namely, Passion Four (Passion 4), Seagull, Master Blaster (also called MastaBlasta), Bayside and Freedom. Memberships of these carnival bands run into several thousand individuals from all walks of life that plan, rehears and undertake to parade on carnival days. There is also the Carnival Calabar Queen, a pageantry organised as part of the carnival (14).

Passion 4 is the most successful band in Carnival Calabar, having been crowned Champions more than any other band in the existence of the competition aspect of the carnival. Passion 4 has been declared as Africa's most outstanding band by all its adjudicators as the band continues to grow in creativity, organization and style in the Africa's biggest street party. Band colour is blue. **Seagull Band** is one of the Carnival Bands registered in 2005 for the Cross River State annual Christmas festival. It is the most stylish and co-ordinated body with the main objective of promoting and sustaining the Tourism and Hospitality industry and at large, to enhance the status of the under privilege through charity. The band displays the African Culture through aesthetics, talents and innovation, paraded annually during the Carnival. **MastaBlasta Band** also known as "The Orange Family" is the largest & most entertaining of the 5 principal bands of the annual Carnival Calabar. **Bayside Band** is one of the five Carnival Bands registered in the annual Christmas Festival of Cross River State of Nigeria. Membership in the Band is open to all Nigerians and foreigners. The Band is easily identified by its characteristic and distinctive aqua marine colour. Leader: H. E. Donald Duke (Former governor of Cross River State). **Freedom Band** which is identified with the colour

Yellow and was founded by Capt. Henry Brisibe and Mr. Larry Esin in 2005, since its establishment, the band has consistently been among the best three in all previous editions of the Carnival Calabar event. His Excellency, Barr. Efiok Cobham, the Deputy Governor of Cross River State, is presently the grand patron of the band (carnival programme book 2014). Recently, the 2015 Carnival Calabar under the present administration led by His Excellency (Senator) Professor Ben Ayade has added yet a sixth band christened “**All Star Band.**” It is made up of professionals, Stars, Nigerian celebrities, past beautiful queens, past presidents and governors, diplomats and their wives. Governor Ben Ayade is the band leader and possibly sole sponsor. Calabar Carnival is a unique display of African heritage, showcased through music, dance, drama and visual creativity, which is reflected in the design of floats, costumes and make up.

Another distinctive component of Carnival Calabar is the characteristic processional and caravan like marching through the carnival routes. Carnival procession is an age long tradition in carnival celebration. Much like the procession accompanying the Corpus Christi during the Lenten season (the beginnings of carnival), this style of marching along major roads has come to be associated with the carnival spirit of clowning and revelry. In Calabar Carnival, the procession is a 12 Kilometre walk across the major carnival routes; the procession begins from the Millennium Park (also known as carnival village), through the Mary Slessor Roundabout, NdidemUsangIso Road, MCC Road and finally wind up at the U.J. Esuene Stadium. It is during the walk that band groups display and panellists cash in on these displays and performances to record and score the bands for final appraisal and announcement of winners. Babson again captures it thus: “At various points on the carnival route, teams of adjudicators are stationed to assess the various bands’ (and their subgroups) performances. These scores are then collated at

the end of the parade and winners are selected based on the highest total scores" (15).

Transculturalism in the Contents of Carnival Calabar

The carnival Calabar exhibits a rich blend of creativity, costume, dance, music and colour from all the bands. In the whole month-long festivities, there is great enthusiasm and intermingling among participants who cut across age and social strata. Driven through the instrument of Performing Arts, carnival celebration is replete with unique display of African cultural heritage showcased through music, dance, drama and visual creativity reflected in the design of costumes and make-ups of the various features of the event. Surviving carnival customs have been modified over the years by local folk traditions, these traditions are especially strong in rural areas where magical rites and observance, carried over from pre-Christian times mingle comfortably with Christian rituals and precepts. (New Encyclopedia Britannica, 198) reveals that carnival right from its origin has continued to unite the world. It is in unity that performances including carnival become transcultural, intercultural, multicultural and hybrid.

Conclusion

The new age of globalisation where internet explosion has crashed all cultural walls and made nations meet at a global performance stage even within a communal setting has led to the amalgam of performance cultures visible in carnival Calabar; leading to hybridization, interculturalism, multiculturalism, and glocalisation. Every component of the Carnival Calabar; dance, music, masking, costuming, band formation and procession so far analysed in this paper suggests a hybrid performance of multiculturalism. With local raw materials we saw costumes creatively designed to reflect and meet global appeal. Carnival cultures of Trinidad and Tobago, Venice, Notting Hill, Brazil's Rio de Janeiro and many more

cultures converged and coalesced in Carnival Calabar for that expressive freedom characteristic of carnival spirit of celebration and performance.

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The Folktale as Artistic Representation of History: An Analytical Study of Selected Igbo Folktales

Nneka Ibeli

Abstract

Every society's growth depends largely on the literacy of the people living within the environment. With the technological advancement, the Nigerian society solemnly depends on the innovations for social and economic advancement. To advance in the contemporary society, there is need to look into the past as a mirror and use it to evaluate the present and predict the future, especially in current effort to rebrand the present society. Folktales are powerful tools used in the idyllic Igbo communities to come to terms with the culture and philosophy of the people. It is also used to foster the classroom learning of children thereby inspiring them individually. The aim of this paper is to explore the moral lessons imbedded in the folktales selected from Igbo societies and x-ray how they can contribute to the process of learning and educational development.

Introduction

Since the advent of mankind, man has puzzled over the constitution of the universe and wondered what controls it, the elemental features, and their various functions, especially with regard to birth and death, reincarnation and other rhetorical questions and ontological issues. These and many other questions arouse the consciousness that led storytellers to interpret and find suitable answer to their problems through folktales.

Folktales are important in the life of every African. Right from childhood, the Igbo child sees folktale as the first type of oral literature he/she is exposed to, and this ultimately prepares him for formal education, and for the task of being a responsible person in the society. Folktale is handed down to the society from generation to generation. This gives rise to the theory of polygenesis, and it is interesting to note that this situation does not reduce the aesthetics and efficacy of the folktale. Each story told is very relevant to the society at large, and has its unique function to children and adult alike. Beyond its entertainment functions, it kindles the imagination of a child and helps to communicate appropriate cultural and societal traits to him, thus making an important contribution to the educational process.

Writers have also shown considerable interest in folktales, as evidenced in a plethora works on this important genre. For instance, David Ker has pointed out that;

There has been a flourishing oral tradition; the beginning of written literature can be confidently dated within the last quarter of the century. In the oral tradition, there was both the voice and the consciousness...Indeed, all art was functional; and most of it was tied to one religious festival or another (25).

It is necessary to note, at this juncture, that many writers, even canonized writers like Chinua Achebe, have used the folktale to develop appropriate children's stories. Such publications as *How the Leopard Got its Claws* by John Iroaganachi and Chinua Achebe's *The Tortoise, The Flute, and The Drum* belong to this category. It is also refreshing to note that traditional literature has formed the foundation to the understanding of contemporary literary works. In some of the works, folktale is used as a motif in the development of a novel or a full length play, as exemplified in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Anowa*, where the rebel girl's motif and the African folktale are used to develop the play.

The major problem with folktale scholarship is that scholars perceive it in an avalanche of ways, giving multiple meanings to the art with the result that its main unction of edification is gradually being eroded or even swept into the limbo of critical analysis. One of the main reasons for this departure is the intrusion of different kinds of scholarship in all forms of African Oral literature especially the folktale. Prominent among the themes are linguistic features and performance aesthetics. The result is that there is a shift in focus and a departure from the didactic function of the folktale. It is the interest in reversing this trend that prompted this essay.

Edification is the primary function of Igbo folktales, and this fact is, unfortunately, ignored by contemporary scholars. Some scholars who discuss the edification function of the folktale lump all of them into one monolytic entity. But each tale has its particular moral lesson, as this paper will obviously reveal. Plato and Aristotle, for example, dwelt much on using various forms of poetry to effect the education of people in the society. Hence, there is abundant insertion of issues that are supportive of the educational goals of dramatic poetry in their critical works.

Using folktales to teach is the main intention of the Igbo society of Nigeria, and this is usually summarized in the form of a moral at the end of the tale. Hence, in each tale, a new pedagogical condition is created in order to steer the listeners to the expected and desired interpretation. This is recognized in pedagogical scholarship, as Shoshana Fellman clearly points out. As she rightly points out, "Teaching ... is not the transmission of ready-made knowledge, it is rather the creation of a new condition of knowledge – the creation of an original learning disposition" (408). This statement is in tandem with the original intention of Igbo folktales. Before delving into the pedagogical and moralistic characteristics of the folktale, a brief excursion into the concept of folktales is necessary..

Concept of Folktales

Among the Igbo of Nigeria, folktales constitute the moral and ethical component of the people's culture and philosophy. They constitute the traditional beliefs and customs passed down orally, either during moon light or around the fire at night. Folktales are accompanied with songs which the recipients sing to add beauty and taste to the story for the concentration and attention of the audience. The characters in folktales range from human beings through animals to spirits. Each character is portrayed in all the features of its existence, and made to act, speak, and communicate according to the archetypal characteristics of the person being portrayed, whether a spirit, an animal or a human being. As a result, these characters commingle, and the setting and situation cause them to understand each other. In a typical folktale, trees talk, animals converse with human beings and each other, as well as spirits in a very unique way. The communication is based on the uniqueness of the situation.

Folktale, as has been already hinted upon, is crucial to the imparting of appropriate knowledge to the younger generation. Culture is a constitution of the behavior of the people, and contains what the people consider moral excel of existence. It also contains the characteristics which the society considers deviant and inappropriate behavior. Hence, culture is acquired by each individual from the components of societal mores.

Culture, according to Edward Tylor, is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (99). In view of this, Oyekani in Olatunde Joel and co, opines that culture is what "we learn from our forbearers and contemporaries, and then pass it to future generations". (55) One can say that Culture incorporates an individual living in a given society. Igbo folktales are powerful tools that carry, norms, values, behaviors and patterns of life. It is defined as all forms of narrative, written or oral, which have come to be

handed down through the years (254). Khalid Iman adds that; "tale is apparently, one of the genres of traditional fiction prose narratives deployed to pass moral instructions' (116).

Many societies, through their stories, have traced where they migrated and originated from. Igbo is one of the ethnic groups who have found their origin through folktale and it still stands till today. As observed by Victor Eyisi: "Eri and his companions later moved into the hinter land to the place now known as Enugu Aguleri where Eri built a house "obi" in honor of his father. He dedicated the altar to the god which remains a tourist site in Aguleri town of Anambra till date (3). Because of the relevance of folktales, modern technologists have made films from folktales. These include films like *Odum and Akwa Eke*, *The land of men* and a popular Igbo play titled "*Ojadili*" by Odunke Artists.

Sam Ukala recently propounded the theory of folkism, according to him, folkism, refers to "an indigenous dramatic aesthetic principle which may derive from the use in the African literary theatre of folk linguistic, structural and performance styles (38). Folkism has a link with African folktales and it constitutes the construction of dramatic works that adheres to appropriate folktale characteristics, especially in the development of theme and characterization.

Selected Folktales.

The next part of this paper will be devoted to the analyses of two Igbo folktales, *How Death Came Into the World*, and *Story of Origin* to expatiate on the concept of edification in the analysis of Igbo folktales.

How Death came into the World

In the olden days, God called the goat and told him to go down to Earth and tell mankind that there will be no death as long as there is procreation. Goat moved and began to eat grass at every nearby bush. At a time he stopped by to graze and chat with his

friends. He wasted so much time that God had to send the Dog and the Chamelion instead. But this time the message has an alternative stance. Dog, with his usual speed, was to tell Mankind that when a man dies, he was free to return to the world after a particular time had elapsed. The "Chamelion with his known slowness, was to tell mankind that once one died, he had to permanently reside in the spirit world, to take the message of immortality to mankind. Dog became boastful because he trusted his speed. Dog first went inside the bush and began to eat defecated things. At some point, his mind would come back as he remembered his mission and ran, but the distraction continued. As a result, the Chamelion got there first and delivered the message. This gave finality to the concept of immortality because Man had received and accepted the message before Dog came with a counter one. Since Mankind had accepted the message, there was nothing more to do since a second message was untenable and unacceptable to God.

Chronicles of the tradition of Origin

Igbo people have a story that traces their origin. Among the Igbo, it is believed that they had their origin from Nri. Nri is a town in Anambra State (Igbo land). The founding father was Eri who came from heaven with his wife Namaku and landed and settled in Aguleri. When Eri and his wife came, the land was very marshy that he could not find a place to rest his legs. He lived on the anthill. Later he complained to God about his condition and God sent down an Awka blacksmith with his bellows, fire and charcoal to dry up the land. This is a direct reference to the expertise of awka people in the blacksmithing profession. When the Awka blacksmith rounded off his assignment, Eri rewarded him with an *ofò* a symbol of authority which conferred on him special expertise to blacksmithing. Eri lived on the benevolence of God. He was not buying or planting food, instead God was providing for him and his family. After his death this act stopped because the covenant with Eri and

God was over. As men were dying of hunger Nri the first son complained to God of their starvation. God gave him an order, which was to kill his first daughter and son and bury them on separate graves. He obeyed, killed and buried them and after three weeks, yam and cocoyam sprouted from their graves. The people ate and became happy. As time went by, Nri was directed by God to kill his slaves and bury them separately as he buried his children. After the usual three weeks, palm trees sprouted on the graves. Nri became so prosperous that God told him to distribute the food to other people who had extended through him but he refused and held all the food to himself, arguing that he acquired his wealth with the blood of his children and slaves, and this act of refusal made him richer and gave him rights over those surrounding him.

The Essence of Folktales

According to Charlotte S. and others,

Anthropologists study folklore in order to understand the inherent values and beliefs of a culture. Psychologists look at folklores and myths and discover something of motivations and inner feelings of human; while folklorists themselves collect and categorize various stories, types and motifs from around the world (253).

These are all adult folk researchers, which means that stories were originally associated with adults alone. How then do we always associate children with folk literatures? Children giggle whenever they hear a good story. According to Igbo tradition a child is someone within the age of 0-13years who are still under the authority of their parents. At this age, they are vulnerable, gullible and dependant. At this level, knowledge is acquired through constant retelling of stories or shared experiences. According to Socrates in his theory of recollection; "all knowledge is known from previous experience". On the other hand, Jean Piaget maintains that knowledge is constructed

when individuals engage socially in talk and activity about shared problems or tasks (75). Folktale is an activity that allows children to interact and retain to memory what the teller narrated. At the end of every story a child tells what he/she learnt from the story told. It is on this notion that that Nkiru Ohia explains that folklores "are said to be the oldest educational and therapeutic tool on earth" (170). Folktales appeal to the child's sense of judgment because the child begins to form the concept of poetic justice where good is rewarded and evil is punished. Most importantly, they learn that every task needs fulfilment before a reward is procured. Another scholar, Bruno, maintains that fairy tales help children to cope with their dreams and inner turmoil, each tale, he says "is a magic mirror which reflects some aspects of our inner world and of the steps required by our evolution from immaturity to maturity" (259). It serves as an informal education which every home in Igboland use to prepare a child to formal classroom learning.

From the selected folktales, children learn that when they are sent on an errand they should take it serious and not allow extraneous issues to disturb them as portrayed in the first tale. Furthermore, the story will make them to develop a sense of maturity and steadfastness. It gives children the opportunity to learn moderation in life. The second story, on the other hand, explains to them that things do not happen in isolation but through God who is the author of all things.

Conclusion

Traditional literature is our heritage. It lays the groundplan for our understanding of all literatures, since literature portrays life as lived in a particular society. A child who begins his life with oral literature will not have difficulty in learning language and cultural values, and other universal qualities of mankind.

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The Revitalization of African Art History: The Illustration of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

K.C. Ene-Orji

The Beginning

As Chika Okeke-Agulu points out in his discussion of the prevailing environment, political, cultural, ideological, aesthetic, and philosophical motivations that helped shape the birth of modern African Art and its history, "The period between the late 1950s and 1970, arguably the most crucial in the political history of modern Africa was also a time of great ferment in the art of the continent..." (14-15). In Nigeria, in the heady days before independence from Britain in 1960, a cultural effervescence was afoot. Musicians, writers, artists and cultural activists were trying to forge a new cultural identity for Nigeria, by arching back into the past to source for elements from their rich heritage which they mixed with contemporary realities so as to prepare for a future of political, cultural, economic and ideological independence. It was within this period that Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* was published in 1958, by Heinemann.

He wrote this story to correct the "inaccurate characterization of Africa and Africans by British authors" like in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Joyce Carey's *Mr. Johnson* in addition to revalidating African history and bequeathing Africans with a useful past: "I would be quite satisfied if my novels (especially the ones I set in the past) did no more than teach my readers that their past- with all its imperfections- was not one long night of savagery from which the first Europeans acting on Gods behalf delivered them" (103-106).

Today, *Things Fall Apart* is regarded as an African classic having sold over 10 million copies worldwide and interpreted in over fifty languages.

The Quest

In the same year, 1958, Uche Okeke, along with ten other students of the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology, (NCAST) Zaria, inaugurated the Zaria Art Society. This society was formed with the aim of revalidating and integrating indigenous African art practices and traditions with European Academy tradition, which the students were being taught by their expatriate teachers to enable them produce a new national art in anticipation of the impending independence. Uche Okeke, the philosopher of the group, called it 'Natural Synthesis'. The Zaria Art Society succeeded in their crusade because today, the crux of modern Nigerian art practice and education is situated in the thesis of 'Natural Synthesis'.

In 1964, Chinua Achebe asked Uche Okeke to make a cover design and illustrations for a new edition of *Things Fall Apart*. He knew Uche Okeke was competent. And it seemed Uche Okeke had used the preceeding years to prepare for this task by developing his literary skills and power of draughtsmanship.

The year 1959 is however very critical in the life and work of Uche Okeke. This was when he began to document Igbo lore, as he spent his long vacation with Vincent Nwankwo at Aro Ndizuogu. Earlier in the year, February, his collection of Igbo folk tales and drawings were published in *NIGERCOL* the magazine of NCAST, Zaria. His mother also taught him the rudiments of uli drawing; a corpus of curvilinear art and symbols peculiar to the Igbo women, used for decorating the human body, terracotta, compound and shrine walls. This was part of the demands made by the Zaria Art Society on its members.

In 1960 his poem *Ebinti Song* was published again in *NIGERCOL* and he won First Prize in poetry in a literary

competition organized by the Nigeria Art Council, Lagos. In May 1961, his poem *Ewu and Moonlight* were published in *NIGERCOL*, before his graduation from NCAST in June. In the same year, 1961, Ulli Beier, the German expatriate lecturer, in the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, helped form the Mbari Writers and Artists Club in Ibadan. Some members of the club were Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, John Pepper Clark, Demas Nwoko, Bruce Onobrakpeya and Uche Okeke. The Mbari Club was a platform that enabled literary and visual artists to interact with one another and the public. It was at this forum that Uche Okeke and Chinua Achebe had a close and deep intellectual intercourse and forged a creative relationship. The first publication of the Mbari Club was a book of drawings by Uche Okeke.

Uche Okeke, in 1962, traveled to Munich, Germany under the auspices of the German Embassy in Lagos. While in Munich he continued to develop his draughtsmanship and exhibited his drawings in Rott am Inn near Wasserburg. He studied the art of stained glass and mosaic in the firm of Franz Mayer in Munich. He traveled around Germany visiting museums, art galleries, academies, theatres and schools of art and craft. At the end of 1963, he came back to Nigeria bubbling with zest as a result of the rich and fructifying experience he had garnered in Germany.

Before traveling to Munich in 1962, Uche Okeke had developed a prodigious corpus of experimental modernist interpretation of uli design possibilities using pen and ink on paper; among them is a set of drawings known as the Oja suite. While in Germany he also produced another set of drawings, mostly charcoal and ink and brush on paper, known as the Munich Suite. These two sets of drawings are perhaps the finest distillate of his creative experiments as he tried to synthesize new art from an amalgam of uli, Igbo folk lore, western art idioms and contemporary experience.

The Illustrations

So in 1964 when Chinua Achebe, then working in Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, Lagos, threw the challenge at Uche Okeke, he was ready. According to Uche Okeke during an interview,

Chinua was in Lagos and I had just come back from Germany where I went in 1962. He then came with the galley proofs of his book and told me he told his publishers that I was the person who could do it. The book was first published without the illustrations. So he said that they needed five or so illustrations and the cover, so I took the book. (Interview with K.C. Ene-Orji, July, 2006).

Achebe made no prescriptions to Okeke. The artist who was already familiar with the story chose some important events in the novel and illustrated them. He interpreted these scenes in unique realistic but stylized drawings that were derivatives of the more complex and abstract uli corpus represented by the Oja and Munich suites. Uli a traditional art practice is according to Chike Aniakor characterized by: ...directness of execution, simplification, and then the linear rendering of form in such a way that, less is said, and more is yet said. In other words: condensation is very important. Uche Okeke took up this task and handled it with almost reverential attention. For the cover design he made a pen and ink on paper portrait of Okonkwo, the protagonist of the novel. The drawing is related to three portraits in the Oja and Munich suites: 'Head of a Girl', 'Munich Girl' and 'Girl with floating hair' all done in 1962. Achebe's description of the physiognomic and morphological characteristics of Okonkwo is realistically rendered in such phrases as: "his busy eye brows and wide nose gave him a very severe look" without the sophisticated stylistic and conceptual tendencies of the Oja and Munich suites. However, the background of the portrait is a dexterous formal juxtaposition of curvilinear lines indicating foliage and stems, akin to those in

'From the Forest' and 'Head of a Girl' and space that situates the head centrally. The rural setting and historical period is indicated with architecture represented by a house and stylized foliage set in the background. Uche Okeke's apt use of Okonkwo's portrait, Aigboje Higo maintains, tallies with the eponymous title *Okonkwo* of the German translation of *Things Fall Apart* (v-xi). The four illustrations in the novel are placed strategically: the first is inserted in the introduction, while the three others are placed in front of each of the three parts of the novel.

The illustration inserted in the introduction depicts the wrestling arena where Okonkwo threw Amalinze the cat and which is described in detail in chapter six. In the foreground of the drawing are situated the young men who police the spectators, wielding palm fronds. In the centre of the composition is the empty wrestling ground. On the far side, forming a semicircle are the musical ensemble comprising a team of three drummers whose drums enliven the arena, other accompaniments and spectators: men, women and children, and the forest and skyline behind them which serve as a background. The drawing is tied together by the figure of a palm frond wielding young man to the right which bridges the musicians and spectators with his colleagues and the foreground. This leaves a space to the left for accessing and exiting the arena and drawing. The drawing is a sensitive composition of linear, curvilinear and organic shapes with muted conceptual spaces in the centre and background simulating rhythm, harmony and silence of music. Uche Okeke applies this visual strategy to execute the other drawings.

The second drawing illustrates the scene in chapter ten where Evil Forest leads eight other masquerades to resolve the marital dispute between Uzowulu on the one hand and his wife Mgbafo and her brothers on the other. Here Uche Okeke interprets the scene using his characteristic stylized massed figures. The masquerades are seated in the foreground with Evil

Forest dominating that segment, as spiraling lines depict smoke emanating from his head, with Uzowulu facing them with his arms folded over his chest. In the middle are standing Mgbafo, Odukwe and her other brother. Behind them stands a section of the crowd represented by schematic massed anonymous figures, which merge with the trees behind that form the background.

A scene in chapter sixteen is the subject of the third illustration. Here a Caucasian missionary Mr. Brown and an interpreter placed off centre address an assembly. The elders and lords of Mbanta are in the foreground, their backs to the viewer and the others, men, women and children complete the circle, while the forest rises above them. This drawing illustrates Uche Okeke's mastery of perspective, management of formal space and the principles of design, which is also indicated in the other illustrations.

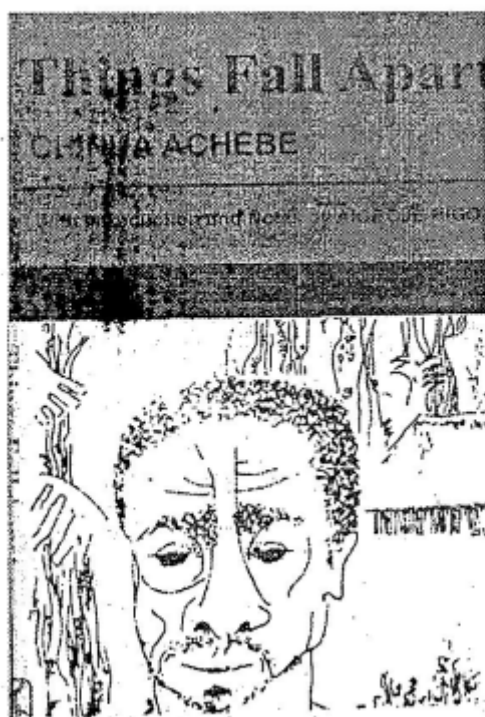
The fourth drawing illustrates the scene in chapter twenty-two where the ancestral spirits, *egwugwu*, and some elders of Umuofia confront Reverend Smith and Okeke his interpreter. As if to emphasize their moral and numerical supremacy, the masquerades and elders occupy three quarters of the visual space with Evil Forest placed centrally, pushing Reverend Smith, Okeke and the church building to the remaining quarter to emphasize their precarious situation. This illustration is an orchestrating of varied lines, which situates the forest foliage in the background, which is represented with linear inventions also present in 'From the Forest' in *Oja Suite*.

The portrait of Okonkwo on the novel's cover page and the four other illustrations are linear allegories which can be likened to prose and the visual distillates of the more condensed and poetic renditions of the *Oja* and *Munich Suites*

The Postscript

Dan Bischoff has pointed out that when Chinua Achebe saw the cover design and illustrations he was satisfied with them and said, "That's how it should be" (25). Uche Okeke's visual

intellection have since become an integral part of several editions of *Things Fall Apart*. After four decades of this artistic collaboration, in June 2006, the artist Uche Okeke, 73, and the novelist laureate Chinua Achebe, 76, met again in Newark Museum, Newark, United States of America, to discuss this historic cooperation, in an event tagged 'Inspiration Creativity Nigerian independence and How to Find the soul of a Nation' in front of a mammoth audience.



Uche Okeke
Book cover, 1964
Pen and ink on paper



Uche Okeke
Court in Session, 1964
Pen and ink on paper



Uche Okeke
Sermon, 1964
Pen and ink on paper



Uche Okeke
Onslaught, 1964
Pen and ink on paper

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Udechukwu, Obiora. "Lyrical Symbolism: Notes on Traditional Wall Painting from Agulu". B.A.Thesis. University of Nigeria: Department of Fine and Applied Arts, 1972. Aniakor, an Art Historian, critic and artist has contributed tremendously to the study of uli art historically and as a studio artist. He alongside other artists assisted Uche Okeke carry out the uli revolution in Nsukka.

Political Culture as Product of Social Constructs in Emeka Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures*

Emeka Aniago

Nature and nurture both present a depiction of humans as puppets controlled by a manipulative gene pool or by an environmental puppeteer (Austin D. Miller).

Abstract

This paper examines analytically Emeka Nwabueze's illustration of the political predisposition of some politicians in A Parliament of Vultures. Primarily, the focus of analysis in this paper are: the place of drama as a medium of promoting public awareness and debate in Nigerian polity; the aesthetic significance of Nwabueze's choice and arrangement of words that forms his play's title, the conceptual description and designation of the political culture enacted in the play as 'gutter-politics', and lastly, the theoretical interpretation of social constructs as prime stimuli that contribute towards the germination and evolution of some prevalent political realities and manifestations. Consequently, this paper explains how A Parliament of Vultures reveals symbolically the prevailing political realities in Nigeria, Particularly how one of the legitimate arms of government, the national and state parliaments, is perceived to have been hijacked and overtaken by mediocrity perpetuated by some political bad eggs. Also this paper examines what Nwabueze's play envisages as the likely socio-political re-aggregation that could eventually enthrone a new political order when the masses decide not to remain docile and distant. To discuss these perspectives as products of

prevailing social constructs, this paper adopts social constructionism as the concept that will offer us some plausible explanations, illumination and proposition of solution. Lastly, this paper applies contextual analysis as its preferred analytical frame in an attempt to expound on the supposition that A Parliament of Vultures presents significant examples of typical realities in Nigeria's polity.

Introduction: Gutter Politics in Nigeria as a Product of Nigeria's Socio-political Social Constructs

The symbolic portrayal of Nigeria's polity in the play *A Parliament of Vultures* is absorbing as well as realistic. From an insider's perspective, it is evidently telling, not just about that society which it is mirroring, but also about other African countries, albeit the playwright's attempt to create aesthetic ambiguity. The plausible deduction from an informed perspective is that the primary source material utilized in *A Parliament of Vultures* is the typical socio-political realities of Nigeria's polity. To analyze this assertion, we shall limit the primary focus of our discussion into three items, namely: concept of 'gutter politics', social constructs as determinants of socio-political realities in any polity, and the play *A Parliament of Vultures* as a mirror of typical realities in Nigeria polity. The cardinal objective of this paper is to proffer on the one hand an illuminating description of the concept of 'gutter politics' as a social reality and its correlation with the mirrored realities in *A Parliament of Vultures*. On the other hand, to examine the correlation between the projected topical concerns in *A Parliament of Vultures* and Olumuyiwa Falaiye views on Nigeria's leadership failures as a reality being sustained by the subsisting social constructs. However, before we delve into how social constructs contribute towards the formation of those social realities that constitutes what this paper encapsulates as 'gutter politics', we will first highlight the potentiality of drama as a viable means of tackling subsisting decadent social

constructs. Assessing the potentiality of drama Ziky Kofoworola contends that “drama provides an exciting forum for dissecting societal ills and problems with the ultimate aim of finding solutions” (27). In other words, it is plausible to say that playwrights use drama as an effective medium of re-enacting some prevailing social realities in a bid to instigate public debates. These public debates conceivably are aimed at creating veritable platform for mind-rubbings. Whereas these mind-rubbings are expected to generate robust awareness amongst the populace in order to trigger positive communal quests for solutions to varied societal maladies and anomalies. Thus, through the play *A Parliament of Vultures*, Nwabueze brings to the public domain the very serious social concerns to the play-reading and theatre-going public in a bid to re-ignite the dexterity of their intellect, as a means of spurring their thinking abilities into action. Therefore part of our purview is to assess how Nwabueze no doubt methodologically painted a critical picture of the unpatriotic bunch that plagues the political landscape in Nigeria. In appropriating his poetic liberty by naming the characters with some Nigerian names, and endowing them with specific mannerisms in their choice of expressions, this paper suggests that Nwabueze’s story reflects similarities with the prevailing socio-political cultural specifics in Nigeria. What this indicates is that the materials applied in the play are typical realities of Nigeria at a precise era. Meanwhile, the expression typical realities “examined within a cultural perspective represents such things that can be in the first instance culture specific such as – dances, songs, food, etiquette, mannerisms, ways of dressing, ways of holding ceremonies, festivals, sports, occupations, physical appearance, and other attributes which typify or are typical to a ‘fictive subject’”(Aniago 191). Furthering, a ‘fictive subject’ in this regard, “could be an individual, a community, a society, a nation depending on the scope of the narrative”, hence, “those relevant information and identifiers that are widely

acknowledged and are ascribable to a given 'fictive subject' are the typical realities" (Aniago 191). Therefore typical realities have to be subject-specific as well as typical to a given 'fictive subject'. From this stand-point it is noteworthy to point out that even though Nwabueze created an ambiguous locale in *A Parliament of Vultures*, it is evident that based on some attributes of his characterization and application of Nigeria indigenous language, the play's story is manifestly situated within Nigerian polity. That notwithstanding, it is plausible to note that this play's thematic preoccupations are such that concerns not just Nigeria but Africa and the international community.

The Play's Story as a Typical Reality

A Parliament of Vultures relates the dubious meteoric rise of one Madam Omeaku from an ill-mannered, illiterate street-side food and liquor owner to a parliamentarian. Satirically Nwabueze enacts how through crooked processes Madam Omeaku and other nefarious political players dubiously got themselves elected to the parliament. Nwabueze emphasizes on how generational progression of socio-political decadence takes root in politics, whereby Madam Omeaku's relevant experience and credentials is not what was considered by the electorate and the party as the determinant in making her the most suitable for the post. Rather it was a matter of who out-wits the other by any means, such as the ability to slander, blackmail, buy most votes and rig the election. Madam Omeaku having been declared the winner attempts to introduce her daughter to her amorous lifestyle as a way of positioning her on the path to her kind of prosperity. As she begins to enjoy her loot, she taunts and ridicules her husband Mr. Omeaku. Annoyingly, she reminds him that he has worked more than thirty years in the civil service, yet he cannot build or buy a house for himself and his family. Also she cajoles him by pointing out that he cannot afford oversea holiday, or expensive cars, but she can just

within a short period of a year of being a Nigerian parliamentarian. In an outlandish manner, Madam Omeaku boasts that just by being a member of the parliament she has acquired houses in choice locations in the country, and can afford month long expensive holidays in choice spots in any part of the world. Again, she brags that she has bought choice cars for herself and even bought one for her 'car-less' husband, from the proceeds of their devious manoeuvres with public funds.

Nwabueze characterizes Madam Omeaku as a classic epitome of ineptitude, greed, insensitivity and callousness, which has continued to pervade politics in Nigeria. Also, Nwabueze indicates that in the midst of this cabal are a few well-meaning politicians who are threatened, frightened, arm-twisted, side-lined, and even brutalized so long as they refuse to compromise. The play gets to its climax when the youths arrive at the conclusion that they have had enough of the unsavoury actions of the corrupt parliamentarians, particularly after Madam Omeaku and her fellow 'vultures in parliament' succeed in falsely incarcerating the two well-meaning parliamentarians, Dr. Parkers and Mr. Otobo. The angry youths, who are co-ordinated by university student activists, storms the parliament and rounds-up the parliamentarians as they attempt to escape from the parliament building. The play ends with the youths revolutionary actions.

Corruption as Typical Reality and Social Construction of Human Behaviour

Among other themes, *A Parliament of Vultures* through its representation of the prevailing realities of party politics in Nigeria, projects the theme of leadership failure. In his view on the context of leadership failure as a major theme in *A Parliament of Vultures*, Nobert Oyibo Eze, notes that Nwabueze in this drama that encapsulates the perennial "national question of poor leadership in Nigeria" (2). Furthermore, Eze observes

that Nwabueze's effort in this play mirrors the "vulgar realities, indiscipline and unflattering characters that infest" Nigeria's polity (99). Similarly, Ngozi Anyachonkeya observes that *A Parliament of Vultures* is a satire that "dramatically unveils the regrettable gamut of corruption and hypocrisy that polarize the political atmosphere in postcolonial Africa" (125). According to Uwem Affiah, *A Parliament of Vultures* is "a hilarious political satire that takes a swipe at the abysmal performance of the legislature in Nigeria and the total misfits who though lacking in intellectual vigour and moral decency, find themselves in parliament as a result of a poor political culture and a flawed electoral system" (378). Similarly, Chukwuka Nwachukwu that in *A Parliament of Vultures*, Nwabueze satirizes the "poverty of thought and predilection to criminal antics designed solely to satisfy the self with the common core" (389). Furthering, Nwachukwu contends that Nwabueze is understandably "miffed at the danger posed by this kind of practice coming as it does from those to whom the destiny of the nation is entrusted for safe-keeping" (389). Clearly, Eze, Anyachonkeya, Nwachukwu, and Affiah's observations are in accord that *A Parliament of Vultures* is a representation of some typical realities of contemporary Nigeria politics, which projects the circumstances of leadership failure. To add to these critics' views, we can say that through *A Parliament of Vultures*, Nwabueze exemplifies the dark and unsavoury sides to politics in Nigeria and unambiguously blames corruption as the problem. He then goes ahead to present corruption as a vicious malignant cancer which is virulently eating away the life of the nation. He indicates that if popular drastic steps are not taken to reverse the prevailing trend, the polity would deteriorate.

Still on assessment of leadership quandary in Nigeria, in his contribution Ayo Olukotun in his article captioned 'Is a Nigerian Nelson Mandela a Possibility?', re-affirms Nwabueze's emphasis in *A Parliament of Vultures* when notes that there is a prevailing "desperate hustle" by many Nigerian

politicians “for office at any cost” (61). Olukotun goes on to explain that in Nigeria the “leadership deficit is matched only by the regression of values and decency in political and social life” (61). In a comment that further supports the typical reality nature of the theme of leadership failure in Nigeria, Nicholas Anakwue observes that there exists an abiding conformist mindset amongst many Nigerians, thus “some argued blindly that if the opportunity of leadership were to present itself, it would be but an avenue to rightly grab one’s share of the hitherto denied proverbial National cake” (80). To illuminate on the peculiar contexts and nuances of political malaise bedevilling Nigeria, we turn to the theoretical reflection of Tänzler et al on the application of social constructs theory. In their contribution they posit that corruption which exists practically in every corner of the world as a scourge of humanity is a phenomenon that tends to disguise the fact that it has “shown many faces in history and at different places” (2). Furthering, they Observe that “neither at all times nor everywhere is the phenomenon” we refer to as corruption, happens to be designated as such; hence “what we might condemn as corrupt practice is sometimes not even viewed as deviant behaviour or crime” by some others in their communities or domain (3). Thus, it is the conviction of Tänzler and others that “to speak of corruption depends on cognitive assumptions and social conditions that are not universal” but locale specific. Consequently, they suggest that

The meaning of corruption changes over time and from place to place, *and* diverse forms of corrupt practice and various modes of the perception as well as the evaluation of it can be observed simultaneously in one society, in different social groups and even in the behaviour of one and the same actor in separate social contexts (3).

To illuminate further on this, Tänzler et al explain that social construction viewed within the social science represents as its

core argument that “social order exists as a product of human activity in its genesis”, meaning that “social order is the result of past human activity” and that “social order exists only and insofar as human activity continues to produce it” (3). Therefore, social constructionism may be defined as a concept which explains that human realities majorly exist in different manifestations mainly because of social and interpersonal influences (Gergen, 1985). Similarly in their explanation of the plausible evolutionary trends of the products of social constructs, Middleton and Edwards (1989) allude to the potentialities and mechanism of history and memories as important ingredients. These factors, they believe combine in one way or the other to propel the continual review of the subsisting conceptual modalities from generation to generation. Similar to Middleton and Edward’s point of view, the works of Shotter (1993), Semin and Gergen (1990), as well as Lutz (1988), point at the potentialities of the influence of what people know about the past, as that which influence’s their subsisting thinking and their future philosophy. Similarly, Granovetter (2007) in his study on the theory of corruption, analyzed within the praxis of social constructivism explains that corruption is not a natural fact but a social factum. Thus, this phenomenon through diverse paradigms has come to be viewed as a social problem. To further appreciate the categorization of corruption as a kind of social problem, Stanley Eitzen contends that:

There is an objective reality to social problems. There are structures that induce material or psychic suffering for certain segments of the population; there are structures that ensure that misdistribution of resources within a society and across society; there are structures that prevent certain societal participations from developing and realizing their full potentials; there are corporate and political organizations that waste valuable resource, that pollute the environment, that are imperialistic, and that increase the gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’ (10).

Clearly, the perspective espoused by Eitzen is no doubt in accord with this paper's supposition that the issues bedevilling a given society can be scholarly discussed and explained. This can be achieved through structured and detailed study of the social structures, the historical and social mechanism of that society in the first instance. Hence, examples of corrupt practices projected in *A Parliament of Vultures* are typical social constructs of the Nigerian society.

In his inaugural lecture, Olumuyiwa Falaiye, a prominent Nigerian philosopher and scholar, contends that "there is nothing inherently wrong in the nature of African leaders" (30). Rather he thinks that "what is probably wrong is the system and structure which produces them" (30). On these counts, Falaiye's view affirms the perspectives projected by Nwabueze in *A Parliament of Vultures*. In relation to African politics, the contexts and dimensions of social constructs as plausible explanation of 'gutter politics' and insight on efforts of the playwright, such as Nwabueze in *A Parliament of Vultures*, we begin by examining a very engaging concluding remark in Falaiye's inaugural lecture, where he notes:

I have interrogated African *Polis* with the major aim of addressing what I consider as the basic questions confronting the development of Africa. I do not wish for those who will be alive in Africa in the next fifty years to be as despondent as I am today. My dreams about Africa are today being deferred. I hope our children will inherit from us a place better than we met. Then, I would not have been here on earth in vain. (42).

No doubt this paper concurs that the epicentre of African developmental problems can be traced to corruption, which Falaiye and other bright minds within and beyond Africa have eloquently revisited. However the position of this paper is that Falaiye's effort will achieve greater result through theatre's mass media process. This is because drama will bring the

message nearer to the grass-root. Theatre's mass media process is different from the process of circulating messages exclusively in and around elite meetings, and gatherings, as well as in learned publications, which effectively places majority of the masses outside of such very intellectual eruditions. At this point one begins to appreciate deeply why a drama such as *A Parliament of Vultures* is a vital continuation of the push towards the actualization of the dreams and goals of social crusaders, human-right activists, and philosophers like Falaiye.

In line with the views of Falaiye, Eze, Affiah, and Anyachonkeya, it is the thinking of this paper that Nwabueze's attempt with *A Parliament of Vultures* represents the concept which this paper refer to as 'gutter politics' which encapsulates the prevailing flavour of politics in Nigeria. Through the term 'gutter politics' this paper attempts to use a predominant reality clearly understandable to most Nigerians as a metaphorical representation of the realities of politics in Nigeria. To an average Nigerian, the literal idea of 'gutter' is an open drain, which more often than not is dirty, smelly, disgusting and revolting. This reality called gutter, presently in Nigeria has continued to be the very place a large percentage of Nigerian residents attempt to dump their refuse. Some Nigerians even dump human waste therein; therefore metaphorically, gutter implies that which is filthy, mucky, and unpleasant. So when this paper refers to the concept 'gutter politics', it means that kind of politics that is not peculiar to Nigeria even though it has distinct prevalence in Nigeria. Gutter politics is a global phenomenon that exhibits different manifestations from one culture to the other. Therefore, within the perspectives of this study, 'gutter politics' represents that kind of politics that is disgusting, unpleasant, dirty as well as mucky. Nwabueze, through the following dialogue between the characters Parkers and Madam, portrays the predominant metaphorical connotation of gutter to most Nigerians.

Expectedly Madam Omeaku on hearing her fellow parliamentarian, Dr. Parkers refer to her with a word that includes gutter, snaps and immediately engages him in physical confrontation as she rebukes him in very strong words. This scenario encapsulates the idea that amongst Nigerians the word gutter metaphorically represents the very unpleasant and revolting. Therefore, the concept of 'gutter politics' represents that kind of politics that lacks decorum, that is vulgar, abhorrent, as well as decadent. Also gutter politics is characterized by open intimidation, glaring character assassination, resorts to violence, involves vicious and fragrant verbal insults and above all reckless and impudent insensitivity to the sensibility of the public. The drama, *A Parliament of Vultures* captures some of these salient features that typify Nigerian 'gutter politics'. The play captures some typical realities of contemporary Nigerian gutter politics, which includes thought provoking manifestations of total lack of patriotism, suffocating level of greed and unjustifiable penchant for looting, mind rending degree of insensitivity to the plight of the governed, hopeless ineptitude that pushes Nigerians in diasporas towards contemplating renouncing their allegiance, unbelievable artistry in falsehood and the most disturbing acts of cruelty that knows no bounds. In line with *A Parliament of Vultures* these manifestations by some politicians have effectively created in many cases a state of retrogression or stagnation in various sectors of the economy.

Nwabueze, in the play *A Parliament of Vultures*, represents this typical essence of 'gutter politics', as well as how the socio-political system and structure breeds politicians who beyond their physical appearance take on the characteristic nature of the vulture. The playwright's choice of the figurative noun 'vultures', is a symbolic representation for the parliamentarians, which is noteworthy as well as critical. The term 'vulture' is a name for a big, bald-headed scavenging and predatory bird whose species are found in most parts of the world. It is

important that readers of Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures* or its audience during its enactment understands the central idea of the various Nigerian's ethnic groups' worldview on the bird vulture, and the prevailing connotations when applied to people. Amongst Africans specifically Nigerians, vulture is perceived as repulsive, hideous, despicable and disgusting bird. According to Affiah, in line with social realities subsumed in *A Parliament of Vultures*, vultures are ravenous, greedy, voracious and insatiable, hence "the legislators are thus likened to vultures and seen as possessing all these attributes" because metaphorically, "they prey on the people, scavenging them to death (378)". According to Uriel Okunrinmeta and Olugbenga Alabi, metaphors such as vulture, locust, and locust "reveals that their referents are destructive since they share with them such attributes as greed, selfishness, callousness, cunningness, wastefulness, brutality, recklessness, pretentiousness and moral rottenness, among others, which have wreaked havoc on Nigeria as a nation" (30). Hence in Nigerian cultures such as the Igbo, the Yoruba, and the Edo, vulture is neither reared as a pet nor hunted as food, because it is perceived as most revolting. Consequently, it is noteworthy to add that Nwabueze's figurative description of some of the parliamentarians as vultures is significant.

To re-enact these realities to the audience, Nwabueze adopts the following trajectories in *A Parliament of Vultures*: the life of the politicians with primary focus on the parliamentarians, the nature of their politics, the perspectives of the politicians, and why the flavour of politics in Nigeria and elsewhere can in some instances be classified as 'gutter politics'. The play also situates another prevailing reality of politics in Nigeria which is the evidence of growing inclusion and opening-up of the political landscape to accommodate more women. This indicates the weakening of prevailing stranglehold on the reins of power by men. However it is noteworthy to add that by implication *A Parliament of Vultures* clearly

indicates that involvement in 'gutter politics' in Nigeria and Africa is not men's exclusive preserve. This is because Madam Omeaku a woman wallow's neck deep in this metaphoric 'gutter'. As a result of deep 'gutter politics' being played by some politicians, the playwright through *A Parliament of Vultures* indicates that their country is deeply in throes. The playwright provides some examples of such actions through such characters as Madam Omeaku, Reverend Jossy, an impostor who adopts the title Reverend to hoodwink the electorate towards believing that he is an anointed man-of-God who would be morally upright when elected and Mr. Bob Brown who acts as a political jobber and crook. Mr. Bob Brown in the following expressions about the character Reverend Jossy exposes the problem with a parlous and parochial socio-political system and structure which subsists in the microcosm of the world of the play, *A Parliament of Vultures*.

A deep appreciation of Nwabueze's attempt with *A Parliament of Vultures* suggests that countries are in throes because the followers have for long been in slumber; hence they cannot call the politicians to order. Consequently, politicians in the mould of the above mentioned parliamentarians have continued with their premeditated looting and milking of their nation to a state of socio-economic stagnation and retrogression. In the following dialogue the perverse character Mr. Bob Brown explains to his fellow nefarious vulture in parliament Madam Omeaku, how he facilitated the manipulation of the electoral process to ensure the return of the unsuspecting Dr. Parkers as an elected member of the parliament so that he would assist them to launder their loots.

The statement by the disreputable character Mr. Bob Brown shows the level of decay the socio-political activities have assumed. It indicates the vicious circle of fraudulent manoeuvres, hence Nwabueze reminds the readers/audience of how the socio-politico-economic system and structure breeds individuals who emerge as leaders in Africa, just as Falaiye

explains in his inaugural lecture. Nwabueze also highlights the fact that the credence and legitimacy of a large proportion of the politicians is suspect. He also projects that the process of electioneering which enthrones the politicians is that which lacks integrity because it is an open-secret that deep manipulation and despicable manoeuvres subsists. Nwabueze also points a finger at another pertinent issue which majorly instigates the relentless breeding of unpatriotic populace through the dialogue between the characters Madam Omeaku and her husband Mr. Omeaku.

In the conversation between Mr. Omeaku and Madam Omeaku, Nwabueze blames the socio-economic systems which relentlessly stifle commensurate reward accruable to meritocracy and intellectualism, but indirectly reward mediocrity as that responsible for malignant economic crisis in Africa. This is a serious indictment on the prevailing locale specific socio-political culture, which undoubtedly represents a product of the centrifugal forces of a particular social constructs. The cogent logic is, if a polity is mostly operated in mediocrity, one would expect nothing better than a dysfunctional and crisis prone polity. Nwabueze through the utterance of another character Mr. Otobo presents yet another pertinent perspective on the problem with the socio-political system and structure in some African countries.

Otobo: That was how the election was lost and won. The selfish, hypocritical fools were more interested in what they can get than in the person who would deliver the goods. With this, and the manoeuvres of that crook, Mr. Brown, Madam Omeaku was brought into parliament (39).

Through the above remark by the character Mr. Otobo, Nwabueze emphasizes on the reality of money in politics, and how the impoverished individuals would readily endorse mediocrity rather than cast their vote for a seasoned, well articulate and informed candidate who throws little or no cash at

them to buy acceptance. Consequently, because most politicians actually spend a lot of money during political electioneering attempting to buy acceptance, the eventual victors tend to see their victory as their right and opportunity to recoup their investment. Nwabueze through *A Parliament of Vultures* tends to rekindle (the apparent lack-lustre) debate on how best to end the cycle of heavy investment in electioneering in order to do away with the avoidable cycle of recouping which promotes looting. Looking again at the above remark by the character Mr. Otofo, it is arguable that essentially Nwabueze is emphasizing that in a polity where the dominant political ideology is propelled mostly by unpatriotic, selfish and retrogressive perspectives; such polity will continue to slumber while the country remains in throes. However, Nwabueze throws open the idea that a drastic measure such as revolution may be the solution to the malady bedevilling such countries. Even at that Nwabueze, unambiguously avoids bloodletting and bloodbath as part of the process. Meanwhile the burning of the presidential mansion in many ways suggests an overwhelming public anger with the icons of the existing political structures which must give way for a new re-building to commence. The forceful apprehension and bounding up of the vultures in parliament with ropes suggests that Nwabueze proposes a revolution that would be humane but firm in its bid to torpedo the retrogressive old order. This is to make room for a progressive new order. Everything revolves around the indictment of the existing socio-political systems which promotes different forms of corrupt practices. Thus the need to re-engineer the polity through desirable social constructs.

Conclusion

The focused play examines a fictional African polity as a means of assessing the political quality assurance in Africa. The idea is to stimulate debate on the quality of politics in some African countries, in order to instigate rebirth. Therefore,

Nwabueze's ideological projection in *A Parliament of Vultures* can be encapsulated within the praxis of 'internalist' paradigm, which argues that "the source of Africa's numerous problems can be traced to nowhere else but Africa" (22). One of the very prominent proponent of the 'internalist' school of thought, Falaiye notes that African economic woes and her socio-political malaise which are as a result of problematic leadership will persist if the spontaneous emergence of political leaders subsists. Here he refers to the situation whereby individuals ascend to very top political positions without evidently learning the ropes to accumulate substantial skills at lower political positions, essential for higher political offices. Therefore he laments that "it is only in politics and leadership that people spontaneously claim to be qualified" (Falaiye 25). Consequently, Falaiye thinks that this phenomenon is not acceptable because surprisingly "no one accepts an untrained doctor or lawyer, but all would seem to accept untrained leaders/politicians" (26).

This paper agrees that Africa's leadership and socio-economic upheavals are attributable to the African social constructs. However it is noteworthy to add that some are instigated through proxies by neo-colonial forces bent on keeping Africa on its knees. For the desire of Africa immense natural resources some neo-colonial forces collude to ensure the emergence of unpopular leaders in Africa. The argument is that such puppets would be of little or no benefit to Africa. Nigeria and other African countries just as Nwabueze suggests in *A Parliament of Vultures* should turn their backs at neo-colonial puppets. Therefore, because there are no stringent measures of checking the excesses of the leaders in some countries, gutter politics is flourishing. The leaders are exhibiting enormous selfishness, wickedness, and unpatriotic behaviours because they have seen others get away with it hence they too feel they would get away with it as well. To say the least it is apparent from *A Parliament of Vultures* that Africans in some African

countries are metaphorically in slumber even though they are aware of the chronic maladies that bedevil their countries. Nwabueze is of the view that the maladies will remain and even wax stronger and stronger and pose a profound threat to Africa's security until Africans wake-up from their slumber and turn their backs on 'gutter politics'.

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The Ballot and the Bard: Oral Poetry, Radio Jingles, and Electioneering Campaigns in Selected States of South Eastern Nigeria during the 2015 General Elections

Onyebuchi Nwosu

Little has been written about the literary quality and form of these political songs...It seems that in some cases the songs are based on traditional literary forms of one kind or another... It is easy to assume that this means of oral propaganda is bound to disappear with increasing literacy and 'modernization'... On the contrary it is possible that the spread of the transistor radio may in fact add fresh impetus to political songs. - *Ruth Finnegan*

Abstract

With democratic tradition taking firmer root in Nigeria and politicians suddenly realising that one important key to election victory is adequate sensitization of the electorate, many politicians seeking for elective posts have now fallen back to the use of political radio jingles. In South-eastern Nigeria, these highly persuasive but snappy audio instruments are mostly composed in Igbo language. This essay critically assessed some Igbo political radio jingles used for electioneering campaigns during the 2015 General Elections. It identified some Igbo oral poetic elements in them and examined the extent to which the composers of these jingles have appropriated some Igbo oratorical forms and techniques. Data for the study were gathered from some Igbo political radio jingles aired at the peak of intense electioneering campaigns from five Frequency Modulation (FM) stations in three states in South-eastern

Nigeria namely Abia, Ebonyi and Enugu states. Drawing theoretical guide from New Historicism, the jingles are carefully evaluated as oral literary texts produced within a political economic and cultural situation of a particular time and place. The essay concludes that most Igbo political radio jingles used during the 2015 electioneering campaigns in three states of south-eastern Nigeria drew elaborately from the Igbo oral poetic lore.

Introduction

As events build up towards the conduct of the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria and political activities attain a near frenzy and cataclysmic situation with a large number of the political gladiators scouting for the most appropriate persuasive and wider-audience-reaching medium to market their 'political wares', many political actors in some states in south-eastern Nigeria resorted to the use of radio jingles. Aware that most of the electorate are basically Igbo, these politicians contracted some traditional artistes who ingeniously composed for them some creatively worded and pungently deployed political jingles in Igbo language. These political jingles dominated the air-waves of some radio stations during the build-up to the elections.

This essay explores the use of Igbo political radio jingles by some politicians in some states of south-eastern Nigeria to draw massive support during the electioneering campaign period with its major focus being to ascertain some traditional oral poetic forms which are appropriated by the producers/composers of these jingles as well as establishing the links between these oral poetic forms and the jingles. The essay has also taken the responsibility of unearthing certain Igbo linguistic and literary nuances in the jingles and gauging their effectiveness by assessing the extent to which they measured up to the intrinsic characteristic of jingles which are predominantly advertorial compositions. The study measures

the literary weight of these selected Igbo radio political jingles which were aired mainly in some Frequency Modulation (FM) stations during the 2015 season of electioneering campaigns. The underlining motive is to analyse the literary impartations of these Igbo political radio jingles and highlight their usefulness and effectiveness as veritable emerging instruments of political contestation.

Oral Poetry, Political Jingles, and Electioneering Campaigns

Poetry involves the use of words to express feelings which have strong emotional undercurrents. Oral poetry connotes rhythmic, melodious, intelligent but completely verbal expressions which are often sung, recited or chanted with the aim of sensitizing and entertaining the people. Okumba Miruka defines it as “the verbal expression of feelings using versified language” (88). An expression is versified when it has high degree of rhythm which is the calculated symphonic beats observable in a verbal expression. Of significant interest is the fact that oral poetry is composed, performed and passed down from generation to generation through the word of the mouth. Albert B. Lord touches on this when he asserts that “with oral poetry, we are dealing with a particular and distinctive process in which oral learning, oral composition and oral transmission almost merge; they seem to be different facets of the same process” (5). This kind of poetry is mostly associated with the natives or the folk. Igbo oral poetry is however an indispensable part of African oral poetry, for according to Sam Uzochukwu, Igbo people produce various forms of oral poetry at various occasions.

In the life of the Igbo, traditional poetry features on many occasions, festive or sorrowful. If it is festive occasion, it evokes the emotion of joy, and if it is a sorrowful occasion it evokes the emotion of sorrow. But Igbo traditional poetry is not merely an emotional affair, for the emotions also go with

thought which may be in the form of comments on life and death generally. (64).

From this, it is evident that apart from being steeped in rich emotional feelings Igbo oral poetry also carries useful life enriching and enhancing thoughts. Similarly, Helen Chukwuma says that Igbo oral poetry is best captured by the term *Abu-song*, which she defines as “a representative term whose meaning is best caught by verse or poetry, Igbo oral poetry is sung, recited or chanted.” (34). However, Igbo oral poetry goes beyond songs as they can be chanted or recited or declaimed.

Politics according to Heywood “in its broadest sense is the activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rule under which they live” (4). This means that once people are involved in any activity to regulate their behaviour in order to harmoniously exist in their society, they are somehow involved in a kind of politics. But Aduradola and Ojukwu while corroborating Lasswel and Danziger says that

politics focuses on ‘who gets what’, ‘when and how.’ It determines the process through which power and influence are used in the promotion of certain values and interests...The concept of politics revolves around three fundamental questions: Who governs? For what ends? And by what means? These are played out through discussion, disagreement, lobbying, rioting, campaigning and voting. (104).

This leads to the acquisition of political power which the scholars above refer to as “the capacity in any human relationship to control behaviour and influence thought for the attainment of political goal” (104). With political power, one controls the behaviour of others and determines what goes to them, when and how; this is the crux of all political struggles; a tendency which has made the quest for political power quite gruesome, fearful and fiery.

To attain political power, politicians indulge in fierce contest; they sell their plans and programmes to the electorate and persuade them to support them. Aware that this power resides with the voters, they devise several means to canvass for their support. The process of soliciting for support from the electorate and requesting them to cast their vote for one party in preference for another is known as electioneering campaigns. For Ademilokun, "political campaigns are indeed important to political parties because through them. A lot of information is passed to the electorate and awareness is also created..." (264). Aduradola and Ojukwu view the activity from a holistic standpoint as they opine that "political campaigns are an organized effort which seeks to influence the decision-making process within a specific group or environment. It can also be viewed as the mobilization of forces either by an organization or individuals to influence others in order to effect an identified and desired political change. (106) Of utmost importance in every political campaign is the 'message' which is "an important and potent tool that politicians use to express views and feelings to the public with the intention of reshaping and redirecting the electorate's opinions to align with theirs" (106). Hammering on the factors that determine the robustness and effectiveness of a campaign message, they insist that such message "ought to contain the salient ingredients that the candidate wishes to share with voters and these must be repeated often in order to create a lasting impression on the voters" (106).

The invention of the electronic media gave vent to the emergence of the jingle. "The advent of radio and television gave rise to a new form of advertising known as the jingle. Jingles are short, catchy songs that are used to advertise a product or service." (http://gorecentre.mtsu.edu/political_jingles 1) However, while acknowledging that "political songs emerged in the land that would be the United States of America as early as the 1700" (3). George S. Caparas observes that "a mix of

clever lyrics and memorable tune gave birth to the advertising jingle. It makes so much impact because of its short lyrical easy-to-memorise nature as further noted by Caparas, thus:

A jingle is basically a candidate's musical score, but its usefulness lies in it being a mnemonic device that compresses name, program, and platform into two-minute rhyme. The best ones play endlessly in one's head... Its mission is simple: Disarm the voter with good harmony before drilling the message home... (3)

In Philippines, apart from its ability to stick to the minds of the voters for a very long time, having a political jingle shows how seriously a politician has taken both the election and the electorate; it signifies the level of importance the candidate attaches to his campaigns and the position that is being struggled for. "...possession of a creative political jingle not only shows that you're serious about winning, but you've also got the resources to push for a decent media presence". (3). Furthermore, Soetan Jeremiah Temitope observes that "music is a powerful force for political mobilization" (ii). Adding their voice, Titus and Bello narrowing it down to Africa, say that "African music is a powerful medium of communication through which human actions and reactions are expressed. It provides a forum to mirror the society so that members could understand things better, and learn more about life" (166). Commenting on the relationship between song and politics in Nigeria, Ezikeojiaku affirms that "in a place like Nigeria where the written election manifesto is of little significance to the majority of the electorate, a song or poem, which is a conventionally accepted form of communication can be of immense advantage and effective means of disseminating political ideology" (273). Narrowing down his statement he asserts that "Among the Igbo, songs serve social, political, religious, psychological, literary and topical functions"(273). Tracing the origin of political songs in Nigeria to "the organised

protest to the tax and land politics of the British Administration, which led to the formation of earliest political organisations in Lagos... [and] the Aba Women Riot of 1929 which the aggrieved women matched with political songs to the British Administration to protest the imposition of income tax on their husbands,” Ezikeojiaku reasons that the Igbos for a long time have been using songs and other pieces of oral poetry to achieve political goals.

With the impetus engendered by the emergence of electronic media, radio jingles become a staple in Nigeria’s political firmament as further noted by Joseph Babasola Osoba: “Political campaigns and jingles can be described as inherent features of every democratic set-up. In Nigeria, they were used in the late 1950s and early 1960s...” (115) Though the first radio station in South-eastern Nigeria is Radio Nigeria Enugu which began broadcasting in 1950, the radio broadcasting density and propensity in the region has greatly increased since then. By November 2014, the total number of radio stations in the region stands at 31. Radio is a powerful tool for mass mobilization and sensitization and this is made more manifest when the station airs some of its programmes in an indigenous language; a language which is native to many listeners of the station. Igbo is the native language of most people who reside in South-eastern Nigeria so when politicians recruit artistes to produce radio jingles in Igbo language and air them through the radio to canvass votes, they are aware as Udemadu said that “when one is talked to in the language he understands, the message makes more impact. This is why, it is very expedient to use the indigenous languages in advertisement” (144). This brings us to the interest of this study which is to assess some political jingles composed in Igbo language and aired in some radio stations in South-eastern Nigeria during the 2015 electioneering season.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

In carrying out the study, the researcher monitored and recorded some Igbo political radio jingles from five Frequency Modulation (FM) stations in South-Eastern Nigeria. The stations are Coal City FM 92.9 Enugu, Salt FM 98.1 Abakaliki, Unity FM, 101.5 Abakaliki, BCA FM 88.1, Umuahia and Dream FM, 92.5 FM Enugu. Out of the five FM stations, two are owned by the Federal government, two are owned by state government while one is privately owned. The monitoring and recording was done from 16th January through the 28 of February 2015. Apart from that, the time for the recording of the Igbo radio political jingles was between 6:00 am and 8:30 am in the morning. This time is regarded as peak period in broadcasting and advertising because during the time, listeners/viewers are alert and refreshed after having had a night rest. In collecting the data (recording the jingles) the researcher took note of the station, the time and day the jingle was aired. After that, the jingles were first transcribed and painstakingly recorded in the language and form in which they were rendered. The researcher then translated each of the Igbo political radio jingles into English language in order to widen the scope of its appreciation. Also in analysing the radio jingles, "S" sign represents the line(s) rendered by the lead singer or soloist while those with "Ch" indicates those chanted or sung by the chorus.

The theoretical framework relied upon in the course of this study is New Historicism which according to Abrams and Harpham is a theory that "conceive of a literary text as "situated" within the totality of the institution, social practices, and discourses that constitute the culture of a particular time and place, and with which the literary interacts as both a product and a producer of cultural energies and codes" (218). In applying the theory to this study, the Igbo political radio jingles are construed as literary texts, produced by Igbo oral

artistes who are contracted by politicians and political parties (institutions) who are predominantly of the Igbo cultural milieu and the jingles (texts), as products of these people, have culturally entwined political messages and codes which they are expected to pass across to teeming eligible voters who are of the same cultural stock with the producers.

Selected Igbo Political Radio Jingles Used during the 2015 General Elections in South-Eastern Nigeria: A Critical Appraisal

The Igbo political radio jingles that constitute the texts for this critical discussion are first discovered to have imbibed some remarkable attributes of Igbo oral poetry among which is the sing-song anaphoric pattern where the song is intoned by a lead singer or soloist after which the chorus supports or sing their own part. This is evident in the following excerpt from one of the jingles recorded on 16th January 2015 at 6:45am from Coal City FM Enugu.

- S: Ebe ka anyi ga ebinye aka?
 Ch: Ebe esere okuko Igbo!
 S: Papa m ga ebinye aka?
 Ch: Ebe esere okuko Igbo!
 S: Mama m ga ebinye aka?
 Ch: Ebe esere okuko Igbo!
 S: Where shall we cast our vote?
 Ch: Where an Igbo cock is drawn!
 S: My father shall vote?
 Ch: Where an Igbo cock is drawn!
 S: My mother shall vote?
 Ch: Where an Igbo cock is drawn!

In the above jingle, the poet-persona who is also the lead singer requests to know where the electorate would cast their votes and the response he gets is “where an Igbo cock is drawn!” which is the symbol for All Progressive Grand Alliance

(APGA). The soloist-response structure is maintained till the end of the jingle. Notably, because the jingle is meant for Igbo listeners, there is a wholesome annexation of the species of cock that is the symbol of the party; to give the electorate a high sense of solidarity, the cock in the party's symbol is portrayed as being of Igbo stock- *Ebe e sere okuko Igbo*—where an Igbo cock is drawn, suggesting that the party is equally, their own party.

Apart from the anaphoric pattern, some of the jingles have a chorus and recitation structure which is also synonymous with Igbo songs. In such instances, the chorus sings for a time and mellow down their voice while the lead singer makes some verbal recitation. Most times through the recitation the crux of the message is delivered in clear manner. Below is an example from another jingle.

Recites: Umunnem na umunnam
 Tinyere injinia Julius Ucha votu gi
 Ka o buru Govano Ebonyi Steti
 Anyi nwere ezi olile anya
 Na o buru na Ucha bata n'ochichi
 Ebonyi Steti ga adikwa nma ozo

(Recorded on 16th January 2015; Unity FM Abakaliki; by 6:54 am).

The opening part of the jingle above begins with a chorus requesting for applause for somebody who is coming to bring notable peace and progress in Ebonyi State. There is an adroit use of periodic suspense where one is meant to wonder who this person is. Then as the singing gradually goes down remaining at the background, the soloist's voice now in full declamation requests the electorate to vote for this peace and development bringer who is in the person of Engineer Julius Ucha. With this, there is a step by step unveiling of the political message with a concluding promissory note.

Another Igbo oral poetic form which is prodigiously appropriated by producers of Igbo radio political jingle is the chant. Of all forms of Igbo oral poetry, the chant is the most misconstrued but its features are markedly clear. Chant takes a middle ground position between speech and song. I have noted elsewhere that it "bears the features of a speech and that of a song—all at the same time. It has the rhythm of a song and the pitch of a speech... [it] has the tempo and melody of a song but is accompanied with the tone of a speech." ("Folk-Chant as Paradigm..." 72). As speech which dovetails into song, the chant starts from a lower tone and rises consistently until it then stops abruptly.

Another form of oral poetry which the composers of the political jingles appropriated is the panegyric which is also known as praise poetry. According to Ruth Finnegan, such poetry

stresses acceptable values...publici[zes] new status or achievements in a non-literate culture, flattering those in power or drawing attention to one's own achievements, preserving accepted version of history...serving as an encouragement to emulation or achievement, and not the least, providing an economically profitable activity for many of those who engage in it. (120-121).

Igbo oral poetry is no exception as it involves the invocation of high calibre laudatory epithets in praise of the personality of the human subject so chosen for such notable veneration. Sometimes, the pedigree of the personage is recalled but above all, the rare deeds of the human figure are venerated while he is made to adorn a larger-than life toga. Politics is a game and also a contest, so in couching some of the jingles, most of the composers clothe their political figures in dainty apparel, they raise them higher than other contestants so that the electorate would definitely single them out as those who are worthy to be given their votes.

In a popular political jingle, the key character is Chima, a short form for Chimaraoke Nnamani, the former Governor of Enugu State. He is lauded as the “the child who is better than money and reigns” as well as one who is handsome and good natured, for in Igbo, *idi nma*- to be good, carries both physical and behavioural importations. Chima’s attributes are put forward for the electorate after which there is a reminder about belonging to those who “eat well-ripened orange” which is the symbol of Peoples Democratic Congress PDC., the party under which platform, the former Governor of Enugu State is vying for a Senatorial position.

In another jingle, a praise-worthy analogy that is deeply-steeped in native lore is made while praising a particular candidate who is contesting for Enugu East Senatorial position under the platform of All Progressive Grand Alliance (APG). The jingle is cast into the cask of praise as the subject Ozo Nwakaeze Okafo is flauntingly given the title of *okpoche ngene* which when translated means a dredger, clearer or cleanser of a stream. This pictures him as a man of unfathomable kindness and benevolence who removes impurities from a general stream from which the community fetches drinking and domestic water. No wonder he is regarded as a bringer of “rest of mind.” So with all these accolades, he is painted to be in good position to represent Enugu East in the Senate under the platform of All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA)

In another jingle aired by Coal City FM Enugu by 6:56 am on 17th January 2015 the political position seeker, Gilbert Nnaji, on whose request the jingle is produced is lionized as “the head that carries all kinds of problems and troubles”.

- | | |
|-----|--|
| S. | Gil bu isi na ebu ogidi |
| Ch. | Isi na ebu ogidi buru ogidi ndi iron a mbo mbo
Isi na ebu ogidi! |
| S. | Gil is the head that carries troubles |
| Ch. | When the head that bears troubles carries problems
Enemies will keep running
The head that carries troubles! |

Next to oral praise poetry is the employment of repetitive structures just as it is usually observed in Igbo oral poetry. Repetition is an artistic situation where a word, phrase or full line is repeated in a poetic verse. Repetition is an intrinsic element of Igbo verbal versification. Helen Chukwuma sees it as “a basic principle of oral art” and commenting further, she observed that “in a typical oral verse, repetition is not restricted to the structure only but to the words of the stanza themselves” and its use is to introduce stability which ensures “permanence, retention and recall” (149). As anaphoric elements, most Igbo political jingles deployed during the 2015 electioneering campaigns have repetitive structures. A typical example is the following jingle recorded on 18th January 2015 from Coal City FM at 6:50 am.

- Ch. The good train!
 S. That's the train we will follow
 Ch. To get good things!
 S. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi's train
 Ch. The good train!
 S. That's the train we will follow
 Ch: To get good things!

Apart from the repetition of lines, there is ideophonic repetition where a semantically meaningless but musically important sound is repeated in a verse. Defined by Iroha Ebe Udeh as sound that “do not have definite or fixed referent” but helps to “dramatize tone, invoke mood, link sound and idea, harmonize songs and improve the musicality of [an oral verse] (195), the uses of idiophone in oral poetry helps to achieve strong musical effect. The imagery “oil used in frying *akara*” indicates a valuable delicious thing for in Igbo land, there is a kind of fried aromatic snack called *akara* usually made from fresh cassava tuber that is peeled, grated and left over night. After this, the white cassava pulp is mixed with some condiments, moulded into small balls and fried in fresh red non-bleached palm oil. The taste of the remnant oil used for the

frying is quite delicious and highly prized. It is from there that the expression *mmanu akara di uto, onye ratu ibe ya aratu*—oil used in frying *akara* is sweet, if you taste it, allow others to have a taste too, is derived. The implication of the expression hinges on equity; meaning that anything that is good should not be monopolized. So, in the jingle above the delicious oil represents leadership as the analogy drawn in the second line shows – if you govern, allow others govern too. In Abia State where the subject of the jingle Engineer Okezie Ikpeazu is vying for the Governorship position, a particular zone, the Ukwa-Ngwa people have not produced a Governor since the creation of the state in 1991. This time around, Okezie Ikpeazu is from this “marginalized part” so the jingle is cashing-in on this sentiment and vigorously requesting that if leadership is said to be beneficial, there should be equity in its distribution. It is therefore requesting the electorate in Abia State to vote Okezie Ikpeazu on that ground for when that is done, it will then be said that there is equity in Abia State; for the governorship seat would have rotated round the three Senatorial districts. A particular Igbo proverb is used in the jingle to fan this political sentiment—“For when the son of Ogwugwu/and Nwanosike are treated equally/enmity will go.” It therefore takes one who is deeply aware of the political sentiments in Abia state to understand the strong argument and coded messages ensconced in this jingle.

Igbo oral poetry uses proverbial lore and this is equally manifested in some of the political jingles under review in this study. The essence of using such witty sayings in poetry is to intensify points and encapsulate the intended message in concise expressions thereby avoiding unnecessary long-winded verbosity which will water-down the impact of the message. An excerpt from a particular jingle recorded on 20th January 2015 from Unity FM Abakaliki at 6:28 am will help to illustrate this. Other political jingles go outright to request for votes. Similarly, the jingles in some instances employ highly

exaggerated expressions just like oral poetry to proclaim support for a political party in a language that is trenchantly boastful and stoic.

Using some mind bugging hyperbolic expressions, the jingle's voice personae expresses his support for Edward Nkwegu, the Labour Party's Governorship candidate's for Ebonyi State during the elections. By vehemently affirming that "if you carry him up and hit [him] on the ground" he would not change his political leaning, he is invariably persuading if not wooing other voters to have such firm stance in their support for the Labour Party candidate. More so, the second line –*I buligodu m elu kuo m n'ala*– even if you carry me up and throw me on the ground, emphasizes the point raised in the first line and as well depicts strands of irrevocable and unshakeable assurance that the voter's mind is made up as to where to cast his vote. Such inestimable show of unbendable cum unchangeable support is infectious as many other electorate who hear the jingle would definitely align with him. Like Igbo oral poetry, the jingles have major thrusts. For instance, in the jingle below which is a solo chant, the poet-speaker recalls the past deeds of Gilbert Nnaji, a Senatorial candidate for Enugu East Senatorial zone. With the feats serving as a springboard, a campaign is mounted for his re-election.

While some jingles recall the dividend of democracy brought by a particular candidate who is seeking for re-election, another jingle like many other pieces of Igbo oral poetry lampoons a particular set of people who want to hoodwink the electorate in a particular state and constructively points the way forward.

The rich Igbo oratorical sagacity employed in the above jingle clearly matches the persuasive rhetorical device appropriated by the composers of the next jingle. Consequently, as mediums to solicit votes from electorates which draws so much from Igbo oral poetry, most political jingles which were recorded for this study describes and reiterates (in vivid terms)

the symbol of the political party that sponsored their production either in their opening or concluding lines. This unmistakeably helps to direct voters who have been convinced by their yarns to the appropriate place where they will cast their votes.

In each of the excerpts, the electorates are properly guided through symbols on where to cast their votes. Aware that most electorates in the rural setting are not lettered, the producers and composers of the jingles as conscious politicians and artistes weave the specific party symbol into each particular jingle to explicitly pass the message across to the teeming listeners. They are aware that symbols will create a highly retentive impact than the names of the party or their acronyms. Sometimes, they use both the acronym and the symbol simultaneously as is evident in the first excerpt above.

Conclusion

From all the discussion, it is glaring that most Igbo radio jingles used by politicians to solicit for support during the 2015 electioneering campaigns have strong leanings to Igbo oral poetry. It is discovered that these radio jingles apart from drawing their structures extensively from Igbo oral poetic lore also incorporate forms like songs, chants, recitation and the panegyric. Furthermore, it is observed that while some of the Igbo radio jingles have major themes just like any Igbo verbal poetic expression, such thrusts include recalling past deeds/feats of their political patrons, outlaying plans and programmes of party candidates who are vying for political positions and extolling their personality, leadership/political acumen so as to effectively market them to the electorate. More so, while some jingles like forms of creative art have positive and hopeful visions, others lampoon, satirize and educate the electorate on certain political issues in their domain. In addition, other jingles we analysed, borrowing form Igbo oral poetry, have some Igbo proverbial undertone; some are filled with idiophones, repetitive

structures and have high symbolic, euphemistic and hyperbolic contents.

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Orature and Indigenous Aesthetics in Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's *Dancing Masks*

Lucky Josiah Nte

Abstract

Prior to the publications of Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's poetry collections, *Heart Songs* (2009) and *Waiting for Dawn* (2010), she is largely known as a prolific novelist, writer of children's literature and a burgeoning playwright. While literary critics are still in laudation for the adeptness of her award-winning poetry collections, she published a more refined and all-round-themed collection in 2013 titled *Dancing Masks* that served as the extension of the lyrical flow, style and content of her two earlier collections. With *Dancing Masks*, Adimora-Ezeigbo has established herself as a major voice in the contemporary African poetry. As in her previous poetry collections, *Dancing Masks* explores things bothering on humanity and the society from a variety of periscopes. This study, however, will narrow itself to examine Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo's indebtedness to selected elements of traditional African oral poetry, especially as can be derived from her Igbo background, to create aesthetic value in *Dancing Masks*.

Introduction

The opening of *Dancing Masks* with two proverbs – one from Igbo's repertoire of proverbs and the other from a renowned Afrocentric novelist, Chinua Achebe – does not only illuminate the significance of the collection's title, but also gives the reader a prenotation of the rich African oral tradition crested therein. Worthy to note is the apt symbolicalness of the

term 'masks' in the title. Masks are invaluable in most Igbo societies. They appear during, virtually, all types of gatherings: festivities, some religious rituals, legal proceedings, and funeral rites (as elucidated in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*). The multifariousness of the moods of poems in *Dancing Masks* confirms that the poet is not just a mere observer of the experiences therein, but an active participant – a unique characteristic of masks in the Igbo society. Also, the dance of the masks is a carefree activity, the frenzy dance patterns with no scrutiny, and this is reflected in the style in which the titles of the poems are written – where the poet's deliberate refusal to conform in totality to the capitalization rules of the English grammar is pronounced.

Furthermore, Tanure Ojaide in his foreword to the collection draws attention to the fact that Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo is greatly inspired by the Igbo folklore as he confirms that 'she [Adimora-Ezeigbo] uses her Igbo background and culture – what she grew up with – as a source of strength' (9). Adimora-Ezeigbo gives more insight into the Afrocentric stance of her literary production:

I was brought up by Christian parents... I was also brought to respect and love my culture, especially the positive aspects of my culture... I am just an ordinary person who loves her culture and is glad to be a Nigerian from Igbo ethnic group... Being Afrocentric is natural to a true African; I am an African and I am proud of it. (Aanu Adegun, "I'm not controversial" (9).

Dancing Masks is divided into five sections; with the first section, *Signs of the Times*, dealing with recurring global issues such as corruption, climate change, moral decadence, great achievements, among others. This section harbours her longest non-pidgin poem in the collection, "Wanderer forever". The second section, *Fingers of Feeling*, takes a deep look into such feelings that are associated with affection and bonding between lovers, parents and children and among colleagues. The first

poem from this section, "Celebrating Agbonma the beauty", invokes sublimity as the poet employs Negritude style to extol the Igbo cultural values and concept of beauty. The poems in the third section reflect its title, *Haiku Connections* here the poet experiments with the Japanese genre of poetry. The significant feature of the poems therein is that few words are used to create infinite imagery. The fourth section titled *Ikpem: Pidgin Blues* satirizes current social ills such as terrorism as the poet explores the rich ideophones available in the Nigerian Pidgin English to humorously condemn societal ills. The last section is a collection of eulogies and dirges that mourn personalities that have left indelible marks in the poet's life. Its title *Infinite Cycles: The beginning ends where the end begins* is philosophical.

Regardless of the issue Adimora-Ezeigbo is criticizing, celebrating, experimenting, satirizing or eulogizing, the five sections of *Dancing Masks* share common ground as the abundant traditional repertoire of images and metaphors based on the flora, fauna and cosmology of the poet's Igbo roots are evenly apportioned among them; and this accentuates the 'Africanized' aura of her poetry.

This study is timely and significant to scholarship because it reacts to the position of Tanure Ojaide when he writes that 'only a few literary scholars have attempted discussing the aesthetics of African literature directly' ("African Literary Aesthetics"). This scarcity-in-appreciation of indigenous aesthetics in modern African poetry in particular and African literature in general has led to defaulting by African critics on their vital roles towards the recovery and return to paths of the indigenous African traditions by African writers. This study, therefore, aims at achieving what Chinweizu and others in *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature* (1980) refer to as 'the criticism of craft for the purpose of: nurturing talent by encouraging [Afrocentricism] and discouraging [over-reliance

on Western literary traditions] tendencies among African artists; [and] educating the taste of the African public' (287).

Theoretical Framework

Aesthetics, derived from the Greek word *aisthetikos* (meaning 'perceptible by the senses'), is the philosophical study of the nature of beauty in disciplines that deal on creativity: fine arts, literary studies, music, among others. Arthur Danto writes that though the term was introduced by the German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten in 1753, but 'the study of the nature of beauty had been pursued for centuries' ("Aesthetics", n.p.). M. H. Abrams and Geoffrey Harpham in *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (2009) write that aestheticism, as a concern in literary studies, emerged during the late nineteenth century in Europe, and had its headquarters in France (4); and they further explain that Walter Pater, who introduced the views of French Aestheticism into Victorian England, emphasized 'on high artifice and stylistic subtlety...and...the supreme value of beauty and of "the love of art for its own sake" (5).

Aestheticism in the study of African literature has a divergent perception. While Western aestheticians view art as self-sufficient, independent of the societal values, with emphasis on craftsmanship, that is, as in poetry, the excellent use of cryptic and elitist language and strict observance of rhyming scheme and pattern; conversely, African aestheticians view an ideal art as such that is dependent on African socio-cultural values and its orature heritages, in addition to good craftsmanship. The view of African aestheticians is what is regarded in this study as indigenous aesthetics: the beauty of modern African creative arts in regards to their ability to effectively explore the elements and creative devices that abound in their preceding indigenous traditional artistic creativity.

The search for indigenous aesthetics in African literary arts is one of the primary concerns of some African anti-colonial

and postcolonial writers and critics alike, such as the Negritude movement of the Francophone African poets and Decolonization mantra of Chinweizu, respectively. Tejumola Olaniyan and Ato Quayson in *African Literature* (2007) refer to this drive for the availability of indigenous aesthetics in modern African literature as 'nativism'. They assert that:

The primary argument of nativism is that colonization and its attendant cultural Westernization...of Africa have produced an abnormal situation in which "authentic" African ideas and ways of doing things have been displaced or corrupted by foreign ones. The urgent solution then is to recover and return to paths and directions suggested by truly indigenous African tradition. (193).

Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo is one of such contemporary African poets whose poetry is in 'fidelity to "authentic" African traditions'. This is manifested in her *Dancing Masks* in which elements and devices from traditional African oral poetry are extensively explored as it treats varying issues pertaining to contemporary African society via the Nigeria-Igbo experience. This is what this study undertakes.

Elements of Traditional African Poetry in *Dancing Masks*

As asserted earlier in this study, the aesthetic value of poems in *Dancing Masks* is largely influenced by the elements of African orature as they explore life through multifaceted experiences. In this study, some of these elements that will be examined include language, poetic forms and devices.

Language: In response to her critics on her language style, Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo says that '[t]hough some people will say that the poems [in *Dancing Masks*] appear to be simple and easy to understand and that the message is simple, but somehow the images and symbols there require some thought' (Gbenga Adeniji, "Peeping into Akachi's *Dancing Masks*"). This sums the simplicity of the diction employed by the poet in her

collection under study – a reflection of that of the traditional oral artist. In traditional African poetry, simple and accessible words are chosen by the oral artist. This approach helps the artist to create imagery that is vivid, precise and apt; which compels the audience to listen attentively and flow with the fluidity of the performance without unnecessary interruptions (that may be witnessed if the audience tries to puzzle out ambiguous words). Renowned Afrocentric triumvirate – Chinweizu, Onwuchekwa Jemie and Ihechukwu Madubuike – in their *Toward the Decolonization of African Literature* (1980) categorically condemn African poets (who they considered Euromodernists) who use:

Craggy, unmusical language; obscure and inaccessible diction; a plethora of imported imagery; a divorce from African oral poetic traditions... [full of] Shakespearianism... dotted with Latinisms...lumpy, full of obstructions, unnecessarily and artificially difficult. Simple ideas are often deliberately clothed in esoteric idiom. (165-166).

They recommend that for any poem to be considered Afrocentric, its style should employ such diction that has a 'readily available surface meaning in poetry because without it, it is futile to attempt to discover and appreciate whatever deeper levels of meaning a poem might contain' (168). *Dancing Masks* conforms in totality to the Afrocentric notion postulated by Chinweizu et al. Poems in this collection are composed with simple and unambiguous language and they are accessible even to those not versed in poetry to read, experience and enjoy.

In the same way, the memorability of poems in this collection is distinctly sustained by simple free-flowing expressions which give the poems their musical ambience; as exemplified in the third stanza of "Mother, your name is melody" in which simple words and end rhymes are combined to create a lyrical aura:

Two image makers
 Union of soul mates
 Marriage of twin minds,
 Without impediments. (ll. 22-25)

Apart from creating music, the simplicity of words also makes the poem excerpted above to be easily understood as they effortlessly invoke images of harmony, 'twin minds'; and blissfulness, 'without impediments' that characterize the marital life of the poet's parents – the poem's central subject.

Another manifestation of the significance of simplified diction in *Dancing Masks* is that it gives the poems in the collection an efficient structure that entraps the audience's attention through their climaxes – as available in an ideal African orature performance. To illustrate, the structure of "New Yam", a Yoruba traditional poem, and an excerpt from "Heart aflame" in *Dancing Masks* share similarity as the tempo of both poems rise and fall without obstructions. Most significantly, the infusions of Igbo and Nigerian Pidgin English vocabularies in most of the poems in *Dancing Masks* enhance the collection's Afrocentric flavour. These words conjure images that can be easily identified within the Nigeria-Igbo readers' socio-cultural and linguistic milieu; and make the messages of the poems simpler to decipher. The Nigerian Pidgin English takes the lion share of these infusions as all poems in the fourth section – *Ikpem: Pidgin Blues* – are composed in it. Some Igbo expressions such as "*Olue n'omume*" (in "Murderer of conscience"), "*mberede nyiri dike*" (in "Sudden attack") and "*Ezi ogo m*" (in "Homecoming of a christian soldier") are translated in the text for the benefit of non-Igbo readers; whereas no pidgin expression is translated thus, retaining its comic essence in the collection.

The simple, unambiguous and obsolete-free diction engaged by Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo in composing poems in *Dancing Masks* is one of her bequests from the African orature; and this

has effectively moderated her poems to perform similar roles as traditional African poetry – balancing aesthetics and themes harmoniously.

Forms: F. B. O. Akporobaro, a pundit in African Oral Literature, writes that ‘the forms of African oral poetry are numerous and vary in form from one society to society’ (49). He further lists these forms to include praise poetry, funeral dirge, chants among others (50). Isidore Okpewho in *The Heritage of African Poetry* (1985) extends these forms, albeit as anthological entries, to include love, praise, criticism, the environment, reflection, appeal, war and death. Adimora-Ezeigbo’s *Dancing Masks* incorporated some of these forms that are dominant in the traditional Igbo poetry as the messages of her poetry dictate. These include praise poetry, funeral dirge, satirical poems, love poems and poetry of the environment.

Praise poetry (also called panegyric poetry) in traditional African poetry is eulogistic in its depiction of the virtues of a given subject such as a war hero, noble men, and totemic objects using appropriately suggestive allusions, symbols, metaphors and similes. The first section of *Dancing Masks, Fingers of Feeling*, contains most of the praise poems in this collection. Adimora-Ezeigbo in “Miracle woman”, features concepts available in typical traditional praise poetry, wherein the poet uses such expressions that connote dignity and honour (‘A name you wear like a garland’ 2); strength and endurance (‘search for phantom *uri*’ 6); and divinity (‘I, your acolyte, will worship in her temple’ 20) to extol the virtues of Aba Rose Sackeyfio – a Gender Studies pundit and professor at Winston-Salem State University. Allusions are made to the ‘foreignness’ of Sackeyfio as well as a metaphorical revelation of the close affinity between the poet and subject she praises: ‘My sister from faraway land’ (3). In the poem “In the praise of the artist”, correctness of imagery is deployed as the poet hails the craftsmanship of Chimamanda Adichie in prose writing; and the influence of the fictionist’s predecessors on her works:

Thunderous *tom-tom* salute the air
 Tumultuous welcome for the weaver of words
 Following in the steps of past weaver birds.
 Give her a garland of praise (ll. 3-6).

Another traditional African poetry form that is dominant in *Dancing Masks* is funeral dirges; which the whole of the fifth section, *Infinite Cycles: The beginning ends where the end begins*, is dedicated to. Akporobaro describes the funeral dirge as 'the lament in poetic form of a mourner for a departed loved one' (52). Funeral dirges in this poetry collection, like those available in African orature, feature such words that express great loss; and bring hope and consolation to the bereaved. For instance, in "Farewell, great compatriot" the poet laments the prominence and virtues of late Chief Emeka Obiabaka. On the other hand, hope, as well as consolation, is given to the female relative (inferably, the wife) of late Peter Chukwudozie Obidiegwu; as the poet assures the bereaved of the Peter's blissful after-life, in accordance with the latter's Christian faith. Being conscious to identify and expose social ills and other excesses in the society is one of the social responsibilities of traditional African poets and contemporary Afrocentric poets alike. To live up to this, satirical poems are composed to humorously ridicule such issues with the aim of realizing a positive change. The tone of satirical poems may be disdain and mockery. *Dancing Masks* in its characteristic examination of contemporary and topical issues in the Nigerian society takes the advantage of this form to satirize the vanity of human desires (as in "Sex change"), and terrorism. To achieve this effectively, Adimora-Ezeigbo uses Nigerian Pidgin I'nglish – a unique variety of English in Nigeria that is lyrical and invokes humorous imagery. The fourth section of *Dancing Masks*, titled *Ikpem: Pidgin Blues*, is dedicated to this form. In "I no fear boko haram", the poet's stance that she cannot be frightened by the Islamic terror group is laughable as she lists powerful and better-informed personalities who fear the group's attack.

When the poet flees as a gas explosion in a hotel is mistaken for a Boko Haram attack, hilarious words are used to describe the scene to invoke laughter; instead of sympathy for the pathetic and tensed state of things due to terror activities. Terms like 'massacre', 'Pogrom '66', and 'Kano slaughter' allude the unchecked years of political and religious killings that have been witnessed in the northern part of Nigeria; and the Boko Haram insurgency is linked as an example of such wanton destruction of human lives and property.

Love poems are recurring poetic form in both traditional and modern African poetry. Expression of affections is inevitable in every human society; and this feeling can appear in different manners: familial, romantic or patriotic. Isidore Okpewho affirms that love 'has remained a favourite subject in the poetry of any age' (38). In *Dancing Masks*, poems that describe different kinds and moods of love are categorized under the second section titled *Fingers of Feeling*. The first poem in this section, "Celebrating Agbonma the beauty", is a combination of less romantic and more patriotic love; and is heavily influenced by the pro-Afrocentric Negritude philosophy. Negritude movement is an ideology developed by francophone black intellectuals during the 1930s chiefly by Martinican Aime Cesaire, Senegalese Leopold Sedar Senghor, and French Guyanese Leon Damas in Paris, to strongly oppose and condemn the derogatory and malicious claims of the European writers; who have deliberately denied or distorted African culture and values in order to justify their iniquitous colonial and imperial dominance over the continent. Leopold Senghor in his "Negritude: A Humanism of the Twentieth Century" redefined Negritude as 'the sum of the cultural values of the black world' (196).

J. O. J. Nwachukwu-Agbada, Lekan Oyeleye and Chijioke Uwasomba in their *Exam Focus: Literature-in-English* (2005) write that the idea of the Negritude movement was 'to reassert and revive, through the works of literature, the cultural values,

identity and authenticity of Africans' (223). They further state the characteristics and purpose of literary works inspired by the movement's ideology: "All works informed by the ideology of negritude usually makes use of traditional images, local references, African symbols and the image of a beautiful black woman. The essence is to show the beauty of Africa as opposed to the negative impression held by the racist colonialists" (196).

Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo, a true Afro-conscious writer, dutifully revives the ideal of Negritude in "Celebrating Agbonma the beauty". The title of this poem unmistakably communicates this significance. Adimora-Ezeigbo metaphorically uses a young Igbo girl to extol those values associated with the Igbo culture such as beauty, elegance, resilience and splendour. The poem opens by comparing the dark 'midnight skin' and graceful complexion of Agbonma to the legendary Yam King of Agulu-Ukwu. In order to authenticate her claims, the poet insists that it was the 'Divine Potter' Himself that took His time to mould Agbonma and He lavishly gave all comely features to her thus making Agbonma's elegance indispensable.

The description of Agbonma with words that depict eternity – 'ageless' and 'fadeless' (20) – is to emphasize the unceasing importance of the Igbo culture and values. The poem climaxes at the final stanza as it reveals that Agbonma's fame can no longer be contained within her immediate geographical entity, that is, the South-Eastern Nigeria. This refers to the exploits that the Igbo people have made (and is still making) in their various fields of endeavours all over the world such as Chinua Achebe's international acclamation as a distinguished African novelist, and Philip Emeagwali's fame as a world renowned Igbo inventor and computer scientist based in the United States (allegedly called 'A Father of Internet'), among others:

Moreover, the lyrical essence of "Celebrating Agbonma the beauty" is sustained by the poet who employs images of virility ('nurtured in fertile soil'); sacredness ('*nzu* in Idemili shrine');

progression and radiance ('*omeji*, yam tendrils'); elegance ('Feline in movement'); and divinity ('Divine Potter') to describe the rich Igbo culture and lifestyle in particular, and the indispensability of African values in general.

Lastly, poetry of the environment is a form of poetry that deals largely on the perception of the elements that make up the immediate environment of the poet. Okpewho writes that 'poems in the oral tradition are devoted to observing those aspects of nature that relate to man's sources of livelihood' (98). However, contemporary African poetry, where *Dancing Masks* belongs, also deals with those doomed consequences arising from man's over-exploitation and subsequent pollution of his environment. Both traditional and modern African poets share common concerns which Okpewho succinctly puts as 'a reflection of the poet's personal feelings in his description of the environment' (98).

In *Dancing Masks*, poems of environmental concerns are grouped in the first part of the first section, *Signs of the Times*. Environmental poems therein include "Weird world", "Winter whiplash", "Reflection on london's unpredictable weather" and "Sun stroke". While the last three environmental poems are mere observation and appreciation of varying weather concerns, "Weird world" is a clarion call that draws attention to the undeniable devastating effects of global warming. The poet uses spine-chilling words to emphasize the dire implications of harmful human activities to the environment.

Adimora-Ezeigbo predicts an apocalyptic end if these environmental issues are not solved or managed effectively; as she empathizes with the Third World countries who will bear the brunt of this calamitous repercussions:

Life leans on skeletal motion

Time crosses the abyss of hope.

Helpless, poor nations await the guillotine. (ll. 17-19).

Devices: One distinct feature of African poetry is its extensive use of indigenous literary devices such as proverbs, ideophones, personification, apostrophe and repetition to create aesthetics and enhance its philosophical poise which only mature minds can decipher. *Dancing Masks* is rich with these traditional poetic devices – which enhance the ‘Africaness’ therein.

Akporobaro defines a proverb as ‘short popular saying that expresses a truth of experience of a general observation whose truth is self-evident’ (20). Proverbs are commonly used by old men and diviners; and they are essential in formal speech making among the Igbo traditional society. Proverbs have a persuasive force and are used to illustrate, explain or argue a point. An important quality of proverbs that reflects in both African traditional poetry and *Dancing Masks* is that its ‘density of meaning [is] compressed into a line’ (Chinweizu et al 246). The first proverb in the collection under study is ‘the horn blower must blow his nose’ (“News flash” 10). Though the mental picture this proverb creates is that of a flutist cleaning his nose; but the implied meaning is that he who does a good job should be rewarded accordingly. Not all proverbs in *Dancing Masks* are directly translated in the poems they appear in. The poet left some in their original linguistic form so that their effectiveness will be maintained; however their translations are provided as endnotes. Examples of such include ‘*mberede nyiri dike*’ and ‘*azu anu uka*’ in “Sudden attack” and “News flash” respectively.

Another traditional poetic device well harnessed in *Dancing Masks* is the use of ideophonic expressions. Ideophones, loosely referred to as onomatopoeia, are expressions whose meanings are directly inferred through their sounds. Sometimes, these words are systemically prolonged or simultaneously repeated to create emphasis. G. M. T. Emezue in her *Mastering Poetry* (2002) further explains the characteristic of ideophones: ‘The sound of the words suggests its meaning in imagery’ (103).

Ideophones are distinctly used by oral artists and story-tellers because of their musical effects during oral performances.

Ideophonic expressions used in *Dancing Masks* are mostly composed in pidgin as seen in "Death dey for corner" where 'kakaraka' is used to highlight the incontestable strength of death. Other ideophonic expressions in this collection include 'wowo' (ugly), 'katakata' (trouble), 'kia-kia' (quickly), 'dum dum...gbudum gbudum' (explosion), 'cool lee lee' (calm down), and 'jee jee' (easy).

Other poetic devices, though not peculiar to African orature, but indispensable to the Afrocentric aestheticism of *Dancing Masks* are personification and apostrophe. While personification is realized by ascribing human qualities to non-human objects; apostrophe is created when an inanimate object or someone absent is addressed as if present or at hearing distance. Adimora-Ezeigbo while describing the alarming rate of loss of lives in "Death dey for corner" employs personification to aptly create suitable images that can describe the ubiquity of death. Other examples include 'Masculinist tone assaults our sensibilities' ("Those wings must fly" l.4), 'Knowledge has its own language' ("Front-runner" l.1); and 'Love visited' ("What if I describe the way I feel?" l. 2).

Apostrophe is dominant in the dirgeful last section of *Dancing Masks* titled *Infinite Cycles: The beginning ends where the end begins* where the poet addresses the people she mourns as if they can hear her. In dirges, apostrophe is used to uphold the African philosophical belief that spirits of the dead can hear the living and respond to supplications.

Lastly, African traditional poetry employs repetitions to systematically realize emotional intensity. This is also obtainable in *Dancing Masks* as can be seen in "Death dey for corner" in which the poet informs her readers that no human qualification can deter death from calling.

if you clever pass everybody
 if you dey wise pass Solomon
 or get money pass Bill Gate
 or sabi computer pass Job (ll. 43-46).

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that despite the overbearing influence of westernization and its attending negative consequences to the African literary creativity, most contemporary African poets are still in fidelity to their indigenous orature heritages in order to preserve, propagate and transmit their socio-cultural values to the posterity. Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo in *Dancing Masks* has created a veritable medium through which the literary aesthetic values of traditional African poetry, especially that of the Igbo society, will be appreciated; while reacting to various current Nigerian and global issues. The successful enrichment of poems in *Dancing Masks* with ample poetic elements and devices from the Igbo traditional poetry is a testament to the indispensability of Afrocentric values in twenty-first century African literary creativity and scholarship.

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Public Administration, Corruption, and Renewable Energy Policy Implementation for Sustainable Rural Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

Renewable energy policy is made to set out a road map for increasing the role of renewable energy in achieving sustainable rural development. The growth and achievement of a policy is dependent on its initiation and implementation by the bureaucrats (public administrators). The efforts made so far in implementing the renewable energy policy had been bedeviled by many factors in spite of all the man and material resource available in the country. The study was set to: identify the role of public administrators and corruption in the implementation of renewable energy policy; identify the effects of corruption and implementation challenges in sustainable rural development and prescribe suitable measures to ameliorate the problems. The study found that public administrators perform the function of policy formulation, interpretation and enforcement/implementation; corruption bedevils the role of renewable energy in sustainable rural development in Nigeria. It also found that the administrative environment, bottlenecks in a bureaucratic organization, coupled with the policy on due process, and executive discretion have major setbacks on the renewable energy policy implementation and achievement of sustainable rural development in Nigeria.

Introduction

The principal driver of today's rapid renewable energy growth for development is policy and its implementation. Growth of renewable energy is strongest where and when the policy-makers have established favourable policy frameworks and implements them considerably, (International Energy Agency, 2007). Such renewable energy policy frameworks should enhance a considerable expansion of access to modern, affordable and sustainable energy services as well as a substantial improvement in the quality and quantity of energy that would further economic development (Kwanashie 1992:316). This should be required for the country to fulfill her vision to become one of the top 20 economies in the world by 2020 (Okafor, 2012). In many countries, a rich and diverse policy landscape exists at national and local levels and such policy landscape can benefit any nation bearing fruitful deliberation and growth in renewable energy (Sorrell, 2004 and Farinelli et al., 2005). It is however, observed that the biggest challenge facing renewable energy technologies is to advance the state-of-the-art to the point where more renewable options can generate energy at costs that are competitive with conventional sources, (International Energy Agency, 2007).

The renewable energy draft policy was made in Nigeria in 1993 by the Energy Commission of Nigeria. The policy was reviewed later by an Inter-ministerial Commission in 1996, at the instance of the head of State, under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Science and Technology of Nigeria (Lukman, 2002). The purposes of the energy policy for the country are to put in place "a co-ordinate and coherent energy policy, which will serve as a blue blueprint for the sustainable development, supply and utilization of energy resource within the economy, and for the use of such resources in international trade and co-operation. The policy also addressed the issue of energy manpower development, indigenous participation, domestic self-reliance, the energy needs of various sector of the economy,

energy sector financing, as well as private sector participation in the energy sector (Lukman, 2002). A policy for renewable energy in the country facilitates steady and sustainable growth of renewable energy infrastructure and market. Each policy is intended to reducing one or more key barriers that impede development and utilization of renewable energy, such as cost-related barriers, requirement for utilities to purchase renewable energy from power producer, as well as perceived risks in technical, financial and legal aspects, (REN, 2011).

Upon the benefits arising from renewable energy policy, some countries seemed to be loose in their in energy policy formulation and implementation as well as changing the policy when a new administration takes over the governance of a state. For energy policy to achieve its objectives in Nigeria, it requires a great deal of consistency. This will help her to swiftly move up to the platform of top 20 industrialised economies, which she aspires to attain in 2020 (Okafor, 2012). Nigerian administrators and energy policy makers as well as public office holders need to be consistent in policy no matter the administration that made it. They need to look beyond their subsistence economies to global national needs which would create employment opportunities and energy for our tilting industries. This is necessary because, according to Okafor (2012) in 25 years, your (Nigeria) population will be 300 million. You need real jobs, not disguised unemployment and you need reliable, cheap affordable energy without it nobody will invest in manufacturing. You have everything Brazil has; oil, gas, water, agribusiness to do bio energy, hydropower and so you have a distributed energy system plus your gas to make energy cheap here but you need some level of consistency in your energy policy.

However, the scale of policy challenges in energy infrastructure renders the current efforts insufficient in scale and scope. What is now required is a sustained political focus. Energy access must move up the political and development

agendas to become a central priority. This raises a fundamental question: What is to be done to establish an energy system that will deliver reliable, affordable and sustainable energy for all and support sustainable development in Nigeria? The answer is policy consistency; the biggest hurdle is policy consistency because no one government can achieve these goals by itself. It will take a generation of 20, 30 years, which is the evidence on energy everywhere. These are not visions of one government; these are the vision of the Nigerian people. It is what happened in Ghana which has had changes in government but today they have about almost 70 per cent electrification because in spite of a change of government from Jerry Rawlings to Attah-Mills, every government pushed electrification and parliament backed them.

The resultant effect of the above is that, if appropriate incentives framework is established, it will turn the attention of the private sector to clean energy investments. The public office holders and administrators in Nigeria are at the centre of the policy making and implementation. The hazard in energy policy being experienced in Nigeria today is as a result of poor policy making, implementation, Constance change in government and inconsistencies in policies. The progress and or failures in energy policy in Nigeria are to be explained by the administrators and public office holders.

Public Administrator is charged with the task of administering the affairs of the public, (bureaucracy). It is the primary responsibility of the public administrator (bureaucrat) to work toward improving the quality of the affairs of a state through proper formulation, interpretation and implementation of any approved policy. The growth of the public affairs is encouraged through the participation of public administrators in decision-making and implementation. The public administrator use the standard of informed consent when making decisions on behalf of the public with full application of ethics, to exercise the highest degree of trust and loyalty when making decisions

for the public (Diego, 2012). Although higher public servants have always played a major part in shaping public policy, the extent of their involvement has ebbed and flowed in response to legal, structural, and political changes at the federal, state, and local government levels.

In recent years, the exercise of policy making and implementing roles by public administrators has evoked mounting public criticism and top-level career servants in Nigeria have faced unusually serious challenges to their authority (Okafor, 2012). The results of the challenges are not farfetched. The political structure of Nigerian government, corrupt tendencies of the bureaucrats and politicians, quota system that negates the principles of merit in employment and academic enrolment, loyalty to ethnic group, administrative environment and religion have helped to compound their problems or abuse. However, it is worth noting that public administrators made important intellectual contributions to the economic and social reforms of the 1980s, breaking the public service's virtual monopoly over policy advising. They are credited with introducing new ideas and greater contestability that many argue has improved the quality of advice.

Such understanding of the basic role of public administration is the foundation from which its principles (such as transparency, publicity, accountability, public control of administration), forms and methods of activities, requirements for professional and impartial performance etc. are derived. The role of public administrators therefore, is to organise and control the day-to-day functions of an office or organization in the public sector. They are also called bureaucrats. Public administrator is the backbone of an organization and without them most public institutions would be in complete disarray (Boone, 2012). Okoli (2004: 167), described the role of public administrators to include the implementation and execution of the policies and decisions of those in authority. It is up to the public administrator to plan and direct the development,

implementation and evaluation of government policies, research and programs within the sector which they are working. At any length, public administrators could facilitate or inhibits the realization of any public policy through unnecessary bureaucratic process, including renewable energy policy. That is why their role could be seen as backbone to the success of any government programme.

Renewable energy refers to energy resources that occur naturally and repeatedly in environment and can be harnessed for human benefit (Okoye et. Al, 2011:138-143). There are significant renewable energy resources including large and small hydro-electric power resources, solar energy, biomass, wind and potentials for hydrogen utilization and development of geothermal and ocean energy, (ECN, 2005:9). There are renewable energy resources, which are not in common usage worldwide, these include ocean waves, tidal energy, ocean thermal gradients and geothermal energy (FRN, 2002:28). Renewable resources such as solar energy, wind, hydropower, and geothermal energy have many benefits. These resources can reduce carbon dioxide emission and waste. Clean air is vital on this planet because it can reduce human health problems such as asthma and lung disease (Iwundu and Okonkwo, 2011). Renewable resources can also lead to environmental sustainability because these resources will not be depleted and stimulate the economy by creating more job opportunities as well as increasing citizens potentials in investment.

Policy is the intended and unintended actions of the government. A policy is a principle or a group of related principles, along with their consequent rule(s) of action that provide for the successful achievement of specific organization objectives. A policy contains both a 'principle' and a 'rule of action' (Thierauf, et al.1977:209). Policies are made to curb or solve existing problems. It is geared towards making an effective use of a particular matter. Policy is a harnessed ideas articulated towards formalizing and addressing a coordinated

principles for action or inaction. The administrators in a bureaucratic organisation formulate visions that translate to policy for addressing the organisational challenges. The overall objective of renewable energy master plan (REMP) are to: articulate a national vision, targets and a road map for addressing key development challenges facing Nigeria through the accelerated development and exploitation of renewable energy; and put in place, a comprehensive framework for developing renewable energy policies, legal instruments, technologies, manpower, infrastructure and market to ensure that the visions and targets are realized (ECN 2005:35).

In any economy, policies are found in all functional areas and at various levels within the existing area. For the policies to be effective, they should be based on organization objectives; capable of relating objectives to functions, physical factors and organization personnel; sufficiently comprehensive in scope; stable and flexible; in conformity with accepted ethical standards (Thierauf, et al. 1977:210-211). These notwithstanding, the implementation of any policy are determinant to its success. Implementation often hinge on the availability of both man and material resources as well as the environmental characteristic of socio-economic condition in a given organization.

Energy Policy: Energy policy is a clear guidance on difficult, controversial and globally important issues that tend to outline procedural or hindrance to the smooth flow of action or inaction in energy business (Western Morning News, 2013). It is a legislation to promote energy efficiency in a nation or the world at large (Phil's Stock World, 2013). Energy policy is a detailed guideline by the government on the exploration, production and all the activities in energy industry as it concerned the nation or the world. There are national energy policy which regulates all the activities of energy industry, production and utilization. There is also world energy policy regulating global energy exploration and production. Energy policy is vital because it

outlines and regulates the activities guiding the energy production and use. For example, according to OECD/IEA, (2013) Austria Hydropower policy contributes to the security of Austrian energy supplies and the stability of the wider European electricity system. In Denmark, major investment is planned to meet Denmark's new goal that wind power generate 50% of its electricity consumption by 2020. Netherlands in the support scheme for renewables, the level of subsidy keeps up with the market price of energy. Norway-Sweden, a joint Norway-Sweden scheme provides a larger market for trading electricity certificates, promoting renewable generation. High proportion of Spain's electricity is already provided by renewable sources; grid operation has been adapted to successfully handle output variability. Under this framework therefore, the objectives of this study are: to identify the role of public administrators in the implementation of renewable energy policy in Nigeria; ascertain the challenges of these role in the implementation of renewable energy policy in Nigeria and suggest possible remedies to enhancing the role of public administrators in the implementation of renewable energy policy in Nigeria.

The Role of Public Administrators in Renewable Energy Policy in Nigeria

We should recall that a public administrator is a public servant, civil servant, he is a servant of the state and belongs to the executive arm of the government. His duty is to give effect to the policies and decisions of the government of the day whose responsibility it is to administer the affairs of the state, (Asiodu 1992:289). Diego (2012) maintains that the growth of the public affairs is encouraged through the participation of public administrators in decision-making and implementation. Diego emphasized that, in any bureaucracy, the public administrators offer advice and contribute to the formulation of policy but we all know that the determination and the decisions

on the policy belong to the minister and the cabinet. As a subservient to authority, the administrator exercises power over those functions constitutionally granted to be performed by him. In this case therefore, to realize the objectives and achieve the targets and milestones set out in the REMP, clear strategies and implementation issues were addressed. The public administrator would do the following in ensuring the realization of expected policy objectives as initiated by ECN (2005:165).

Policy, Legal and Regulatory Framework - Public administrators implements government policies. The onus lies on them to follow the contents of the policy and ensure that they are implemented. It is incumbent on the government to create the appropriate framework for policy, legal, fiscal and regulatory instruments that would attract domestic and international investments. In such framework, the administrators will involve actions that all stakeholders must take and coordinates\supervises such actions in order to achieve a sustainable renewable energy.

Creating a Level Playing Ground - There are incidentals in the implementation of any policy which tends to frustrate the realization of the policy objectives. The roles of the public administrators in this respect are to report to the government those unintended consequences of the policy for its reprisals. In Nigeria for instance, there are subsidies on fossil-fuelled conventional energy technologies, external costs including environmental, health and safety which are not taken into account in market price of these energy carriers, they also create barriers for renewable energies to achieve a higher market share. The administrator who is at the corridor of power and an eye to the executive looks into the ambiguities in renewable energy policy implementation, recommends and ensure that proper actions are taken as well as barriers removed to have level playing ground.

Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) - While the broad objective of the renewable energy policy is to have standards, the administrator's responsibility is to attach portfolio standards and defined target year of each specific renewable energy form in the overall renewable energy policy. This is necessary because, it will enable the administrator to evaluate and analyse the policy contents, policy goals and policy achievements in the renewable energy policy.

Fiscal Incentives - There is a policy framework creation of innovative incentives to encourage the renewable energy technology supply companies\investors at the initial stage whereby tax exemptions and capital subsidies such as investment grants are given to the companies or investors to enable them find their feet. The administrator's duty is to ensure that these rules are obeyed by the appropriate restricting agencies like the customs and excise and tax and revenue departments of the federation. The administrators give the relief papers to the companies\investors as a support or backing to the government policy on renewable energy.

Market Incentives Policy: The major factor in the renewable energy policy is the ambition of the government to set renewable energy entry into the national energy mix. This is actually one of the major obstacles of renewable energy that is, creating a market for a product that is not yet cost-competitive. To solve this problem, the public administrator assumes innovative incentive policies that would address the obstacles in order to have government – led initiatives and entrepreneurial response.

Other roles of a public administrator according to Cornell University Law School (1992), includes but not limited to the factors identified below. The first is concerned with issuing such rules as the administrator considers necessary or appropriate to achieve the objectives designated in his functions by the government, as well as

making such arrangements as may be necessary and appropriate to facilitate effective coordination among all federally funded programs and the preparation of an annual comprehensive plan for facilitating such coordination. In addition to these, there is need to provide for the furnishing of information derived from the national policies established for the growth and development of the nation, reinforced with the provision of adequate staff, train and retrain them to fit into the programmes of the state policy as well as enough resources which are necessary to properly carry out the responsibilities of the government. Finally, it is necessary to ensure that the policies of the government are implemented, ensure that financial and otherwise any hindrance to the state policy are submerged, recommending to the chief executive all loopholes and or barriers inhibiting the state policy, identifying and summarizing effective program models that provide treatment, counseling, or other aid to enhancing state policy, describing in detail the activities in the preceding fiscal year of the nation and appropriating actions for them, accounting for and describi all the programs for which assistance was provided in the year under review as well as recommending possible advancement, ensuring that all the relevant ministries and parastatals are informed of their annual grant as well as releasing them when needed to enable them run the affairs of the ministry, providing technical assistance and training to law enforcement agencies, State and local governments, elements of the criminal justice system, public and private nonprofit agencies, and individuals in the prevention, investigation, prosecution, and treatment of cases.

Basically, it suggested that, as countries develop, the functions of public administrators and political power takes “rubber band” and “balloon” characteristics, able to be delegated in many different ways while also being controlled and also able to affect predictably the behavior of subordinates and the general public. It indicates the following aspects to pay

attention to: (a) the mixing of soft and hard forms of administrators with political powers; (b) the delegation and control of political power; (c) responsiveness to regulations; (e) quality of human relationships and (f) problem-solving capacity (Werlin, 2010).

The Challenges of the Public Administrator's Role in the Implementation of Renewable Energy Policy in Nigeria

There are challenges to the role of public administrators in the implementation of renewable energy policy in Nigeria. Prior to the implementation of the government's plan for renewable energy, regulatory delays and unnecessary duplication across jurisdictions discouraged potential new investors in renewable energy programme, (Maria van der Hoeven 2014). A few companies dropped out in Korea due to delay to parts of individual projects, legal and institutional limitation, and uncertainty of the business outlook. It took a considerable amount of time to stabilize the new technology due to frequent server maintenance and software modification (Maria van der Hoeven 2014: p. 105). In France, development phases (pilot, prototype, demonstration and testing in real conditions up to industrial launch) require increasing amounts of funds for an uncertain outcome; these features are hard to combine for a standard investor. Unlike conventional and less risky investments, financing innovation requires a deep understanding of technical and commercial issues, risks and opportunities, as well as a risk-management process through close project follow-up; and a high return of investment to finance part of the risk incurred (102). In Portugal, assessments of the benefits and consequences of structural infrastructure investments require a long-term perspective, but this was not compatible with some stakeholders' shorter term perception of the market. The financial crisis plays a critical role in access to investment funding and business stability, while international energy markets and the business environment continue to change, in

terms of supply and demand, with evidence of higher volatility than ever before, (99). Italy's main obstacles met in the implementation of the new market framework and in deploying infrastructures for renewable energy, have been the long administrative procedures and the "not in my backyard" (NIMBY) effect (92). In Spain, at the technical level, the integration of large amounts of intermittent generation requires adequate transmission and distribution energy planning. Environmental issues and public opposition have been a challenge for the Spanish-French interconnection, as the grids have to pass through areas of high environmental value (84). In Norway and Sweden, going from a national to a bilateral Renewable Electricity policy is challenging. The cornerstone of co-operation is an agreement between Norway and Sweden on a common market for electricity certificates. It is important to have regular and close contact between the ministries responsible for the certificate system and the energy agencies administering the system. This has proved important for the proper handling of information that can have an impact on the market (82). Apparently, some investors are willing to contribute financially to renewable energy themselves (c.g. for marketing purposes). In 2013, as a result of the increased budget, there is far more variation in projects supported: 224 large-scale solar energy projects, 33 onshore wind farms and 104 renewable heat projects, but also several tidal energy, large-scale solar water heating, hydropower and renewable gas projects (80-81). In 2012, the Danish government initiatives point toward the long-term goal of full conversion to renewable energy by 2050. The goal for 2020 is that wind energy cover 50% of Danish electricity consumption. But integrating large amounts of fluctuating wind power demands other adaptations to secure the quantity of energy supply (79).

Interference by the political office holders - Implementing policies by the bureaucrats are at the discretion of the political office holders. He directs what happens in the state, especially

the policies that would promote party's manifestos. Some policies which were not initiated or inherited by the political office holder are frustrated and skewed. At the end of the day, the policy goal would not be realised.

Influence of the socio-economic environment of the administrators - The socio-economic environment of the public administrator contributes to the success or failure of any government policy. The public administrator may be lured by hunger to accept bribe in order to delay, divert or frustrate the intentions of the government expressed in a paper for the good of the people. Poor socio-economic environment of the public administrator causes harm in the implementation of government policy, hence he seeks for what enters his pocket as income.

Bureaucratic Bottlenecks - Officialdom and hierarchical structure in place at the government business has always delayed the accomplishment of objectives. Sometimes the objectives are completely marred due to the officious way the public administrator handled the lay down principles in the office without recourse to emergencies, facts and needs.

Due Process - Like the bureaucracy, due process has a major setback on the renewable energy policy achievement in Nigeria. Too many committee meetings as well as following due investigation and approving of energy needs associated with new government policy-due process, had much delay in the implementation of renewable energy programmes in Nigeria.

Weak and Inadequate Implementation of Policies - Before now, alternative energy was absent in the policies of the successive governments at both federal and state levels. No agency was tasked to implement government policies on renewable energy. Hence, the public administrator found it difficult to apportion the role to any group or people.

Low Human Capacity Building - The gap on human capacity availability in the renewable energy industry has been one of the major setbacks in the implementation of policy. Most people who claim to be professionals are not trained in the area, hence they produce fake and inadequate materials that cannot last.

High Patronage of Fake Renewable Energy Materials - Due to poor product standards and high demand for wealth by many people in the emerging economies, fake renewable energy materials are patronised instead of high quality ones produced by professionals in the energy sector. The essence of this is not only to discredit renewable energy policy, but also, to get more money in continuous replacing of the fake materials.

Changes in Government - The public administrator's role will be handicapped if the successive administration does not continue the ideas in the policy. Most changes in government in Nigeria had always come with changes in government policy. The administrator would lack the power to insist on implementing a previous administrations policy when in actual fact the political office holder has his own vision.

Poor Financial Outlays - The public administrator would find the implementation of renewable energy technology (RET) difficult if there were no financial provision for it in the annual budget. It would be more difficult if the RET was in the budget but with inadequate and poor financial outlay that can meet the set target.

Corruption - On the nature and manner of giving and accepting bribe or any other form of motivational factors involved in corruption, there are believes that corruption is endemic in Africa, particularly in Nigeria (Michael, 2013). Corruption may undermine capacity building and institutional development projects (Klitgaard, 1997). The fight against corruption has also been much studied from the perspective of

individual incentives. A variety of factors contribute to corrupt practices especially in societies where the wealthy are respected and given honours and chieftaincy titles regardless of the acquisition methods. There are official instituted organs set to ensure that bureaucracy functions effectively, but the operative principles, doctrines and enabling powers motivates corruption. According to Purohit, (2007: 286) such operative principles, doctrines and enabling powers includes but not limited to the complexity of laws and procedures, the monopoly power and degree of discretion of officials, the lack of adequate monitoring and supervision, the commitment of political leadership, and the overall environment in the public sector. The low level of public sector wages in developing countries is often advanced as a leading factor affecting corruption. This was deduced from empirical evidence in a study by Shah, (2007) as to whether low civil service wages foster corruption.

Overly aggressive targets, Uncertainty of Policy Duration, Inadequate Efforts to Enforce Policies

In their analyses of the U.S. experience of renewable portfolio standards policies that focused on policy design and implementation, find that overly aggressive targets, uncertainty of policy duration, inadequate efforts to enforce policies, and too many exemptions led to the failure of renewable energy policies, (Wiser et al., 2005 and Wiser et al., 2007 and Wiser (2010)).

From the foregoing, the following recommendations become inevitable. The first is the advocacy of police persistence to encourage the 'going concern concept of government. Over the years, each administration ends up with their policy whether implemented or not. Those policies that are people oriented are abandoned to some selfish policies of the emerging government. The bureaucrats have no alternative than to do what the political office holders directed. Government must develop policy frameworks that would encourage private sector investment in

renewable energy production. Those restrictions that hinder private participation in renewable energy production, such as, high cost of RET, high import tariff on RET components, etc. should be removed. Also recommended is the provision of capital subsidies in form of grant, soft loan, tax free, etc. would be necessary to exert entrepreneurial activities and initial take off production.

Nigeria should implement the IEA identified three actions which will allow renewable energy and other clean energy technologies. First, energy prices must appropriately reflect the "true cost" of energy (e.g. through carbon pricing) so that the positive and negative impacts of energy production and consumption are fully taken into account. Second, inefficient fossil fuel subsidies must be removed, while ensuring that all citizens have access to affordable energy. Finally, governments must develop policy frameworks that encourage private sector investment in lower-carbon energy options. Public administrators should continue to be centrally involved in the policy-making process in order to promote vested interests requires for the development of more broadly based political organizations. Since the politicians are not permanent, public administrators would direct successive governments on the affairs of the state. Furthermore, Government should provide adequate funds in the annual budget to help the public administrators in the implementation of renewable energy policy. The funds provided should be monitored to ensure that proper utilization and to avoid diversion in order to meet private socio-economic demands.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the role of public administrators could be inhibiting or facilitating in renewable energy policy in Nigeria. We have been able to assert the roles of public administrators to encompassing policy, legal and regulatory framework; creating a level playing ground; ensuring that the

policies of the government are implemented; ensuring that financial and otherwise any hindrance to the state policy are submerged; recommending to the chief executive all loopholes and or barriers inhibiting the state policy; identifying and summarizing effective program models that provide treatment, counseling, or other aid to enhancing state policy; able to describing in detail the activities in the preceding fiscal year of the nation and appropriating actions for them, etc.

The challenges in carrying out these roles are interference by the political office holders, influence of the socio-economic environment of the public administrators, weak and inadequate implementation of policies, due process, bottlenecks in a bureaucratic organization, change in government, poor financial outlays, human factor, etc. There are, however, measures that would ensure good policy implementation by the bureaucrats in the emerging economies, such as: persistency in renewable energy policy, government involvement and patronage, leveling the playing field, Capital Subsidies, etc.

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Interrogating Culture, Leadership, and Legal Framework in Sam Ukala's *Odour of Justice*

Chiamaka Cynthia Igboayaka

Abstract

*Culture is the way of life of the people. Through it, the people interpret shared values and identity interwoven by leadership history and the entrenchment of justice system. Though, there are cultural demarcations between Nigerian societies, the leadership style of, and the qualities of the ruler highlight the cultural and rule of law practised in a particular society or community. Most Nigerian traditional communities have long history of cultural identity and leadership management based on transparent framework of rules. However, the contemporary Nigerian justice and security systems leave much to be desired. The legal processes and sometimes the outcome of the court cases cause the people to doubt the transparent policies they claim to possess. Laws which are meant to protect the people especially the poor are often hijacked by the wealthy and corrupt individuals and used instead, to oppress and suppress them. Culture on the other hand serves as an alternative to establishing and implementing strategic laws that help to maintain order in a given society. In *Odour of Justice*, Sam Ukala, addresses some of these challenges by revealing the importance of culture and justice in checkmating the excesses of some corrupt and greedy individuals. The manipulation of trope and ideology by the playwright does not leave the reader unaware of the dynamics of culture leadership and justice in a changing society. The work asserts that how the people perceive and respond to laws portray admissibly the nature and practise of the above.*

Introduction

The concept of culture in Nigeria is significantly directed to the policies that govern and instruct the behavioural activities of the people. Culture refers to the way of life of a particular people; their customs, norms and values. Culture interprets humongous codes that represent the people's values and heritage overtime as they are traditionally and culturally historical. Culture undergoes social and political through factors. Thus, the role of culture is sometimes challenged by the political forces that tend to downplay the good interest of the populace. This brings about scores of grievances between both the rulers and the ruled and often time end up in socio-political crisis.

Culture in rural communities is usually observed at its climax. The traditional heads are believed to be one of the best custodians of the people's culture. One of their duties is to ensure that the traditions of the land are carried out to the letter. However, the royal head of a community has the power, and with the consent of his cabinet members, to review the community's constitution and make amendments or change policies that may no longer be of value to the people, especially one that hurts and hinders their collective development. The contemporary times have played a major role also in helping to fashion the kind of laws enacted in the rural communities in order to align with that of the urban areas. For example, some communities are breaking out of the communist leadership to seek for autonomous and democratic governments where the people can also contribute in the affairs of the land. However, despite the growing changes to break from the old form, the people still do everything in their power to adhere to and respect their ancestral customs. These can be seen in some of the occasional festivals and ceremonies held in the villages, coupled with certain traditional rites and orientations that enable an individual to be recognised in his community, whether as a

child, youth or an elder; and be it a native or a stranger. Wyatt MacGaffey notes that "a clan's traditions reveal a structure corresponding to that of the clan itself" (17). To him, "a man without a tradition is a stranger ..." (17). Tradition thus, links a man to his past and helps him discover his identity.

In *Odour of Justice*, Ukala highlights the essence of culture through the stepstaken by the people of Oki. Even in the midst of threats and challenges from their superior leader, Owodo II of the Ogodo clan, they remained resolute in their fight and decision to retain their leader (Elema) whom they believe is a symbolic representation of their tradition. Their unilateral decision stand out even in the court of law as there was no clear cut evidence to prove otherwise.

The Nigerian constitution interprets a set of laws put together by legal and government institutions in a state which is expected to be upheld or obeyed by the people residing within its existing territories. The constitution provides guides of punishment for the offender. In other words, they serve as a group of laws set out to maintain order in a society or an establishment. The Nigerian laws are not different from the one practiced in America, since the two countries maintain the democratic tenets in its leadership structure and justice system. Therefore, the constitution can be described as a set of rules or codes of laws that capture the mainstream of justice delivery, politics and administration in a nation. Their function is to outline codes and preserve ethics of the law which serve as the *grund nurm* of the society. According to B. Ewelukwa, "the law is described as a set of rules that exists in human society for regulating human conduct, resolving conflicts and avoiding human confrontation. It is made up of rules of conduct imposed and enforced by the sovereign or ruler"(2). Law thus, serves a regulatory purpose and is mostly established based on the religious, political and social order of its operating institution. Due to the various categories of its parts, the legal system

affords people the opportunity to explore its prospects thereby improving their chances of obtaining justice.

It must however be emphasized without mincing words that the Nigerian justice system lacks the administrative independence that it deserves as it suffers abuse by the political elites and the judiciary themselves. Lawyers and judges are often coerced to subvert the cause of justice by the parties in a suit. Integrity is a challenge in the adjudication of cases and getting victory or the entrenchment of basic human rights that displace social oppression and victimization remains a herculean task. This inadvertently leaves the ordinary citizen with no option than to appeal or be overcome by the earlier verdict given. It has further created a large group of Nigerians who may not know how to fight for their fundamental human rights and keep silent in the perpetuation of injustice and oppression by their opponents and parties in dispute. Because legal justice affects society, its corresponding effect on culture cannot be totally questioned. Society is the product of a people's culture as culture shapes society. More often than not the quality of justice is a derivative of the ethical strength and capacity of the existing principles for resilience and truth.

Synopsis of the play

Odour of Justice portrays the standing frame of justice in a society filled with lust for power. Obiamaka, the new Elema of Oki community is challenged by the supreme leader of their clan, Owodo II of Ogodo. Obiamaka, having lost his elder brother Ofume (his predecessor) to a mysterious death, is unanimously crowned king by his people. Meanwhile, the wife of Ofume, Umogwun is accused of having a hand in her husband's death. She runs away threatening to dethrone Obiamaka by the time she gives birth to her son. Obiamaka questions the paternity of her child, having been told by his late brother that he had not slept with his wife Umogwun for several years. Umogwun collaborates with Owodo II of Ogodo who is

already angered by the late installation of Obiamaka as Elema without his consultation and the recent activities in Oki town which has been detrimental to his own interest. After the birth of Umogwun's son, Owodo II seizes the opportunity to fight the Elema. As her son grows older, Owodo dethrones Elema and installs Umogwun's son as the Elema of Oki town. The people of Oki protests against the declaration via the appeal court, after which the Elema (Obiamaka) is exonerated and justice served. This leaves Umogwun's son dejected and wrings shame on the face of Owodo II and his supporters.

Critical Analysis of *Odour of Justice*

Sam Ukala in this play offers the audience an insight into the cultural significance of a conflicting leadership situation in Oki community. Faced with the domineering leadership of a typical traditional African dictator Owodo II of Ogodo, the people of Oki show astute resilience in the customs they believe in. It is established in the play that it was the people who installed Obiamaka as the Elema of Oki town, following the death of his elder brother Ofume. Therefore, they do not take it light when it becomes the decision of the Owodo to alter their collective aspiration and support. This brings about the major conflict in the play and later leads to Owodo's defeat and disgrace. The crisis in the play started in the opening scene (flashback) where Ofume, the former Elema accused his estranged wife Umogwun of infidelity. The part was replayed as a result of Ozo (Elema's aunt) reminiscence of the event gearing towards the present condition of Ofume in his sick bed. That Ofume strongly believes that Umogwun desecrates their marital bond and by that behaviour has committed an abominable act is not disputable. According to him, "everyday, you find new excuse for coming home well after midnight...Why don't you wait for me to die before you begin to hawk yourself about?, to which Umogwun replies in rhetoric "I? Hawk myself about?" (127) Ofume's allegation of

this infidelity which attends the taboo tag is not because that's what she does but that "everyone in Oki knows that." (127) The impropriety of Umogwun's denial may not be unconnected with the above truth and its cultural implication for her and Ofume. However, she goes further to blame Ofume for not being man enough to impregnate her, thereby suggesting his sterility or incompleteness. It should be stated quickly that both of them have had children in the past but they all died. But being a woman in desperate need of fame and power, she laments that Ofume is not able to give her a child after the death of their children. Her decision to engage in marital adultery may not be unconnected with an unspoken bad feeling about an evading sense of loss of throne. Ofume is the Elema but having a son for him would make him an heir apparent and Umogwun would not want to lose the opportunity of having her heir on the throne. Thus through language and action she captures this problem in perspective:

...How old am I, Ofume, that you should expect me to lie fallow like an abandoned farmland? My seven children have died here, before your very eyes. One by one, they died. And now you are also ... Or do you deceive yourself with the thought that you are still alive? You have no heir to your throne. The wife of a king dreams to be the mother of a king. And I wish to realise my dream. Can you give me an Elema with the cold limp rag between your thighs? Can you impregnate me by lying lifeless beside me night after night? Answer me. (128)

Having suspected her of infidelity, Ofume for some years stopped sleeping with his wife. He tells his family members about his doubts of the legitimacy of Umogwun's pregnancy as she has informed them of her expecting a baby who would eventually ascend the throne of Oki Kingdom. Ukala like in most of his plays uses characterisation to achieve cultural conflict and motif. Umogwun's action is a social taboo: one which defies cultural purpose and intent, making further a

lampoon of the health of the Elema as well as traditional stool ascendancy. In traditional Africa the payment of a bride price legitimates the male child in most indigenous societies as being portrayed through her action. So a woman in her situation having been the queen will do anything within her power to remain there. This is why she queries while addressing Elema as "My husband! Or did you receive my bride price from anyone else?" (148). This problem is buttressed by Elema's sister who has got wind of the matter: "well, I ask because your so-called husband wrote me to say that he had not slept with you for several years and that he was not responsible for your pregnancy" (148).

On the part of the present Elema's wife Okwunne, the kingship throne/Elemaship of her husband, Obiamaka is a mistake. She is not settled with the idea of her husband being the Elema of Oki. Her fear is heightened by the visit of two strange (beautiful) women to Elema, after which they offered him a calabash with a warning before their exit. Elema's information that the messengers were from the 'Great Corpses' (144) petrifies Okwunne and terrifies her further: "Ghosts! I said it. One sees all sorts of things in the interior. You're just being installed and ghosts are already visiting." (144).

She worries that her husband is unperturbed and seeks support from his aunt. Ozo rather dismisses her as being foolish and ignorant of their tradition, blaming it on her youthfulness. Okwunne subsequently mocks them as being cowards for not daring to touch or open the white calabash dropped by one of the women, as portrayed on pages 144-145.

However it was later discovered in the play that the two women were sent by the Owodo in order to frighten the Elema and probably make him develop cold feet and relinquish the throne. It would be mentioned that Umogwun by culture failed to take care of her ailing husband. When he dies, she is not allowed to take part in the funeral rituals. Her relationship and protection by the Owodo is interpreted by the Oki people as

questionable. Hence, she is not allowed to act as queen as Obiamaka suddenly becomes the Elema at the death of his brother Ofume. Her son is also not allowed to undertake any traditional duties since the nature of his birth is also questionable. In order to claim the throne both parties indisputably go to court.

Culture and Legalism in the play

Sam Ukala in *Odour of Justice* provides us with the practical route of obtaining justice in a Nigerian traditional community and the never ending influence of some affluent groups in marginalising their opponents. At this point, one can no longer trust the outcome of a case decided in legal courts. Many times, even when justice is served it takes a lot of time, thereby making it difficult for the victim to carry through. This leaves a lot of questions on the need for the legal institutions since they may not serve their purpose justly. In a country like Nigeria where many people tend to indulge in illegal means of getting quick money, where many do not rely on the government to provide for its people, a lot of things are bound to go wrong. The security and legal systems become the major means by which these actions can be curbed. Instead, the reverse is the case. These establishments have rather joined forces in the midst of the exploitations to unleash harm and mayhem to the people. Ukala does not hesitate to restore hope to the people as seen in *Odour of Justice*. Through his characters' action and language, he revives the people's anticipation to resilience in the midst of any difficulty. Analysing the events in the play, the Owodo II of Ogodo considers his position as a traditional leader as an accessory to exploiting his people. He is rather disgraced in the end, when the Appeal Court rules in favour of his opponents, the Elema of Oki. He was provided with clear references of the contents of the case, therefore, proving beyond doubt why the Elema should retake and retain his throne as the rightful king of Oki. At the

first dispute in court in the high court Owodo won because he was able to bribe his way thereby jeopardising the cause of justice.

Culture on its part happens to be the basic factor for the events in the play. The mysterious death of Ofume, leading to the crowning of his younger brother, Obiamaka (Elema) is culturally and spiritually interwoven. Though Ofume's passing is tragic, it was like a step forward towards the development of Oki community and is sacrificial. The newly elected Elema does everything in his power to see that he cleanses his community of all the atrocities committed by the people in power. In his audacious capacity as king he dissolves the task force in the community who went round collecting fees from the villagers without making proper account of public finances. The Elema is able to create out of the wreckage of the past new policies and members of the traditional throne thereby paving way for progress in the society. His integrity and vision are fully captured in the statement: "My government will not condone corruption. The task force on the modernisation of Oki, as presently constituted, is hereby dissolved. No kobo shall henceforth be paid to it by any indigene of Oki" (156).

Meanwhile the dissolved task force was supposedly instituted by the supreme clan leader Owodo II of Ogodo. In other words, the mere suspension of the members without his permission angers the Owodo, and strengthens his resolve to dethrone the Elema and strip him of his powers. Elema goes further to accuse the Owodo to have collaborated with members of the task force to defraud the people of Oki. This shows the bold nature of the Elema even to the point of confronting his superior. His action is enlivened by the fact that the Owodo is behind the illegal activities of the task force and Elema would not tolerate any of these actions. Elema goes further to tell the Owodo that the resources and powers of Oki kingdom do not rest in the hands of the Ogodo clan. Elema Obiamaka shows his understanding of his traditional role to the people as he does not

fail in his custodianship duty to guide the Owodo properly on the right step to traditional ascendance by taking him through a regurgitation of history:

The Elema does not care what you care yourself. I have to warn you to steer clear of Oki, to stop fomenting evil there. The amalgamation of Oki and Ogodo into a clan was purely for convenience. When Uhunmede, the first Elema, founded Oki around 1275 AD, the founder of Ogodo was not there. Uhunmede came from Benin, just as the founder of Ogodo, but both of them didn't come into the same party. They never knew each other before they settled in their different locations. No one became a vassal to the other. In fact, Oki is a separate clan. The Elema throne is hereditary like yours. It is not an appendage to yours. It is not open to scramble. Your forefathers never were kingmakers in Oki. Therefore, you cannot make kings for Oki. I warn you for the last time to stop meddling with the affairs of Oki or you'll find the trouble that you've been seeking relentlessly. I warn you. The start that burns like candle dwindles like a candle (167).

The above comment offers us an insight into the background of the Oki community in relation to Ogodo clan and the tussle for traditional ascendance. The idea of culture led the people of Oki to select Obiamaka as the Elema of Oki. They saw this as a divine providence and did not delay in seizing the opportunity to abide by tradition. At the revelation of this Owodo is infuriated and vows to make Elema pay for undermining his authority. He tries to accomplish this when he declares Elema regent and pronounces Umogwun's son the heir to the throne, irrespective of his paternity. The issue is contested in the court of law and judgement was given in that regard. However, the people of Oki strongly believe that the declaration by Owodo is not enough to invalidate their joint decision on the Elema. Obiamaka as culture and its traditional justice system is a communality process. Culture in Nigerian societies is sacred. It determines the principles governing their beliefs and traditions.

Its effect is seen mostly in rural communities where many are yet to understand secular ideals and practices of a globalizing world. The idea of globalisation and civilisation does not rule out the existence of a cultural society. Ukala through this motif invokes a cultural ideology into the socio-political setting of rural communities imagined through Oki. The tussle for the throne of Oki is historical and Ukala's portrayal of this history is not accidental as it is culturally emancipating. He interplays the context of culture and law and order to underscore the significance of leadership and rational judgement. The idea of marginalisation is therefore ruled out and the playwright's exploration of this argument is tactful.

The use of the legal system in the play to resolve the conflicts arising as a result of kingship squabbles cannot be underestimated equally. Although in the contemporary society, especially in Nigeria, where many questioned the quality of justice or verdict given at law courts, law still plays a major role in the dispensation of justice and that seems the viewpoint of Ukala's *Odour of Justice*. Nevertheless, it is a known fact that legal processes are usually manipulated by the wealthy citizens mostly of the leadership class. This is very clear when Owodo's close subjects and confidantes conspire with him through the law to frustrate the Elema out of his position. The fact that these characters feel that nothing would be done again shows the deplorable condition of getting justice delivered in a Nigerian court. According to Nwakacgo, "I wonder. What can the law do for him? Now that those infidels, who judged our first cases in his favour, have all been thrown away on transfer and our men are now the judges, we control the law" (164).

Ukala suggests through the actions and statements of some of these characters that the law is a tool of oppression rather than emancipation. Nigerian justice system and its verdicts are thus ridiculed through the statement credited to Uzun who describes the law as a weapon, ironically depicting why it should not be trusted at all times: "The way to infinitely ride the

law like an ass is to pretend to respect it. In that way, others would continue to prostrate before it while it tramples upon them in accordance with their dictates" (164). Therefore it is not surprising that the Owodo would support this argument when he says that "In the hands of the great, the law is a weapon of oppression. And we are the great!" (164). The play mirrors how the wealthy in society perpetuate oppression with the connivance of judicial officers to provide a party with a favourable judgement at the expense and freedom of the other; these others which largely remain of the poor segment of society.

This ought not to be the case, as the legal units are meant to serve everyone, irrespective of tribe or status. Offences that are punishable by law are only applied to individuals who have not the financial resources to lavish on the lawyers, even in the midst of substantial evidence against their rich rivals. Cases like land matters, boundary issues and leadership conflicts abound in Nigerian rural communities. Efforts to resolve these problems amicably sometimes escalate to bigger conflicts. The legal institutions then become the last resort. Resolving a case in court sometimes does not provide lasting solution, this invariably is portrayed in the play, and therefore it is important to recognise the role of communal acceptance and understanding between two conflicting parties in order to engage in better and long-lasting relationships. Unlike in the past when most rural societies engage in the communist type of leadership, others are now embracing the democratic and rotational forms of governance. No more is it seen as a family affair where only members of the same family or household are said to possess the right to govern a particular territory. However, as seen in the play, the system of leadership is that of communism. In other words, the people consider it as part of their culture to entrust kingship to members and descendants of the same household; thus, anything on the contrary contaminates and defies their mutual conviction. The Elcma

although did justice to his position as the king and is able to handle their case wisely in the court of law, he does however seem to have a biased notion about the justice system considering the land case between his town and Ogodo-nta. He resolves to keep the case out of court and settle it the traditional way. To him, no good has come out of the judicial system concerning the land matter and that case to him is not yet a priority: "I must tell you Diopka Efule: the land case shall not be the priority of this administration. In fact, we have planned to withdraw the case from the court and settle it amicably with Ogodo-nta". (158). As Elema reminisces further:

Fifty-eight years have passed like a bad dream. Court cases inflicted death on the three Elemas. And Diokpa Efule is urging me to employ the unprofitable method of my predecessors in dealing with the evil and unpredictable masquerade. No. I'd rather do more fruitful things in my time (159).

As the supreme ruler of the clan, Owodo II seizes the opportunity to manipulate the justice/legal system against his counterpart, but his plans eventually collapse when their case was taken to the Court of Appeal and struck out because, he does not have any substantial evidence to back his claims. Elema's frustration with this failure confirms his thoughts and hopes on the mode of operation of the Appeal Court as he persuades his Defence Counsel, having lost in the High Court. Elema's interrogation of the justice system is encapsulated therefore in the speech made by the Defence Council which buttresses his anger and dejection at judgements given in court to favour the rich and possibly the corrupt: "Chief, could anyone say that we didn't perform brilliantly at the High Court? The way some of these judges liquidate one's brilliant performance for a mess of porridge is, to say the least, sickening and frustrating" (180)

His frustration is because;”I don’t want to go through this again. I mean ... It’s not because of the money. I know you can pay. But i detest what some of my learned friends do: tout for bribe for the judge so that their client can win a case that he should clearly lose! “(180). According to Elema, “theirs was a justice with a bad odour. The court of appeal may be different.” (180)

The Court of Appeal in Nigeria may not be different from that of other nations. Matters that are not completely settled, or a group that is not satisfied with the rulings of previous courts, can take the case to the Appeal Court, before and if need be, proceeding to the Supreme Court which is the highest court of justice. The Court of appeal was established by section 238 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. To Adefi Olong the Court of Appeal is “an intermediate court and hears appeal from the Federal High Court’s, the State High Courts, Code of Conduct Tribunals, the Sharia Court of Appeal and the Customary Court of Appeal.” (66).

Leadership Structure in the play

The Elema represents in a great way the ideal qualities of a good leader. He puts the interest of his people at the front and would not let anyone infringe on their rights. He, unlike his counterpart Owodo II, does not abuse his position by taxing the people unnecessarily and embezzling their collective revenue, and he sees to it that his subjects do the same. Though, the Owodo II of Ogodo clan sees itself as the overall head of all the other clans, the Elema of Oki would not surrender to anyone who plans to abuse his people and infringe on their human and traditional rights. How he is perceived to be at loggerheads with the Owodo is as a result of several cases of fundamental abuse of human rights and traditions. Thus, the Elema is considerate and calculative as a leader. He allows people, both young and old, the right to voice their opinion and take effective decisions that contribute to community development. In one of their

gatherings, to discuss issues affecting their community, the elders would not allow one of the youths to speak, because they believe that the youths should wait for elders to talk first before they make their own contributions. Ozo, Elema's aunt rather disagrees, saying that ideas do not come by age, that whoever has anything to say should speak up. To this, Elema agrees, "...What I want to get today is the consensus of the entire Oki; hence I invited the elders, the youth leaders and members of the Task Force on the Modernization of Oki. Before we ask the youth to implement a decision, they ought to understand it I will not lead the youth like sheep. Let's hear the young man" (154). The Owodo, on his part, is an authoritative leader who wants to take full and excessive control of all the towns under him, including Oki town. But due to Elema's resilience and goodwill for his people, the Owodo's excessive powers were thus limited. Through these custodians of culture and traditions, Ukala explores leadership and governance in Oki kingdom and by a large extent the portrayal of leadership qualities and attributes in the traditional rulers. The playwright makes no mince when he projects two sides of the leadership coin for the peoples' evaluation and choice. Edward Wynn in *Molinta Enendu*, identifies the following as appropriate leadership attributes: the insight to understand the thought and values underlying the thinking of significant persons and groups;

the judgement to determine which issues can become sources of potential group coalescence; the moral qualities to decide whether such issues are deserving of concern; the desire to unite people around such issues; the ability to commit oneself to such an end to foster cooperation; the sense of acquiescence necessary to loyally serve others who may grant authority to lead; and the communication of interpersonal skills to foster cooperation. (262)

The Elema possesses most of these qualities and these are why his people hold him in high regard. He proves himself a worthy choice for his people and does not disappoint them for selecting

him as their king. Though the Owodo II tries to use his power to counter this, but then, there was not much he could. Enendu's attitude to community leadership is that of shared ideas and principles with respect to human values. Thus he states that,

Community leadership style is often seen as part of the custodians and real essence of culture, promoting continuity in the development of human societies. Its operation is anchored on an integrated pattern of human knowledge, beliefs and behaviours that depend upon social learning, set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices that characterize the traditional community as an institution. This is fundamental and important to traditional leadership, which is considered an instrument for the protection and preservation of the people's culture. The leadership authority in traditional communities, especially in Nigeria, is usually conferred on men of dignity, in royal households based on ancestral lineage and meritorious standing. In other words, the traditional leadership institution in these communities is culturally-based and shaped (264).

In other words, the pattern of leadership practiced in traditional communities is culturally represented. It has its inclination based on the traditional values obtainable in the said society. It would be maintained that the Elema does not go outside his community's cultural purview in rendering leadership to his people but continues to dissect issues and attitudes through firm and courageous stand on the truth.

Proverbial Aesthetics in the play

Sam Ukala through the portrayal of some characters in the play employs substantial number of proverbs to convey the basic message of the play. This attests to his rich cultural roots and knowledge of the tradition and values of his people. Proverbs to any cultural community especially in Nigeria are mostly attributed to wisdom. The Igbo's describe it as *mmanu ndi Igbo ji eri okwu*, a sauce for digestion of words in Igbo clan.

Words in this context are audio expressions that may not be explicable in simple terms; therefore, to drive home the point proverbs are usually applied. Sometimes, the proverbs are self-explanatory, as some would say 'Onye atuolu ilu kowara ya, na ego ejiri luo nne ya furu efu' (that a person who expects explanation for proverbs, signifies that the mother's bride price was in vain). In *Odour of Justice*, the following proverbs can be observed. The use of proverbs in the play illustrates the deep cultural heritage of the people not just in deeds but in words. The playwright by skilfully applying them establishes an aesthetic platform for literary and dramatic appreciations.

Conclusion

Sam Ukala is an adept social and cultural commentator who deploys the artistic medium to communicate to his audience and affect their lives towards positive change. In *Odour of Justice*, the playwright is adept at showing how culture can be used to advance the society. He does not shrink from exposing the elements in society that exacerbate injustice and social oppression by manipulating norms and values of freedom and justice. In the case of Elema, he fights with his power to better the life of his people that not even the incessant threat by the supreme leader, Owodo and his sister-in-law could deter him. The people of Oki praise him for his decision to dissolve the existing task force in the community and to establish a new one which serves the need of the people without abusing their collective collections. The playwright exercises this victory through his choice of characters that are voices of reason and justice in their task to resolve conflicts that may escalate to violence in the future, especially as it concerns the rural settlements. Through cultural expression, Ukala casts a spotlight on the significance of ancestral norms and values even in a contemporary age. He weaves his theme round the lust for power, pride, greed, infidelity, betrayal and justice most of which make salient questions regarding the contemporary

society. Through artistic exploration the playwright advocates conflict resolution as panacea to communal tussles which John Onah agrees, that “every creative interpretation is a product of an ideological culture and often reflects the particularity of a given society” (26).

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The Traditional African Performance and the Latent Cultural Meanings of *Onunu* Traditional Festival of Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria

Evelyn Nwachukwu Urama

Abstract

Preparations, colourful costumes and ritualized performances have been the hallmark of festivals over time. The Onunu Festival of the people of Nsukka town of Enugu State, Nigeria is accompanied with ritualized performances which give it intense cultural meanings. Traditional performing arts like music, dance, drama, poetic chants, songs, masquerade organised in various communities in Nigeria originate from their culture which is handed over from one generation to another. In Igboland, these indigenous ritual performances serve as the means through which their cultural heritage is performed and disseminated. Although God is believed to occupy the realm above, everywhere and in all things, in traditional Igbo society people depend on the ancestral spirits, gods, deities, and other supernatural forces for survival. These ritualized performances are organised for entertainment and also to maintain the link with ancestral spirits which manifest in different forms for different purposes such as to provide solutions to the people's problems as well as enhance their satisfaction with life. This paper focuses on the aesthetic and honourable nature of the ritual performances and how they affirm the cultural meaning of the Onunu festival. It also explores how these traditional performances during the festival expose the use of colourful costumes which inspire creativity.

Introduction

Traditionally in Igbo land, performing arts like music, dance, masquerades, drama, songs and poetic chants are inseparable things which influence each other considerably. E.N. Urama in her 'Indigenous Art Performances and Igbo Worldview in Nigeria Literature' (2012) in support of this posits that they form an inseparable whole which merge at occasions like wrestling, marriage and funeral ceremonies, festivals, title taking and during sacrifices to appease the gods. The Onunu festival which is a festival that marks the end of the year and the beginning of another year in Nsukka town of Igboland is a whole one month event. It is marked by many ritualized performances which express the spirit of community ethos that is espoused in the basic Igbo philosophy that guides the society. Ikenna Nzimiro in his 'Social Structure' in *The Nsukka Environment* (1978) stresses that the structure of the villages in Nsukka rests on the basis of the lineage segments; and this is true because Nsukka people trace their origin to the escapade of the four sons Atta Igala, Nsukka Asadu Attah, Okpuje Asadu Attah, Eha-Alumona Asadu Attah and Obukpa Asadu Attah. Nsukka Asadu Attah, the eldest son of Attah Igala settled at the present Nsukka town. He has three sons, Mkpunano, Ezike Ekwensu and Dialoke who are the founding fathers of the three communities of Nsukka Town. Mkpunano has four sons namely: Nguru, Isiakpu, Umakashi and Echara. Ezike Ekwensu has three sons: Ihcagu, Ezeama and Umuoyo and that is why he is called called Nru na-ato Ezike Ekwensu and Dialoke has two sons Ihe and Owere and is fully called Ihe na Owere Dialoke Ndidi Aba. These are the major lineage groups but Mkpunano, Nru and Ihe na Owere consist of minimal lineage groups. The belief in ancestral worship links the people to their ancestors, unites lineage groups and brings social solidarity to the communities. Nsukka people therefore have ancestral shrines which the three communities worship together and such worships are made when they have one

festival or the other. Ritual celebrations during these festivals also strengthen the political system of the people because there is a hierarchy of the ancestral shrines that unite the people with their ancestors. For these worships to be successful, the leaders of the three communities' political and ritual obligations are attached to the office of the chief priests of their common deities and eldest men of kindred known as Onyishi. During Onunu festival, ceremonies requiring the presences of all the people of the communities of Nsukka as well as those requiring the presence of people from the minimal lineage groups or a hamlet called *Mkpuru* are performed. The preparation, as well as honourable and colourful costumes worn by special participants, and the ritualized performances as an integral whole mark the aesthetics of the Onunu festival and therefore add to the meaning of the festival.

Theoretical Framework

Damian U. Opatu in his 'Issues in the study of Literary Theory in Africa' posits that literary theory deals with issues as the meaning of literature, approaches to literary criticism, literary history, literary influences and reception, literary production and consumption, etc. He further stresses that literary criticism deals with the practical explication of literary texts and examines the various critical modes (perspectives) through which it is possible for texts to be given several meaning which do not essentially invalidate one another. Therefore in this regards, historical studies of literature or historicism is adopted for analysis of this work. Historical studying of a literary work relates the work to the life and times of its author or the people discussed and this aspect of textual analysis provides a link joining a past of the people with the experience of present.

Historical studies of literature or historicism is born when the French scholar Hippolyte Taine in his *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* (1863) that is translated by H. Van Laun as *History of English literature* (1871) defines and classifies the formative

historical elements of literature. He argues that literary works are shaped by three factors: race, by which he refers to as 'the innate and hereditary dispositions' of various people; surroundings or milieu, including climate, geography, and other conditions that mould attitudes and customs; and epochs, large and expanses of time, like Middle Ages or the classical age, in which 'a certain dominant idea has had sway' (23-25). Robert Spiller in support of this in an MLA pamphlet entitled *The Aims and Methods of Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literature* opines that ideas of literary works are shaped by the great ideas of their time, whether these be religious, political, scientific, or psychological; and they are also influenced by their culture, the 'habits, norms, values, roles, etc.' of their time and place. With regard to this research work, the origin or historical background of Nsukka people of Enugu State, Nigeria; the significance of Onunu festival to their cultural life in the form of the colourful and honourable costumes, the ritualized performances and the aesthetics of life of the people are discussed in this work. Since the interpretations of the activities of the one month Onunu festival in this research work describe not only the meaning of the festival but also how these meanings are derived and the significance of the festival to the people's culture, this theory, historical studies or historicism, is therefore, very relevant to this study.

Cultural and Historical Background of Onunu Festival

Onunu festival is an annual worship festival dedicated to Nkwo Nsukka goddess and many other lineage gods and it marks the end of the year and the welcoming of the New Year. This is usually at the end of the dry season and the beginning of the rainy season; from late November to early January. Its activities are based on the myth of the end of the year called *ichu arọ* (*ichu Ahua* in Nsukka dialect) and it is celebrated with different types of ritualised performances like masquerade, music, dancing, and poetic chants that emphasize the heroic

deeds of the people. C. D. Suru (2010) points out that dance, music and festivals are inseparable. He also stresses that traditional dance is an integral function of a society and a window to a people's heritage. With regards to the Onunu festival, the key performances are maiden dance and music but other ritualized performances like poetic chants, wrestling and masquerades accompany it to highlight its significance to the people's tradition especially the counting of the months of the year (*igu arọ*). J. O. Urama in his 'Astronomy and Culture in Nigeria' in *African Cultural Astronomy* (2008) posits that in many places in Igbo land, the general life of the community still largely hinges on the lunar calendar and the people look up to the king-priests who determine agricultural seasons based on the lunar calendar. Onunu festival of Nsukka people cannot be mentioned without looking into the rituals associated with how the priests and elders of the town examine nature and their environment to come up with the calendar.

Nsukka people just as other places in Igboland operate the lunar calendar. Urama (2008) points out that each lunar month has seven market weeks (*Izu asaa*) and each week (*izu*) is four days, Eke, Oye (Orie), Afor and Nkwo. He also stresses that each month has a name, a ritual associated with it and also an economic activity specially connected with it. Urama also stresses that the Igbo year consists of twelve lunar months (354 days) as this falls short of the solar year by eleven days it is necessary to add a thirteen month from time to time so as to make the year correspond with the seasons. This thirteenth month is usually a 'nameless', 'void' or 'lost' month and it is called *onwa efukefu* in Nsukka dialect. The Onunu festival starts on Nkwo day and ends in exactly twenty eight days on another Nkwo day (seven Igbo native weeks). Each native week of the twenty eight days is identified with one specific event that makes the one month festival give the people detailed insights into the socio-political, religious and cultural arrangements of the society they originate from. The people get information

about how their town and Igbo society are politically organised or even the origin of their operational political system through the ritualised performances. The religious view of the people that incorporate their myths of origin are also got from the oral performance in the form of poems or poetic chants. Through the music, dance and poetic chants, the significant testimonies about the value system and pattern of thought of the people are presented. These events teach them the history of the ancestors.

The ancestors of the three communities of Nsukka in order to be fully taken as Igbo people, though they trace their ancestry to Igala land decide to implore the Nri (*Nshi* in Nsukka dialect) people from Agu-ukwu in Awka, Anambra State of Nigeria to come to Nsukka and give them Igbo titles. The delegates from Agu-ukwu Nri on arrival at Mkpunanọ (at Umu Ezoğuda in Nguru Nsukka), ask for kolanut for sacrifice to *Nshi na Ama* their ancestor before any decision on the title taking proceeds. Ezoğuda, the eldest son of Nkpunanọ, was not able to provide the kolanut. This created a big problem because they were not aware that kolanut was needed. One of the wives of Ezebigọ provided a small shrink lobe of kolanut and was asked to choose the title she wanted for her son. She chose Onugwu-Atta title and at the same time her son was given the priest of Ani Nsukka (The earth goddess of Nsukka people). The descendants of Ezebigọ in Isiakpu Nsukka are still the priests of Ani Nsukka and they are called Onu-Ani Nsukka. One of the sons of Ezike Ekwensu is given the priest of Nkwọ Nsukka, the wife of Nsukka Asadu and his descendants are called Amankwo till date. Two other deities, Ohe Nsukka and Odo Nsukka were created by the three communities and one of the sons of Ihe, as the first son of Dialoke, was given the priest of Odo Nsukka. Then the priest of Ohe Nsukka was given to another son of Mkpunanọ. The descendants of Ezoğuda, as the eldest in Nsukka also chose the Onugwu- Atta title. The titles are *Onogwu Atta*, *Ozioko* or *Alumona/Arumona*, *Asogwa* and

Ishiwu in their hierarchy. They are all called *Ama* or *Qha* title (*Ndi Ama* or *Ndi Qha*).

The people mark the coming of the delegates from Agu-ukwu Nri as the end of the year and this visit becomes a yearly event. The coming of the delegates from Agu-ukwu Nri marks the beginning of the Onunu festival. They will come and declare that the year is ending. This is called *Mgburu Ahua* in Nsukka dialect. There are many stages of the festival and celebrations for the one month the Onunu festival lasts. The last native week of the one month duration of the festival, the final celebrations that mark the beginning of the New Year and commencement of another prominent festival in Nsukka known as the Omabe Festival.

The *Mgburu Ahua* or the declaration of the ending of the year is done at end of *Qnwa iri* Nsukka (tenth month in Nsukka). It is done by a man from Umu EzQguda village in Nguru Nsukka, the eldest village in Nsukka, beating a metal gong round the major villages in the three communities of Nsukka town at around 10 am in the morning. He is accompanied by an entourage of men and they follow the ancient paths the people of Agu-ukwu Nri followed when they first came to Nsukka. The sound of the metal gong (*ogene*) carries the message and every one that hears it will not ask what it is meant for. In the evening of the same day, the same group goes to the places Nsukka people have deities that link them to their ancestor Nsukka Asadu Attah like Amaguidike in Nguru, Onu Ani Nsukka in Isiakpu, Amori Edem in Nru and Amacze in Owere. This is called *Ozimaa* (the errands of the gods). They are entertained with sumptuous meals just the way the Agu-ukwu Nri people are entertained when they come to Nsukka. Therefore the Onunu festival commences with the feast given to the men of Umu EzQguda. The visit to these places keeps them till the wee hours of the morning. People see them when they are going to the villages but nobody is to see them when they are to go back. On their way back, they sing and chant to keep

people off their track. Their song is called *egwuOkama*, which is a kind of music characterized by scandalous gossip in a call-and-response format. They jest with the names of the people that cooked for them; say that their food is not delicious. They abuse villages that have people with dubious characters through their songs. This is just to bring out the humour of the festival and also to show that they are proud to identify with their root.

After this *mgburu ahua* and *ozimaa*, there are no mourning and gun shots if there is any death in Nsukka town. It is believed that that crying, mourning or gun shots cause another death in the family of deceased people the following year. No family violates the rule for any body that dies when the year has been declared ending because they believe that those who die that time die a cursed death. The prayer of every family in Nsukka is always that the gods should avert any thing that will cause the death of the members of the family during this festive month. Onunu is therefore a symbol of merriment not mourning.

The Aesthetics of Life, the Honourable and Colourful Costumes and the Diversity of Performance of the Onunu Festival

Performing arts are regarded with great respect and admiration worldwide because of the belief that such actions of individuals or group of individuals have great effect on the other members or groups of the society. E.N. Urama in her 'Indigenous Art Performances and Igbo Worldview in Nigerian Literature' (2012) in support of this posits that performing arts give joy to the people and help them to maintain the bond of relationship between man and the supernatural beings which they believe give them life. The people of Nsukka just like other people in Igbo land see life as the highest value in the perception of reality and they therefore do everything possible for life to be enjoyed on this earth. The people of Nsukka also believe that these performing arts foster the relationship between men in society with the divine and also their ancestors

therefore with regards to the Onunu festival; it is believed that young maidens that participate in *Igba echi* or *Orome* dance have appeased the ancestors. The ancestors, especially the mother of Nsukka people (*Nkwo* Nsukka) will therefore grant them divine favour to have children when they get married and also be wealthy. *Echi* or *mkpara echi* is a rod that is used as a means of exchange (money) by the Igbo people in the olden days. This rod is designed by blacksmiths in spiral forms and is worn from the knee down to the ankles of the maidens. Therefore, to wear the *echi* is to display the wealth of the family.

Traditionally in Nsukka Town, every wealthy family likes to show their wealth by the participation of the first daughter of the family in Onunu festival through *igba echi*. Those who cannot afford the expensive *igba echi* make all efforts for their daughters to dance the *Nkwo Orome dance*. The families that have all it takes for a young girl to wear the *echi* go to the chief priest of Nkwo Nsukka to indicate their interest two months before the Onunu festival commences. The chief priest performs all the rituals involved for the screening of the young maidens and a seer is called to ascertain those that are worthy to wear the *echi*. Nzimiro (1972) in support of this action of Nsukka people points out that they usually discuss matters as ritual rites by consulting native doctors (*dibias*) to ascertain the cause of a particular mishap with the group and planning for the proper performance of festivals of the year and other matter. If the *echi* rejects any of the maidens she is decorated with traditional beads and other expensive costumes but does not wear the *echi* on the *Nkwo Orome* day. All the girls that are to wear the *echi* from the three communities in Nsukka assemble once every native week at a secluded place chosen by the chief priest of *Nkwo* goddess to learn the aesthetic walk and pattern of movement they are to exhibit on *Nkwo Orome* day. The maidens that wear *echi* must all be virgins. Some middle aged women that have mastered that act of proud steps will be

appointed to be their instructors. Both the instructors and the maidens are entertained with sumptuous meals and palm wine every day they gather for the training. The food and drinks are provided by the parents of the maidens. The chief priest of Nkwò and other elders from Amankwò village also partake in the feasting.

After five six weeks from the time of *ozimma*, the *Eke* day is the day of *ije be nna* or *igò nna* (the worship of the dead fathers). *Igò nna* is another form of celebration during the one month Onunu festival that a lot of feasting is done. Married women from Nsukka visit their fathers' villages with tubers of yam, big cocks and kegs of palm wine to offer sacrifices to their fathers. Some wealthy women or those from well to do families give gifts of tobacco to men in their fathers' family. This visit is a must for all the women that have lost their fathers and optional for those whose fathers are alive. They leave for the *igò nna* in the evening and the sacrifice is done in the night and they return the following morning which is *Orie* with gifts of yams, cocoyams and money from their fathers' kinsmen. The villages that do not do their *igò nna* on *Eke* day (the following day) do theirs on *Afò* day to return on *Nkwò* day. They are called *òzò afò*. At the morning of the *igò nna* day, the eldest men in the village (*Onyishi*) or the eldest man in extended families (*Okpara umu nna*) will bring out the family *òfò* and offer sacrifices to it. After offering the sacrifices, a promising young boy is asked to stay at the entrance of the family obi (obi ama) to catch the *òfò* as the *onyishi* or *okpara* throws it to him. He throws the *òfò* three times and the boy is watchful and careful not to let it fall on the ground or the family will experience a lot of calamities in the new year. All the men applause the catching of the *òfò* and after that the *onyishi* or *okpara umu nna* renders accounts of their communal properties such as plots of land, *iroko* or *oji*, *kolanut*, *udala*, *ube* and *ogbono* trees. He is expected to take the men round the village to show them the location of the plots of lands and trees. This is

a practical rule that is laid down for the guidance of the people in safeguarding their communal properties.

The *Nkwọ* day that the second group of women return to their husbands' villages is the *Nkwọ Orome* or *Nkwọ Onunu* day and it is the most celebrated day of the one month Onunu festival. The celebration for *Nkwọ Orome day* actually starts in the eve of the day when young boys go to the *Nkwọ* square for wrestling. This wrestling match is between boys from Mkpunano, Nru and Ihe na Owere. It is called *Ote Nkwọ*. Only unmarried boys participate in *Ote Nkwọ*. Married men go there as spectators; they buy drinks to entertain themselves and those who win in the wrestling match. The young boys that wrestle try very hard to win in the wrestling match because their fame is an added advantage in winning the hearts of the maidens that wear *echi* the following day which is the *Nkwọ Orome* day. The community that wins also take back honour and praise.

Every family in Nsukka cook their traditional food *Okpa* made from ground and sieved bambara groundnuts for the *Nkwọ orome* or *Nkwọ onunu* feast. *Okpa* is a pudding and is very delicious and nutritious. Women who put to bed after the previous *nkwọ orome* day do not cross *Nkwọ* shrine unless they take *okpa* to *Nkwọ* shrine to thank her for granting them safe delivery. All the women under this category take a plate of *okpa* to the shrine in the morning of the day so that they participate in the outing to *Nkwọ* shrine in the evening of the same day. As from 10 am that day, celebration commences in the houses of people whose maidens will wear *echi*. Music, dancing and gun shots announce the celebration. This is the first time gun shots are heard after *mgburu ahya*. Relatives, friends and well wishers go to celebrate with them with gifts of money and they will be entertained.

The acouterment of the maidens gives aesthetic value to their performance. They wear attires that distinguish them from the rest of the people in order to create an impact. The maiden is dressed with traditional beads (*jigida*) from her hip to down to

the thigh to cover her nakedness. She wears the *echi* from her knees down to the ankles. She also wears decorated necklaces made with elephant nails on her neck and cross some of them over her chest and arms. On her two wrists, she wears bracelets made from the horn of elephants to add to the beauty of the costumes. The family of the maidens can even employ a traditional make up artist to be dressing the maidens from the time they start training for the outing. The maiden walks and dances majestically, to proudly display the wealth of her parents or husband if she is already betrothed. The aesthetics of costumes are highlighted by her agility as she walks displaying her chest, jumps up at regular intervals after taking few steps. The poetic chants of relatives and praise songs on her family and the beating of *Igede* drums bring out a lot of honour and admiration from the audience. Some parents even pay a traditional bard (griot) to sing or chant praises of the maiden. The performance of the bard highlights the artistry of the maiden as well as that of the bard and is expected to stimulate the interest in the audience to aspire to learn from the bard. The younger members of the audience not only aspire to learn but to better the skills of the bard thereby ensuring the continuity of the tradition.

As from 3.00 pm men and women in their best attires are seen in all the streets heading for the Nkwọ shrine arena. The men will be carrying kegs of wine they will enjoy at the event. The shrine has a public square where dance, wrestling etc. are displayed and religious rites are done and D.U. Opata in his 'A Sense of Wonder: Towards a Foundationalist Aesthetics of African Performative Arts' (2000) points out that public square in Nsukka is not necessarily a place where people simply entertain themselves by watching spectaculars performance but where the people have clan meetings, children games and religious meetings. Six young girls, two from each of the three communities of Nsukka, Mkpunano, Nru and Ihe na Owere will dance the *Nkwọ orome* dance for the year. These girls will be

lifted up and carried on the shoulders by adult women and they will be dancing as the audience sing the *orome* song.

The maidens that wear the *echi* and their entourage move from their houses to the *Nkwọ* square where they have specific portion set out for them. The feasting continues as the maidens dance and walk round the arena displaying their honourable and aesthetic costumes. Members of the audience spread money on them. The maidens among those who wear the *echi* that have not been betrothed will have many suitors asking for their hands in marriage after the dance. Their beauty is portrayed and also the wealth of their family and many men will fight to be the lucky bridegrooms. It is also believed that the maidens who wear *echi* and younger girls that dance the *orome* dance will be favoured by the goddess, *Nkwọ* for it is believed that they will have children and wealth and everybody wants to associate with the success and achievements.

The women chant poems in honour of *Nkwọ Nsukka* (the mother of *Nsukka* people) as they dance and walk round the *Nkwọ* square. They praise the goddess for giving them succour. These songs of praise emphasize the honour, integrity, fame and caring nature of the goddess. In the poems, there are usually references to customs, accepted patterns of behaviours, beliefs and values of the people. They also present genealogies of the people through the poems. There are also references to the historical migration of *Nsukka Asadu Attah Igala* from *Igala* land to *Nsukka* town in the poems. Conflicts, feuds and wars which the people of *Nsukka* are involved and their victories are also emphasized in the poems. The feast is significant because it marks the end of the year.

The next *Nkwo* which is a day the participants of the feast, *egorigo okama* depart, the new year starts. The families that have lost their members during the one month ritual days shoot cannons to announce the death of the deceased. Normal mourning for the dead starts again. In the night the *onyekurunye* masquerade comes out in the community of *Nsukka* that will

host the *Omabe* Festival that new year because the Omabe Festival rotates among the three communities that make up Nsukka (Mkpunanọ, Nru and Ihe na Owere). *Onyekurunye* masquerades come out for four native days (16 days) but their impact lingers the whole year. These masquerades come out only in the night and leave at the very early in the morning. It is forbidden to be seen by both men and women. *Onyekurunye* masquerade chants around the villages of the communities. The poems are dirge or laments on ills of people in the community. These poetic chants have the intension of bringing changes to the society as the people whose names are mentioned are expected to repent and turn to a new leaf.

Factors that have Reduced Participation and Significance of the Festival

Many factors have reduced the significance of Onunu festival to the contemporary Nsukka people. The colonizer has a way of brainwashing the colonized in the form of making them hate their culture by introducing hegemonic system of education. Those who are uneducated feel inferior and the educated do not want to associate with what they think are uncivilized practices therefore less people want to be linked with Onunu festival. Foreign religion that came with colonization also prescribes that those who indulge in traditional poetry and ritualized performances should not be associated with. Improvement or advancement of technology in the form of the internet, the mass media and print media produce programmes that have taken attention of many people so that they see going to watch oral performances as wasting of time. Urbanization has lead to rural to urban migration and the depopulation of the country side too. Therefore few people are left in the rural areas to sustain the performances of Onunu festival.

Conclusion

The preparations and activities involved in Onunu festival of Nsukka people of Enugu State, Nigeria take up traditional African ideas and explore it beyond the traditional boundary. They also demonstrate the political and cultural perceptions of the people. The performances during Onunu festival enhance the retelling of the people's history. Though these performances have religious and inspirational base that make people abstain from participating in them, their religious base should be overlooked and discarded to make the festival becomes a mere carnival. The dance drama should be diverted from the paraphernalia of rituals so that the people will continue to acquaint with the myth of their origin.

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The Literary Translator and the Concept of Artistic Fidelity: An Analysis of the translation of *Ije Odumodu Jere*

Ngozi Ezeibe

Abstract

The study is based on the interpretive theory and method of translation and the role of the literary translator in establishing fidelity relationship between a translated text and its original, in the area of Igbo literature. Since the translation process and output of a translator is directly related to his translation approach, the study aims at highlighting the implications of the linguistic approach adopted by P.J Ezech, in his translation of Ije Odumodu Jere, in Odumodu's Odyssey, with regard to the fidelity relationship between the two texts. Through a descriptive and analytic study, the evaluation of Odumodu's Odyssey shows that strict adherence to the linguistic theory of translation resulted in compromise of fidelity, between the two texts, as provided in the tripartite principles of fidelity by Hurtado-Albir. The study concludes by establishing lack of fidelity between the two texts and recommends appropriation of text as a translation process that would ensure fidelity relationship between a translation and the original text.

Introduction

The literary translator is the person who concerns himself with translation of literary texts. He generally respects good writing by taking into account, the language, structure and content, whatever the nature of the text. He participates in the author's creative ability and then recreates the structures and signs of the original text to create an autonomous text which

does not depend on the original text for intelligibility. In doing this, he needs to assess, not only the literary quality of his work, but also its acceptability to the target reader. This requires a deep knowledge of the cultural and literary history of both the original and target readers.

Literary translation has problems associated with it more than other types of translation. The magnitude of the problems which could be cultural, linguistic, psychological, etc in nature depends on the person of the translator and what he knows. The translator would need to overcome these problems in order to produce a text which the readers would appreciate as the original text is appreciated by its readers. The interpretive theory of translation or theory of meaning provides solution to the problems of literary translation by presenting meaning or author's intention (*"le vouloir-dire de l' auteur"*) as the invariant of the translation process. Once the translator succeeds in apprehending this invariant in the original text and succeeds in transmitting it intelligibly in the target text, a good translation occurs. This invariant in the translation process (the meaning) has a contextual and dynamic value. It is the synthesis of style, connotation, the message and all factors which play significant roles in the communication process. Through the interpretive process (comprehension- de-verbalization- re-expression), the original text is recreated in another language to produce an autonomous, independent text of the same status without compromising equivalence of meaning. In this perspective, a translator's work is adjudged correct if it is faithful to the meaning of the original text or the intention of the author.

Artistic fidelity describes the relationship between a text and its translation. This relationship between the original text and its translation has been a major pre-occupation among theorists and practitioners of translation. The contention has always been the object of fidelity- the source language, target language, period of the original text, the author, the original text, the audience,

etc. The interpretive theorists uphold fidelity to meaning as the appropriate relationship between a text and its translation, and the basis for the evaluation of translated texts.

P-J Eze's translation of *Ije Odumodu Jere*, a pioneer Igbo literature authored by Leopold Bell-Gam, is analysed on the basis of the principles of artistic fidelity propagated by the interpretive theory of translation, in order to ascertain the fidelity relationship between the two texts.

The approach adopted in this study is multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary with emphasis on the application of the interpretive theory of translation. It is a descriptive and analytical study, which involves a comprehensive, systematic and comparative approach to translation evaluation based on research questions derived from principles and theories reviewed in this study which are in consonance with the interpretive theory.

Textual Disparity

The disparity between a translated text and its original is a common observation and concern among bilingual readers and translation critics to the extent that some translations are regarded as betrayals of original texts. The problem of the study stemmed from observations made while reading *Odumodu's Odyssey*. Certain semantic ambiguities and stylistic banalities which necessitated making occasional reference to the original text to clarify issues were a source of concern. Moreover, translations which tend to create doubts on the fidelity relationship between the two texts were observed. It became necessary to identify, articulate and categorize the problems of the translated text with a view to assessing the degree of artistic disparity between *Ije Odumodu Jere* and *Odumodu's Odyssey*.

Generally, the aim of literary translation is to transfer the message of a literary text to readers who have different language and culture from the audience of the original text. For a translator to correctly do so, he should work towards

establishing fidelity between his translation and the original text. The translated text should not only carry the message or meaning of original text, it should also have the same effect on its readers as the original text. The translation approach adopted by translators determines, to a great extent, the fidelity relationship between their translations and the original texts.

One of the aims of P-J Eze, in translating *Ije Odumodu Jere*, as he indicated in the translated text (3), is to show "that Igbo is capable of engaging with other languages everywhere in everything, including discourses in all domains of intellectual engagement be them in the arts, humanities or science". He wanted to project Igbo language to the status of other international languages in the domain of literary arts. His translation operation, is therefore basically a linguistic approach. To achieve his aim he is expected to creatively present the content of the translated text as a rich literary masterpiece skilfully woven in English language. The style, structure, registers and phraseology should blend to produce a literary piece that sustains the interest of readers.

The translator's personal ambition notwithstanding, the purpose of translation can only be achieved by doing the translation correctly, otherwise the effort would be useless. If readers of a translated literary text receive a different message from what the original text conveys, if they feel and or react differently from the original readers, even when the message is presented in the best expressions the language offers, the translation is adjudged incorrect while the translator is seen to have failed to achieve his objective. Therefore the success of a literary translation, and hence the translator, depends on establishment of fidelity relationship between the two texts concerned.

Based on the above, the aim of the study, therefore, is to first determine the fidelity relationship between Leopold Bell-Gam's *Ije Odumodu jere* and its translation produced by P-J Eze, *Odumodu's Odyssey*; establish the implications of the

translation approach adopted by the translator on the fidelity relationship between the two texts; and finally establish the role of the literary translator with regard to Fidelity in translation.

Odumodu's Odyssey, to the best of my knowledge, has not been critiqued before as the translation of *Ije Odumodu Jere*. The study will contribute to the improvement of the translated text in its next edition. It will serve as a guide for another translator of the book and will also bring to the fore, the roles expected of the literary translator in order to produce correct, useful and acceptable work.

As a critical analysis of the application of translation theories and approaches this study will help literary translators to take informed decisions on the translation approach to adopt to best achieve his aim of embarking on the translation work. The study will in no small way contribute to uplifting the status of the Igbo language and its literary texts in the academic and literary circles. Based on the Interpretive Theory of Translation and its analytical nature, this study can lead to an experimental research, to study the effects of translations based on the two major translation theories – linguistic and interpretive theories or a combination of both, on non-Igbo readers of translated Igbo texts.

Translation Criticism

The translation of a literary text is the most complex of all types of written translation and because of its very nature, it imposes as much demand on the translator as on the critic of the work. In order to properly criticise the object of this study, literatures are reviewed to define concepts involved, discuss the theoretical and empirical studies on the topic and provide justification for the study. In the past, the most common way of critiquing texts was to flip through the pages of a translated text in search of translation errors. This practice has however changed. Over the past few decades, linguists, stylisticians and translators have introduced comparative approach to translation evaluation.

According to Ekundayo (255), translation criticism still seems improvised and is, more often than not, too limited in scope and therefore requires a more objective, comprehensive and systematic approach. Such an approach, according to him, should aim at facilitating the discovery to a near maximum of the gems contained in a given translation text. There is no doubt that if the study and practice of translation is to be enhanced, effort has to be made for its criticism to embrace all that a translated text has to offer.

Translation criticism is the systematic study, evaluation and interpretation of different aspects of translated work. Taquiyeh (2005:53) defined it as looking comprehensively at different aspects of a translated work. According to him, translation criticism should rely on certain principles and be based on awareness for improvement and change to occur. He is opposed to the idea that translation criticism is identifying deficiencies in a translated work. He rather believes that criticisms should focus on both the negative and positive aspects of the work. He presents the goals of translation criticism to include making the society aware of the delicacy involved in translation and to find out whether the translator has achieved his goal or not.

Antoine Berman (48) a very influential author in the field of translation criticism, claimed that the method of translation criticism depends on the translation theory adopted. Gideon Toury (2012:73), in presenting a methodology for descriptive translation studies suggests that the translator should constantly take decisions during the translation process. It was further claimed by scholars working in line with his idea that translation should be described in accordance with the target norms that are valid at specific time and place, compared with their original ones in order to produce an objective translation criticism supported by translation theories.(73). In practice, literary translations have been evaluated by writers, translators and critics. This has brought about much quality and richness

into literary translations over the years and made the activity worthwhile and necessary.

The Role of the Literary Translator

In order to explain the translator's role in literary translation, response is required to a fundamental question-Why translate? For Lederer (1986:31), translation is done to make a reader understand what one understood by reading. According to her, to make oneself understood requires making correct expressions by detaching oneself from the linguistic and grammatical forms of the sources language and conveying the message in an intelligible manner to the readers. The translator should therefore present his text in conformity with the usage of the target language otherwise the expressions may be grammatically correct but unintelligible. The translator should remind himself that readers are dependent on him to access the meaning of the text in the original form.

According to Hurtado-Albir (Lederer 1990:76), the translator should work to discover the intent of the author and remain loyal to it in his re-expression. The literary translator is thus sometimes a reader and sometimes a writer, and he has to play both roles very well in any translation process to be successful (19). Newmark on the other hand, states that a literary translator respects good writing by taking into account the language structures and content whatever the nature of the text. He participates in the author's creativity and then recreates structures and signs by adapting the target language text to the source language text based on equivalence of meaning, not correspondences, while ensuring the intelligibility of the translated text by the target audience. He needs to assess not only the literary quality of the text, but also its acceptability to the target reader, and this should be done by having a deep knowledge of the cultural and literary history of both the source and target languages (1).

In the light of the above, and according to Iwuchukwu, the literary translator is also a sound literary critic and should critique his work in the course of his translation process and before releasing it as a finished product (537). The above also agrees with the claim that the role of the literary translator is no longer limited to being passive instruments between source and target texts but includes active communicators and mediators between cultures represented by the texts (Totter and Decappua 2005:448). In the words of Aire-Victor, "to the readers of the target text who have no access to the original, a translator is like a sighted person leading the blind through a labyrinth; if he falters, those who depend on him are in great peril" (464).

Owing to the nature of the literary text where the meaning is found not only in its content but also in its structure, the translator works both on the surface and deeper structure of text to grasp the meaning of the text. This means that the translator has to be conversant with the cultural, linguistic and stylistic provisions of both the source and target texts. He should comprehend the connotations as well as the denotations of the source text and translate them in the language of the target text for the understanding of its readers. This is in line with the concept of Appropriation recommendation by Fortunato Israel (19). The translator of a literary text does not only transfer information, but creates an effect capable of stirring up affective reaction and aesthetic emotion similar to the effect the original text has on its readers. The literary translator is therefore a scholar, a writer, a mediator, a preserver of linguistic diversity by enabling people to continue to express themselves in their own language while reaching broad readership, and a promoter of understanding among people of different languages and cultures.

The Concept of Fidelity

Fidelity describes a relationship between a text and its translation. It is a relationship of faithfulness or loyalty which is

observable through comparative analysis of the two texts, on the basis of meaning equivalence. Hurtado-Albir defines this relationship as fidelity to meaning which, according to him, is a tripartite relationship, - to the author's intention, the target language and the reader. (118) For him, this tripartite relationship is not dissociable, meaning that fidelity cannot be established between a text and its translation if one of the parameters of fidelity is betrayed in the translated text. Thus, fidelity to meaning does not exist between a text and its translation, where the translation is not clear to the target readers or if it presents language errors, even if it is faithful to the author's intention.

The Linguistic Theory of Translation

The linguistic theory of translation situates translation squarely in the domain of linguistics. Vinay and Darbelnet define translation as passage from language A to language B to express the same reality (20). To them, translation process is embarked upon by comparing the two languages in contact, to establish lexical, structural and stylistic correspondence in order to transfer the message. The focus here is on language, while the reality which is the message is not limited to the expression but includes the structure and style of the expression.

Darbelnet, in his own submission posits that for a translation to be without reproach it should, transmit the message of the original, observe the grammatical norms of its period, be idiomatic, be in the same mood or tone as the original (i.e. stylistic equivalence), and be very intelligible for readers from another culture (89). Fidelity relationship between a text and its translation, for the linguists, is fidelity to the original text, its message, linguistic structure, style, period, etc.

The Sociolinguistic Theory of Translation

Eugene A. Nida, who is one of the most influential theorists in the field of translation, presents translation as part of the

broad field of anthropological semantics. For him, "Because translating always involves communication within the context of interpersonal relations, the model for such activity must be a communication model and the principles must be primarily sociolinguistic in the broad sense of the term" (78). The emphasis of this theory is on culture, showing that in order to translate, one must not only know a language, but should also be familiar with the customs, mores and civilization of those who speak it. Thus this theory, though linguistic, goes beyond the limits of general linguistics held onto by Catford, Darbelnet and Vinay. The knowledge of the culture of the readers of both the original and translated texts enhances the translator's comprehension of the intended meaning of the original text and his competence in its re-expression in another language for the reading pleasure of people from another culture.

The Interpretive Theory of Translation

The proponents of the Interpretive theory of translation at the École Supérieure d'interprètes et de traducteurs (Sorbonne, Nouvelle Paris III) led by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer demonstrate that, "a true theory of translation must be co-extensive with a general theory of discourse and therefore cannot be a simple extension of a purely linguistic theory describing language as a system"(33). The interpretive theory presents a translation approach based on the analysis of the meaning of discourse, as opposed to analysis of meaning of words or sentences presented by the linguistic theory.

According to Delisle in translation, "it is the meaning of a message that is transferred from one language to another, and the transfer is accomplished by analysing and then reconstructing semantic relationships. This interpretation of a text (discourse analysis) is an act of intelligence much more demanding than the simple comparison of two language systems" (3-8).. For him, discourse analysis which requires a highly developed capacity to understand and an ability to

manipulate language, is more appropriate than traditional general linguistics for describing the act of translating. This is because “the inter-linguistic reformulation of a message cannot be accomplished with the same linguistic tools or even the same number of words as the original because every linguistic community has evolved its own pattern of language customs”. Translation, based on the interpretive theory is therefore defined as re-expression of an intended meaning embodied in a text with a specific communicative function. Re-expression is done by an act of manipulating language at four (4) different levels: Observing conventions of forms, performing interpretive analysis, interpreting style, and preserving textual organicity. These four levels provide a framework for establishing basic translation difficulties in the course of re-expressing the intended meaning of the text. It should also form the framework for evaluating the end product of translation.

Empirical Studies

Much work has not been done in the area of translation criticism of translated Igbo literature. The Encyclopaedia of African Literature (2003) defines Igbo literature as literature produced orally or in writing by Igbo people exclusively in Igbo language, as opposed to literary works in European or other languages produced by Igbo writers, such as Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*.

There are two categories of Igbo literature. The first, is translated literature such as *Filamint na ndiotu ya*, a translated version of *Les Femmes Savantes* from French to Igbo, by Ezech and “*Nwanyị Mmanu na Ite Mmanu ya*, translated into French by Anyahie. The second category is translation of Igbo literary thoughts into other languages, as *The Bingo's Kingdom*, Nwanjoku's English translation of Achara's *Ala Bingo* and its French version, *Au Royaume de Bingo*, translated by Nkoro, and Ugochukwu's *Contes Igbo du Nigeria*, which is a translated

Igbo oral literature into French. Many Igbo theatres are now being produced with translated scripts as subtitles.

Translation of Igbo literary thought into other languages is still ongoing, however, according to Aire-Victor (1996:447) few critics seem to be interested in the evaluation of such works. He is of the opinion that, like writers who can sometimes be inspired by critics' comments and interpretations, translators can also benefit from critical appraisal of their works. The fact therefore remains that translation critics of literary works of Igbo authors direct their attention to works of popular authors which are written in foreign languages, to the utter neglect of Igbo literature.

Appreciation of the Translation of *Ije Odumodu Jere* by Leopold Bell-Gam as *Odumodu's Odyssey*

The evaluation of *Odumodu's Odyssey* as a translation of *Ije Odumodu Jere* is systematically carried out, by providing responses to the Research questions posed in section 1.6, based on comparative analysis of excerpts from the two texts.

Ije Odumodu Jere is an Igbo literature authored by Leopold Bell-Gam and published in 1952. The short story was written for the Igbo speaking people of the pre-independence era in Nigeria, but transliterated in 1963 into the official Igbo orthography for use in teaching Igbo language in elementary schools in the then Eastern Nigeria. However, because a literary text is timeless and universal, the target audience of the short story is not limited to the pre-independence era, but to all Igbo readers, hence it is still being read and studied.

Odumodu's Odyssey, on its part, is written for the attention of literary scholars, intellectuals, policymakers, the English speaking international community, teachers and students, who are expected to take note of the potentials of the Igbo language and accord it its pride of place along with other internationally acknowledged languages (1&12 of *Odumodu's Odyssey* (OO)). The text also targets the ordinary reader of English, for

enjoyment and leisure, and for the appreciation of Igbo culture and background.

Reflection of the Message of *Ije Odumodu Jere in Odumodu's Odyssey*

For an audience of a translated text to understand the message of the original text, the text should contain exactly the same information as the original text. This means that the intention of the author should be correctly conveyed in the translated text, using the language of its target audience. *Odumodu's Odyssey* correctly conveys the message in *Ije Odumodu Jere*. However, there are few cases of omission and wrong translation of some details that form the story in the original text.

Wrong Translations

Some translation errors also abound in the translation and they distort the meaning of some passages. A few examples are paramount.

a. ...*ndi agha onye nwe ala suru uwe ha ji alu ogu ma kpere ihu, mu na nwunye m na nne na nna ya na umu nne ya soje ha. Ndi obodo ahụ foro afo esoo anyi n'azu.* (of *Ije Odumodu Jere* (IOJ))

...the soldiers and the king wore their military dress and stayed in front, my wife and I, her father, her mother and her siblings were the next after them. The rest of the people followed us. (47 of *Odumodu's Odyssey* (OO))

The translation gives the impression that the king was in front with the soldiers and behind them at the same time, since he is both the king and the bride's father.

Conformity to the Grammatical, Semantic and Structural Provisions of the English Language

The translation of *Ije Odumodu Jere* in *Odumodu's Odyssey*, portrays adequate use of English lexis and structures. This is especially so in the use of appropriate registers for the translation of Igbo technical expressions belonging to certain professions. There are many cases of grammatical errors which border on the use of wrong tenses in the English translations. The book, *Ije Odumodu Jere* is a narration of events that took place in the past. The translation of the text is supposed to reflect the events as such through right choice of tenses, to make correct expressions in line with English usage. There appears to be a lot of confusion in the choice of tenses in the translated text.

Preservation of Textual Organicity of *Ije Odumodu Jere* in *Odumodu's Odyssey*

The translator maintained the structural form of the original text. The fourteen chapters which make up the Igbo text are preserved distinctively in the translated text. Within each chapter the number and sequence of paragraphs and even sentences are maintained. Consequently, the flow of meaning from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is maintained in the whole of the translated text as in the original text except in few cases where omissions occurred, as discussed earlier. The omissions, however, did not distort the message or the intrigue of the story. They only failed to relate some information.

The unity of the theme is maintained throughout the translated text, unlike what happens in some liberal and manipulative translations, where the translation is used to achieve aims other than the authors' intention. In spite of the limitations of the linguistic approach adopted by the translator, it checked the excesses of free translations which tend to destroy the textual organicity of the original text. Thus, the

textual organicity of *Ije Odumodu Jere* is maintained in *Odumodu's Odyssey*.

Reflection of the Affective Components of *Ije Odumodu Jere* in *Odumodu's Odyssey*

Ije Odumodu Jere is an adventure story and therefore contains a lot of expressions of emotion of various kinds – fear, doubts, joy, anxiety, hope, appreciation of beauty, greatness, splendor, etc. Its translation in *Odumodu's Odyssey* aptly captures these emotions in many instances: Fear, pp.25 and 35; boredom, nostalgia and regrets, p.30; appreciation of beauty, p.39; etc. However, the readers of the translated text may not experience the same level of emotion as those of the original text at the instances where the translator failed to make use of his literary endowments and aptitude, but strictly adhered to the linguistic translation approach. Also cases of omission in the English text, identified on pages 14, 31 and 32 of the Igbo text deprive readers of the English text the emotional impact of those passages.

Cases of wrong translations (14 and 47) and wrong English usage (pp.26, 31, 58 and 59), found in the English text have the tendency to inhibit the sensibilities of the target readers in the areas the readers of the original texts are sensitised by the Igbo expressions that were not properly translated. For example, the readers of a translated text may not find an expression funny, but the expression may have elicited laughter in its original form in the source text. This instance can be caused by translation errors.

This is a translation of an Igbo wellerism which highlights the Igbo belief in God (Chi) as being personal, His providence, care and influence on the fate of individuals. The translation, however, failed to reflect this cultural component of the original text to match the cultural background of the target audience by not translating *Chi*, thereby leaving some ambiguities in the understanding of the readers.

Almost the whole of chapter seven of the Igbo text (20-24) is devoted to the description of the wedding ceremony between Odumodu and the princess of Finda. The English translation of the chapter (47-53) succeeds in conveying to the reader the way and manner marriage is contracted in Finda, within the limitation of some grammatical and translation errors. The marriage customs and rituals (47-51), traditional dances (51-53), feasting (53) and giving of gifts (53) are all described with matching expressions, in the culture of English readers, to the extent that the linguistic approach permits.

Conclusion

The appreciation or critique of P-J Eze's translation of *Ije Odumodu Jere* in *Odumodu's Odyssey* has helped to achieve the purpose of this study. Based on the findings and discussion in chapters four and five, it is evident that *Odumodu's Odyssey* is, to an extent, a correct translation of *Ije Odumodu Jere*, but highly limited by the linguistic approach adopted and some grammatical and expression defects. If amended, the translated text will assume a high standard and achieve the general purpose of translation and the translator's primary aim of embarking on the assignment.

The textual organicity of the Igbo text which is maintained in the translation is a useful approach providing it is not carried too far. Apart from maintaining the flow of understanding of the translated text as it is in the original text, it helps to put the translator in check so that his liberty in translation is within boundaries.

In terms of the fidelity relationship between the two texts, it has been established that the linguistic approach adopted by the translator, omission and translation errors led to the production of a text which falls short of Hurtado-Albir's tripartite criteria for establishing fidelity between a translated text and its original version.

The translated text exhibited fidelity to the linguistic, structural and stylistic components of the original text and thus compromised its fidelity to the provisions of the target language, and by implication, fidelity to the author's intention and fidelity to the readers. Since fidelity to meaning is a tripartite relationship, and the three components are indissociable (Hurtado-Albir, 1990:118), failure in any one aspect of it amounts to failure in establishing fidelity to meaning. In the light of Hurtado Albir's Three Principles of Fidelity, which is the reference point of this study, one can confidently conclude that *Odumodu's Odyssey*, which is P-J Eze's translation of Leopold Bel-Gam's *Ije Odumodu Jere* is not faithful to the meaning of *Ije Odumodu Jere*. This means that fidelity to meaning is not established between the two texts.

Based on the findings of the study, the primary role of the literary translator is to establish fidelity of meaning in its tripartite form, between his translation and the original text. This ensures comprehensive correctness of the translation in terms of its message, language, and the reader's understanding and its impact on them.

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The Mystico-Religio-Linguistic Dimensions of Kolanut Ritual

Adolphus Chukwujekwu Nweke

Abstract

Kolanut has much significance according to the different heterogeneous ethnologies of the world. It is a seed that is grown in the sultry forests of the world; especially in Africa and Carribean countries. Scientifically, it is botanical and thus, a mere fruit like every other kind of fruits. Kolanut is understood differently by different cultures and such is the case with the Igbo. In our traditional Igbo mythological world, there are symbolic practices that are highly transcendental; and they aid the enculturation of the identity of the Igbo world. Kolanut ritualism manifests in so many forms in the light of the mystico-religio-linguistic dimensions. This is grasped at a profound symbolic level in some cultural practices as the pouring of libation, marriage ceremony, settling of disputes etc. Kolanut to the Igbo is not fruit; it is life. And the life is not that of the everydayness of being but being in an in-between pan-cosmic, monistic and mutual coexistence with the transcendental: collapsing the boundary between nature and supernature and merging them into a communal oneness. This study undertakes to investigate the ritualism of kolanut as a symbolic performance in the Igbo cosmo-theological, ontological and linguistic perspectives.

Introduction

In Nigeria, there are two botanical classifications of kolanut. The first is *cola nitida* which has only two lobes and natively called *gworu* or *oji awusa* (Hausa). The second one is *cola*

acuminata which is called *oji Igbo* (Igbo kolanut). The Igbo kolanut has as many lobes as eight. Each lobe of the kolanut is whole and complete in itself. Kolanut in Igbo land has great value when taken to the spiritual realm of existence. *Oji Igbo* has two colours: white and red. The white one is *Oji Ugo* and that is the one the Igbo attach much importance to. It has different segments or lobes with different spiritual values attached to them. Kolanut is celebrated in Igbo land through a ritualistic process. The process involves three distinct stages: presentation, breaking and sharing of the kolanut.

Kolanut has different symbols according to different cotyledons. A kolanut that has no lobe is called *Oji Ogbi*. This kind of kolanut is not eaten any human being. It is thrown out to be consumed by the spirits of the land. Children and young adults do not touch it. It can be eaten by the oldest man in the community but this can only be done in accordance with certain sacrifices. A two cotyledonous kolanut is *Oji Agbara*, rare and thrown out to the gods. Three cotyledons mean *Oji Ikenga* and meant for titled men in the land. Four cotyledons symbolize the four market days of *Eke, Orie, Afor* and *Nkwo*. The five cotyledonous kolanut is *Oji Omumu*. It is for procreation. Six cotyledons, although rare, symbolize *Oji Igbandu* (marriage bond, bond between nature and supernature). Seven cotyledonous kolanut is very rare in Igbo land. The eight cotyledonous kolanut is a symbol of joy and happiness.

Many scholars have seen the Igbo kolanut from different perspectives. These perspectives are all drawn from the understanding of the place of kolanut in Igbo land. Senanu and Vincent have argued that the place of kolanut in Igbo land is more of cultural than economic. In terms of cultural, the emphasis is on ritualism. This is presented thus:

[I]t is not only a significant economic fruit, it is also one that has great cultural value, fulfilling crucial socio-religious functions. It is also generally offered as a mark of

hospitality, and offering kola is a great gesture of friendship and comradeship. But for the true essence of kola as a cultural symbol to be appreciated, the simple act of offering and breaking the kolanut is a ritual enactment. Breaking kola nut is a solemn ritual, a piece of drama during which a whole society lights up, reflecting the spiritual and social realities of the people, their mores and relationships (31).

According to Nzeako “[o] nweghi n’akuku Naijiria nke ndi mmadu na-enye oji ugwu kwesiri ya di ka a na-enye ya n’ala Igbo. O putaghi na mmadu enweghi ike igbowa oji wee taa ya nani ya. O putakwaghi na oji bu nani mkpuru osisi di n’ala anyi, kama ndi Igbo na-eji oji ruo oru di iche iche” (3) (There is no part of Nigeria that people reverence the kolanut more than in Igbo land. This does not mean that a person cannot eat the kolanut alone. This does not also mean that kolanut is the only fruit in Igbo land, but the Igbo use kolanut to perform different functions). In the book, *After God is Dibia: Igbo Cosmology, Healing, Divination and Sacred Science in Nigeria*, John Anenechukwu Umeh presents a depth critical analysis of the ritualization of the Igbo kolanut. This is presented in the book this way:

Strictly speaking, the *Iwa Oji* ritual which literally translates as “breaking the kola nut,” comprises three distinct steps namely: *Igo Oji*, *Iwa Oji* and *ike Oji*. *Igo Oji* is praying with the kola nut held in the right hand by the oldest person in the gathering or the officiating traditional priests. Where there are more than one kola nut, the rest will remain in the kola nut bowl while the officiating priest, *Dibia*, or the oldest person, will take one in his right hand and hold it in such a way that the kola nut and the palm of the person holding it are focused up into space or sky. Then God is invoked to “eat the kola” (*taa oji*). At times, an alternative mode is used by requesting God to kindly accept the kola nut with the hands of *Okenya*, / *Ikenya* / *Okeyi* / *Onye Ushi* which the

person praying with the kola is offering (to God) with the hands of *nwata* (a child, even if the person requesting God to do so is 120-years old or more). Then God is asked to do the blessings and sharing of the kola nut so that everybody, human or spirit, animate or inanimate, would receive his/her respective due shares. Those who do not share such communions with human beings are excepted (167).

The lore of a people includes ritual performances. Asika and Akabuike locate ritual performances within the ambits of orality. Ritual performance for them is a manifestation of tradition, beliefs and perceptions of social reality of the African people. It is one of the modes for the construction and deconstruction of the socio-cultural milieu of the people (21). For Sims and Stephens, "rituals are performances that are repeated and patterned and frequently include ceremonial symbols and actions...most rituals are stylized, highly contextualized, deeply symbolic activities that enable groups to acknowledge, exemplify, and/or act out certain traditional ideas, values, and beliefs. Family and community celebrations, sacred and secular ceremonies, and a variety of other structured performances include rituals" (99). Ritual has a way it comes into being, and that way is cultural to the folk group. Symbols are fundamental aspects of ritualism as is the case with the kolanut. Sims and Stephens argue further that for a ritual to take place, it can "occur in many settings. Sometimes they take place in more formalized settings, or the ritual itself creates its own space" (100). Rituals are a manifestation of the socio-cultural heritage of a people; or "outward expressions or enactments of inwardly experienced values, beliefs, and attitudes" (100).

Kolanut Ritual

In Catholicism, there is a ritual process that shares resemblances with the Igbo kolanut ritual process. There is what is regarded as *achicha* in Igbo or technically, the Host in Catholicism. In this process, the Host is blessed by a ritual

performer in a highly divine language that is able to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary. Thus, certain prayers are said over the Host which make it undergo a transformation process of transubstantiation and transmogrification. There is now a spiritual value that is taken by the Host. In every performance, there is an audience and the performer. After the prayer, the Host is broken into pieces. The audience in Igbo religion is either physical and supernatural or only supernatural. The physical audience comprises humans while the supernatural comprise God, gods, ancestors: Chukwu, Chineke, Ezechiteokeabiamma etc. In kolanut ritual performance, there is a *before* and an *after* of the kolanut. The kolanut is just a mere fruit in its *before* state. In its *after* state, it has undergone the transformation process of transubstantiation and transmogrification; and this is achieved via the medium of mystico-religio-linguistic power. The rite of initiation is what is encountered here. The kolanut is initiated into a new life. In Obiechina, the kolanut "must throw off the old self and put on a new self, refined and rendered sacred by the appropriate ritual cleansing;" and thus "often accompanied by ceremonies of purification and ritual sacrifices" (218). The kolanut, broken into different lobes after the prayer as in Catholicism, is thus imbued with a spiritual value which is life eternal. The language is divine, ritualistic in itself and thus beyond a mere tool for communication. It is the language of the gods and only they are addressed with it. The language is inspired and as such cultural for the process, and beyond ordinary human comprehension. It is only understood by one possessed by the divine intelligence. Marriage is ordained as a universal institution as a result of reproduction/procreation and continuation of life. This continuation is only achieved by giving birth to children. Kolanut features in marriage ceremonies in Igbo land. There would be no marriage ceremony in Igbo land without the presence of the kolanut because it is through it that the groom's family is welcomed to the bride's. There are families,

communities, towns, states or continents that are united as one. But the union, at a minimal level is done only by two individuals – husband and wife. At the symbolically mystic level which is more profound and fundamental in Igbo worldview, kolanut is what does the union. It is through it that the both parties are summoned: the host of nature and supernature, humanity and divinity, humanity and humanity, ancestors, God, gods etc. The kolanut is used to show the approval of the marriage between the individuals, families, communities, towns etc. It is also through the kolanut that the groom's reproductive seed is selected and prepared for germination, the bride's womb is blessed and purified for fertility. The day of delivery is or harvest is prayed for. All other couples who partake in the ritual process and the ritualized kolanut are ritualized. The couples who have not had children are purified as well and are got ready for procreation. All those who partake in the ritualization of the kolanut are all ritualized as well; and they share in the love, peace, unity, progress, prosperity, wealth etc that are got from the supernatural through the kolanut. The children are for the community and for all humanity. This is because they (the community or humaniy) are all witnessess to the marriage and are participants in communing with the supernatural via the kolanut; and also are participants in the ritualization of the birth process and the emergence of the life of the child. The child is an interweave or an admixture of the blood of the both parties. This admixture is made possible by the kolanut ritualism. The child is referred to as *Nwanne m*, which is here taken to be "the child of my mother." The mother is *Ani* (the Earth Goddess or the Mother Earth) who is the mother of all humanity. And associated with life through agriculture in Igbo cosmo-theological terrain. The earth is all over the world and humanity is sustained by her; thus, all humanity are of the same mother. Impotency and infertility are prayed against through the

kolanut. The ritualization of kolanut in Igbo land is beyond the understanding of it as just a mere fruit but divinely spiritual.

In a telephone interview with a researcher in Oral Literature, Amadihe Ezugu, "kolanut is life and it can only be given to us by God." It is usually said that "he who brings kolanut brings life." The "he" is a divine figure (God, gods etc) because they alone can give life. It is not humans that are meant in the context because of their inability to give life. In this case, kolanut is life.

In the Igbo socio-cultural domain, kolanut ritual plays a profound symbolic role. For Adannaya-Onwu-Otuyelu, "[k]olanut features in all aspects of Igbo life" (25). Once there is a guest, there is usually the tendering of kolanut which takes a religious significance. Adannaya-Onwu-Otuyelu, in this sense, also argues that "kolanut is a highly valued and indispensable product, it commends our respect in a way no other produce has done. Kolanut is symbol of friendship. Its presentation to a guest surpasses any other sign of hospitality" (ibid). Kolanut ritual in this medium features three segments: the presentation, the breaking and the distribution of the kolanut. The guest knows he is accepted only when there is the presence of kolanut. The one who offers the kolanut prays over it; this automatically leads to its transformation process. Prayers are offered and the both persons or families are blessed through the kolanut. There is the structure of the language which is mystic. We notice that the prayer is so structured that it captures a kind of superior – inferior hierarchy. It first of all calls on the supernatural beings; that is the pantheistic beings, praises them for the gift of life. In this process, ritual has already occurred because of the spiritual bond between the two or more persons involved; and also the bond between humanity and the transcendental.

The ritualization of the kolanut involves the ritualization of the participants or the performer. This is because they are parts and parcels of the whole ritual process. For the breaking of the

kolanut, it is a man who is worthy and chosen that breaks the kolanut because he is inspired with the proverbially oratorical power that ritualizes the kolanut. To be worthy in this sense is to have fulfilled the sacred laws of the land and the commandments of the supernatural beings.

The performer compares himself to "a little innocent child." The childhood innocence used as an analogy in the lines is as a result of his worthiness to be in the presence of God. He has to be a true son of the land and a custom bearer of the people. The argument here is not that anybody cannot just take the kolanut and pray with it. Even when a *sinner* picks it and prays with it for the forgiveness of his sins, he is transformed. But in this context, we have a performer who is purified by his being just and holy and worthy to commune with God. In the third line, the performer knows that God can judge him: "If I've ever touched the wife of a relation / Or seen the nakedness of a sister; / If I've ever stolen what belongs to any human being / Or oppresses a widow or cheated an orphan; / Or borne false witness, or spoken calumny; / If I have killed any human being / With knife or spear, / Or arrow or rope, / Or poison or witchcraft, / If I've done all these things, / May this our land / And the Mother Earth EAT ME!" The earth goddess, *Ani*, is supreme and it is her responsibility to "EAT" him if what he professes is not his true self; but "But if none of these is my guilt / And my fellow-man would afflict me / Because of anger of the heart or anger of the eye / Then let whoever comes to kill me / KILL HIMSELF!" having found himself worthy in the presence of God, the performer prays that God should not allow any evil to befall him because he has fashioned no evil against any man nor go against the will of God. He prays for God's protection of all humanity. While praying with the kolanut, the performer ritualizes himself and the whole humanity at large. This is rendered thus in the work:

Anybody who says he must see me and my household
 With evil eyes
 Let his eyes perish in the seeing!
 Any person who says an innocent house-hold
 May not sleep
 Make him roost with the chicken.
 I pray for the good of the people in the bush,
 And the good of those at home;
 For the god of those in the hills
 And the good of those in the valleys;
 For the good of those at work
 And for the good of those at play,
 But if a man I can stand by does not stand by me
 Let me what kills traitors kill him.
 If a spirit I can vouch for does not vouch for me
 Let what kills spirits kill it (106 - 121).

Proverb functions in the depth of Igbo oratory and generally within the integrality of Igbo cultural existence. To pray for peace, the language as a veritable ingredient (Onwudiwe qtd in Asika and Akabuike 55), is "steeped in proverbial lore" (Obiechina, *Culture* 155). There is the use of the metaphor of kite and eagle in the representation of peaceful coexistence among humanity. This is presented thus:

If the kite perches
 Let the eagle perch.
 Whichever denies the other the right to perch.
 May its wings break (147 - 150).

The traditional prayer goes further in praying for all humanity. All aspects of human life are wrapped up in the whole ritual process. This touches humanity and other cosmological phenomena that are created for man. In the following line, God is written first to show His supremacy over all the earth.

GOD

May we never be in need and find no helper
 A man who has friends is greater than a wealthy man!
 Give our wives fruitfulness –
 One blow, one fall.
 Give us children
 And give us the means to feed them.
 Let any of us or our children
 Who goes out to work
 Come back
 With plenty of money,
 And come back safe.
 Let any weed that brushes us
 On our departure
 Brush against us on our return –
 It is not an evil weed.
 And when we are in front;
 Let evil be behind
 Let no illness come
 And let no doctor cure.
 Let no one be ill
 And let no one heal.
 But I have not spoken and it is final
 You have the yam;
 And YOU have the knife.
 To whomsoever you give
 And in whatever measure, he will eat!...
 I break the KOLA NUT.

The performer asks God for eternal satisfaction. Even if the whole of humanity will be in need, let there be a helper. The fruit of the womb is pleaded for the whole wives. This fruitfulness is metaphorically regarded as a “fall” after the “blow” from the husband. The blow and fall are thus the marital sexual intercourse in which the sperm is released into the woman for the fertilization of the egg. The next process that comes is the emergence of life – “children” – which is recorded

in the line. This therefore means that life is prayed for in the whole of this process – the life of the husband, the wife and the children – the being of humanity. The next line of the stanza asks God humbly to also provide the means with which the children are fed. The idea of evil is brought into the process. The performer prays against an “evil weed” which represents the evil of all kinds. He prays against illnesses. God is regarded as the giver of life: “And YOU have the knife. / To whomsoever you give / And in whatever measure, he will eat!” After the whole traditional prayer, the kolanut is finally broken, and broken culturally with the thumbnails. For Senanu and Vincent:

This poem, which is a dramatic monologue, is a complex offering. It is a serious poem, a rhetorical tour de force which contains a lot of variety in tone and attitude. It moves from the invocation in which, the omnipotence, purity and mystery of God are stressed, to prayerful supplication, some social admonition, general reflection about life and finally submission to the power of Almighty God, the only dispenser. It uses many of the techniques of rhetoric in Africa: aphorisms, proverbs, idioms and witticisms. In addition the poem employs subtle repetitions of words and phrasing and parallelism [both structural and semantic] as techniques to intensify the ideas expressed” (31).

There are many cultural ceremonies in Igbo land such as the New Yam Festival. This period is a period of thanksgiving or gratitude to the god of the land whose responsibility it is to shepherd the farms. Yam is the father of all crops in Igbo land. The celebration or festival is to thank the god or God (the Christo-centric figure) for the bountiful harvest. The occasion is chaired by the king who is the head of the land. The occasion is opened with the kolanut by the invocation of the supernatural host to partake in the communion with humanity. They are to eat before humans for no one struggles with his father over seniority. It is with the kolanut that various families, friends and

relations are welcomed and prayed for safety in their return – serving a totemic purpose. In this ritual process, the sacramental moment or communion features a blend of humanity and divinity and this is achieved through the presence of kolanut. In a personal interview with Frank Egbo, “kolanut is to the Igbo what the Bible is to Christianity, what the shell is to the tortoise and what the heart is to the body. If the Bible can separate from Christianity, then kolanut can separate with the Igbo.” The argument in Egbo is that kolanut is ever-present in Igbo life.

Looking at how integral and subsumed kolanut is in Igbo culture, Ogbalu has argued that “kolanut is one of the fruits which cannot be removed by the people not even the Whiteman from Igbo land” (51). Kolanut features in a situation where a great decision is taken. This decision may range from land disputes, the selection of a traditional ruler to succeed the late king, enactment of the laws of the land and the due punishment for a defaulter, enactment of justice over certain issues etc. Kolanut plays a crucial role here in that it seeks the divine wisdom of God, gods and ancestors to aid human understanding. It is only kolanut that performs this task. This is played out in one of my plays thus:

Orji: (*clears his throat*) Ikenga, we have gathered again before you. We are your children, the children of this great kingdom, Agbogidi. We have gathered to thank you for our lives, for our families, for the life you gave to us today. You know why we are here. You knew that this day will be, and you have kept us alive to witness it. You know when we shall leave here. You who see in secret we bring you kolanut. You who knew us before we knew ourselves, we bring you kolanut. You who know when we shall die to join our ancestors, we bring you kolanut. Give us wisdom. Give us knowledge to do what we are here for. We do not know ourselves and what knows us we do not know. We are here for a matter of great concern; a matter beyond the reach of our minds but only you can decide for us. Only you know

what is good for us. We also ask you for life, good health and wealth. Look after our children and wives. Take away all evil that haunts in the day or night. Let not our enemies see us. If they are in front, let us be at the back. If they are at the back, let us be in the front. Above all, give us the wisdom to do what we are here for. Ikenga, the oracle of Agbogidi kingdom, the god who hears the heartbeat of everyone, we greet you (173).

The ritualization of kolanut plays out in oath-taking. The oath-taker might have been accused of having done something unethical in the land. He is obliged to take the oath in exchange with his life. To ritualize this process, it has to feature kolanut. This is because the host of the supernatural is invoked through it to bear witness and punish the defaulter. It is not the responsibility of man to punish the oath-taker. It is the supernaturals that perform this role.

Settling of dispute in Igbo land features the ritualism of kolanut. The dispute may be land-based, wealth etc. The two parties involved invite a third party which may be an individual or the kindred as the case may be. They seek divine wisdom and justice by praying with the kolanut which is the only fruit the culture recognizes as having a spiritual link to the transcendental world. It is believed that it is the job of the transcendental to judge or settle the dispute through the speaker. In this case, the *judge* prays to be inspired through the kolanut to be just in the judgement. The prayer also focuses against greed which leads to hatred. In a case where it is land dispute, not all humans accept to settle it because of how divine it is. It is only done by one who considers himself worthy, capable, pure and ready to be possessed by the cosmic intelligence.

Life and blood are sacred in Igbo philosophy. Covenant involves life and blood. In the ancient time in Igbo land, the parties involved had blood covenant which bonds them together. Kolanut is used here to perform this ritual. After the prayer with the kolanut, a sharp blade is used to pierce the

thumbs of the both parties involved and they use the different lobes of the kolanut to paste it with the blood and eat. This is a pledge of life if the individual goes against their agreement. He feeds on his good towards his opposite. He is bound to die if he brings evil to the other party. In this modern time, such ritual practice is very rare as a result of various sicknesses that have eaten deep into the very fabric of humanity. It is now only used with the kolanut. Another closely related ritual process plays out in promises such as marriage etc. In this case, the individuals promise to marry each other. In the olden days, this is achieved by using the tip of the tongue to lick the blood from the pierced thumb of the opposite. Now, such promises are done with kolanut. The parties can only be separated only by death; but sacrifices are to be offered to the gods to free the person alive from the eternal bond.

In a personal interview with an eighty-five year old herbalist, Mr Muolokwu Muodezi, "kolanut is very vital in ritual sacrifices. The gods are dumb to us until the arrival of kolanut without which humans have excluded the gods from that sacred communion." Every ritual with the kolanut is sacrificial. Even in using the kolanut to welcome a guest, an altar is already formed in the scene. This scene is consecrated and ritualized through prayers to the supernatural beings present. The ritualist first of all uses the kolanut and sacrifices himself and the entire humanity on this altar of the supernatural via a linguistic medium. The offering of sacrifice to God, gods, ancestors etc feature the ritualization of kolanut. For these supernatural beings to be invoked or pleaded to accept the sacrifice there must be the presence of kolanut and it can never be substituted with any other thing. A situation where there is a gift present – an animal, food etc - it is the kolanut that consecrates the gift and make it acceptable to them. This is done in total reverence and commitment to the whole ritualistic process. Sacrifices in Igbo culture are not offered without kolanut which is the only medium to spirituality. In Parrinder's

book, *African Traditional Religion*, he argues that “one of the great principles behind many social sacrifices is that of communion. Sacrifices may consist of libations of water, rum or beer, and small quantities of food. Or they may take the form of killing an animal, pouring out the blood on the altar or the ground, and cooking the rest for the participants. In the latter case the ceremony is a sacramental communion” (87). This kind of sacrifice creates a bond between nature and supernature, and kolanut is used to consecrate and ritualize the sacrificial gifts to make them acceptable.

In Igbo land, title taking is a special occasion that demands a ritual sacrifice. A title is given to a person who is befitted because he has achieved something great in the land. The community may decide to give him a title having found him worthy in character and morality; and having seen his contribution to the development of humanity or the community. He can still decide to take a title by himself but the title has to be conferred on him with some kind of ritualization. He must be a man of proven integrity. In this case, a cow may be slaughtered and used for sacrifice. Kolanut plays a fundamental role because without it, every other thing will not function. It is only with the kolanut that the supernatural beings are invoked and the ritual initiated.

Conclusion

In Igbo land, kolanut features in various cultural practices. This ranges from their social, economic and religious practices. Kolanut is one of the totemic objects that are accorded with sacredness. It functions as an anthropomorphic element that is deified for its spiritual value. Achebe has argued that “Kola nut was a sacred fruit and had a very distinct and distinguished role to play in Igbo life and culture” (10). Kolanut ritualism as we have seen includes three distinct processes: presentation, breaking and sharing; and in Chidume, Osioma and Echem we read that these processes “symbolize a social and ritual bonding

between the living on one hand, the living and the departed on the other” (51). The ritualism of kolanut has three broad distinct dimensions: mystical, religious and linguistic. These three are driven by symbols and are interwoven for a ritual to be performed. To the Igbo, kolanut is not just mere fruit; it is divine and used for divine purposes. The nutritional content of the kolanut is not biological or scientific; it is spiritual and transcendental. The language of the kolanut ritual is mystico-religious, and thus, super-ordinate. It is through the language that every other thing is called up and assigned agency.

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Nudity versus Morality in “*Women of Hope*” Dance Performance

Nicholas Chielotam Akas

Abstract

Nudity in African performance is perceived by some as something barbaric, taboo, and mundane that need not be discussed at all or seen by children. Some African parents' believe that colonization has really put an end to any form of nudity, no matter the message or reasons surrounding it. But in Africa of pre-colonial era, nudity in cultural activities does not just emerge; rather actions, environmental problem and cultural mythology give rise to them. The research problems in this article are: What is the symbolic essence of nudity in dance? What are the factors that give rise to such nudity in the dance and Are their cultural implications of nudity in the dance? When these questions are answered, the myopic audience will understand that indigenous African choreographers do not choreograph in abstraction; rather their environment contributes to their working metaphor. Based on the objective of this paper, the essence of nudity in the dance, “women of hope”, is of great potency. This is so because it is a means used by women in the dance to express themselves on how they are being raped, robbed, and brutalized by unknown men in the community. So ironically, the communicative potency of nudity in the dance is for caution and signal for total revenge. From the finding, in Igbo cosmology, women are taken serious whenever they decide to do extra-ordinary thing. The use of nudity in this dance is highly semio-communicative when interpreted beyond its moral potency. In order to understand the communicative potency imbedded in the dance, content

analysis would be used as qualitative research methodology towards interpreting and understanding the choreographers' motivation.

Introduction

In African cosmology nudity based on its sociological undertone is highly symbolic and represents situations and actions at any given time. To Africans nudity is not all about sexuality; rather each form of nudity is motivated by a particular action, ideology or environmental situations. For instance, in core rural villages in Africa, children growing up, both boys and girls are allowed to be totally nude while playing, because it is believed in Africa that they are still young, innocent and totally ignorant of any negative emotional feelings or sexual urges. But ironically any child seen covering him/herself at tender age is tagged a spoilt child. On the part of the mothers when they start aging they always expose their bodies especially their breasts. This symbolically portrays how many children they have given birth to. It also portrays at times that they were not wayward before and after they were married and, also, that their breasts are a source of living to all her children, hence none of them should disobey her or regard her as mere old woman. Manning Conrad observed that 'Nudity in some circles and some societies is completely divorced from sexual overtones. It may have no significant meaning in itself or it may indicate such diverse conditions as poverty, humility and commonly even a state of sacredness and holiness'.(24).

The socio-communicative potency of nudity in cultural settings shows that some environmental actions, mythical belief system or opinions contributed to various levels of nudity: half nudity or full nudity as the case might be. Half nudity can be in various forms for both male and female in our present society. For instance, half nudity for girls, means wearing only bra on, while for the male, it involves being totally bare chested with or without singlet. Some of the environmental factors that might

cause such nudity are varied. It might be caused by hot weather, by over-familiarity based on brothers and sisters or cousins, or in a situation whereby some person or persons are grieving over death of relation, protesting over something or to showcase not being guilty of any accusation...

This paper argues that nudity, in all its ramifications, is far beyond immorality, poor home training and poor fashion trend use. Research has shown from social nudists that, nudity has both health, environmental and physical implications depending on how it is been utilized. So it will be totally bad to place nudity side by side with immorality without knowing the ideal reason or reasons surrounding each form of nudity. For instance Manning clearly stated the positive functions of nudity.

Annel Pauls suggests that 'Nudity should not only be judged on superficial level whenever it is seen, rather people should learn to ask question, observe and study reasons surrounding such nudity before making myopic generalizations that the person is totally uncultured'. (29). History has it that the nudity of a man as represented by artists in their paintings and carved works portrays man as a higher animal amongst other animals especially apes. The various paintings of nudity of man symbolically represents the innermost being of every man beyond mere clothing. At times, especially amongst artists, the totality of man exposed in nudity reveals his/her truck shape, emotional reactions and responses to situations or shocks. Arrel Henry observed that 'Any artist that enjoys expressing himself through nudity of man, simply, alerts man as a being whose of self-actualization is inborn and not in the external clothing of make belief'. (34).

For some creative works or art, the medium of expression especially when it has to do with nudity has been misinterpreted and called mundane art on the basis of morality. Morality has made some to reject creative art work and going to theatre to watch dance performance which will lead them to hell fire or affect their faith as Christians. It is important to note that this

paper is not disputing the fact that some art works are highly obscene before its viewers and buyers. Rather the problem of this paper is to correct the myopic perception placed on nudity as a medium of expression in any art work. Towards the conclusion and recommendation as part of this paper, the reader will understand that the researcher advocates viewers deemphasizing their limited mind-set and valuing the reflective communicative essence imbedded in that medium of expression.

Concept of Morality: An Overview

The development of any society, community, organization and human being centres mainly on their moral belief and perception. It is their believed ideology that socially unifies the aforementioned in action, mission and vision statements towards upholding and actualizing any set goal. But nonconformity to a structural and nurtured moral belief system deemphasizes any set principle. According to Hoffman M. L., as cited by Liisa Myyry, 'Morality is the welfare and rights of others, especially when they conflict with one's own interest to make choice between doing good or bad. The person's ability to emerge successfully from this two emotional struggle makes him/her a moral sensitive being' (9).

The essence of morality wherever it exists is for it to stand as a guiding force and principle in making our daily choices. Man as a being is believed to be a higher animal among other animals because of his moral ability, sustainability and actualization based on logical and critical reasoning. But in this paper the aim is to observe, interpret and understand the moral justification in some nudist works, especially dance. At this point, nudity in dance based on cultural and moral justification is beyond biblical opinion of sin; rather in this context it is highly communicative and has a piece of information to pass across to the audience. Akas maintains that

Nudity in creative arts, be it in dance, costume, poetry and fine art, should not be easily ruled out as an obscene object. Rather what matters or should be appreciated immediately is the subjective meaning imbedded in the art and not the objective perception based on individualised ideology due to engulfing effect of colonization of Africans. (46).

Aside the pains and regrets of colonization that at times de-values of our cultural essence, it is very important to state subjectively in this paper that all action, belief and performances in African setting has a moral justification. It is the communicative moral justification in African performances that automatically explains what gave rise to their emergence and their sociological usefulness whenever they existed. Akas Emenike, in an interview, stated that

Communities should not be easily commended especially whenever their festivals look absurd or expressionistic in nature when placed side by side with the westernized festivals or performances; rather let the watchword and thematic essence be placed on the moral justification and the essence of its existence. With this, people can understand that any stylised performance be it nudity or otherwise does not exist in a vacuum. (Interviewed, February 06, 2016).

Based on the above, every stylized performance in African setting or in Igbo cosmology has a traceable root. It is the traceability of such performance that justifies its moral implications. Akas observes that

Man as a being does not act out of mere assumption or provocation; rather the development experience he has passed through in life affects his perception or opinion towards certain views and actualisation of things or action. This consciously makes him store those actions in a domain called 'moral judgement' which at times helps him to determine whether to be or not (24).

The effectiveness of morality in this paper goes beyond the biblical injunction which says that doing good or anything that affects the moral status of a human being is a sin before God.

The Sociological Implication of Nudity in Dance Performance as a Choreographic Style

Dance is unique art form that has several means of communication based on the choreographer's choreographic style. It is choreographic style of any choreographer that positively showcases the information they want to pass across to the viewing audience. In dance scholarship, the use of body movements and its communicative essence has gone far beyond entertainment for it is an expressionistic tool that portrays the innermost intentions of the following: Choreographer (the creator) – the dance (the interpreter) and the audience (the social critics), all these are what every choreographer strives to achieve on stage with the dancers body and choreographic medium.

Research has it that nudity as a choreographic style is barely used by some of the contemporary choreographers due to its obscenity before the viewing audiences and their myopic moral justification of always seeing such expressionistic choreographers and dancers as corrupt people who need not to be associated with especially their children. But according to Amaka Nmezi, an indigenous choreographer in Igbecada village Imo State, in an interview, states, thus:

It is the inability of parents to see, appreciate and understand dancers as communicators and not mediocrities irrespective of their form and style of expression that ironically forces such parents to see dance at professional level for their children as waste of time, resources, energy and manpower (Interviewed, February 04, 2016).

The use of nudity as a choreographic style, in any dance socially wise, is for emphatic purpose depending on the choreographer's metaphoric foresight. Based on this, the existence of nudity in dance performance should be looked at subjectively and not objectively as this paper strongly argues. The sociological essence of nudity as a choreographic style in dance is far beyond the Christian moral justification of sin and hell fire; rather in this paper, subjectively, nudity is used communicatively especially when it has to do with humanity – the society – aspirations/expectations and governance. The choreographer, in order to stress the essence of the aforementioned, will stylize his dancers in nudity form towards achieving the following: to awaken people's consciousness through the obscene body movements on stage; and to help the viewing audience to know the reason behind the obscene movements and what the choreographer aimed to achieve with it. Adrienne L. Kaeppler maintains that

In order to understand the use of nudity in dance, the movements must be grammatical, they must be able to view the immediate environment or society at large and present their worries bare before them. The nudity as a style in dance examines the nothingness of man's existences in world in which he lives and struggles to survive. (118).

The effectiveness of nudity as a choreographic style both culturally, professionally and socially presents the innermost feelings of a depressed man in his society. Scholarly wise at this point man no longer hide his feelings; rather he expresses them the way they are and not the way they ought to be. Arieti as cited by KusiAnkrah maintained that 'Nudity was a natural and normal part of life. People are not nude when things are moving fine for them, but people's nudity are always noticed when environment and conditions are longer favourable to them'. (206). The semiotic use of nudity as a choreographic style by some choreographers depicts the following: State of

Emergency, man's inhumanity to fellow man, victimization of women, to demand for urgent attention on some topical issues, as sign of purification against any taboo.

This is what the use of nudity in dance stands for. It is not misleading anybody, especially Christians (believers). Wadestone as cited by Kim strongly observed that 'There is no sin in nudity itself, but if a person uses the nudity for lustful or immoral purposes, he has misused it and this constitutes a sin. But when it is used for teaching morals, the bible does not speak against nudity nor does it teach that the body is shameful'. (267). The sociology of nudity in dance interpretatively presents the uncertainty of man's expectations in his daily activities.

Nudity versus Morality

The success of any work of art especially in dance performance and choreography centres mainly on the morals behind its creations. It is the core level of morals in any choreographed dance movements that purposefully guides the choreographer towards setting a goal and work hard towards achieving it through body movement. At this point, the choreographer does not create movements out of mere assumptions; rather it is the de-valued moral belief system of the masses motivates the creative impulse of a choreographer towards creating a dance movement. The objective of every dance movement is to educate and not entirely for entertainment as it is wrongly misinterpreted always by non-dance scholars. But, in order to achieve the desired objective, the choreographer has the creative licence to use any available communicative medium and style in passing the intended message across to the viewing audience. Abize Ifeanyi stated that 'Dance is a free expressive art and its medium of expression is as free as the art itself. (24).

The essence of moral justification of nudity as a communicative medium or style is based mainly on the ability

of the choreographer to portray the following: To give reason for selecting such a choreographic style as an expressive medium, to explain the various nudity semiotic movements and take those movements to people that own it for easy understanding and appreciation, and to make the audience understand that the choreographer mirrors its immediate environment and present them the way they are.

Nudity and morality are highly interwoven in any artistic work especially in dance choreography. Nudity in dance as a style always serves as x-raying, interpreting and projecting the intended thoughts, ideology and observation of the creative artist be it musician, choreographer, fine artist and playwrights. The subjective aim of any choreographer using nudity as a choreographic style is to unmask the hidden truth in man's existence in his immediate environment. For instance, it is the nudity of a man that portrays his inner body structure, showcases how smooth and how rough he is and also the places that needs adjustments will be adjusted too. The same is applicable in dance creation and performance using nudity as its communicative medium. Here the choreographer uses the dancer's body as an 'operating theatre' where he dissects the governing and governed, present his flaws, broken promises and other various social misconducts. The moral justification of the use of nudity at this point, presents pressing situation the way it is and how it affects the masses and also demand for a possible solution where and when necessary.

Based on morals, the choreographer should always be perceived and appreciated based on the thematic content of his dance movements, its creation and its actualization and not to be christened on the ideology of sin and hell fire. Akas observes that 'The choreographer is a social crusader and his medium of expression should be adored too as a communicator and not as a sinner or moral degrader'. (24) Nerbahat Erpolat maintains that, 'Nudity in dance can only be subversive when the naked body is

used to question and expose the development of evil on the society through the dancers' body (206).

The semiotic interpretative essence of nudity and morality in dance is for self-acknowledgement and power. Self-acknowledgement helps to ask critical questions when and where necessary, while power gives the viewing audience drive to seek for positive change or look towards observing the change.

This work adopts Sarah M.C. Kenney internalized Theory on nudity. This theory centres on man's inner thought towards nudity against the generalized perception of nudity being an obscene action. She said 'the positive use of nudity is not a sin; rather its wrong use against its existence is highly questionable and must be sued' (24).

Conquest also believes that 'what controls everybody be it artist, normal person and the society at large is the inner self and not outside self'. (34) She also reaffirmed that 'in human existence the inner self is the magic fuel while the outside self helps the fire to burn faster' (34) Symbolically, the fuel based on the thrust of this paper simply shows what motivates the creative impulse of artists, while the medium of expression serves as an interpreting tools (the fire).

In this paper, the internalized theory as the theoretical framework will help in understanding positive essence of nudity and morality in the dance performance called 'Women of Hope'. The core subjective aim of this theoretical framework is to advocate that the medium of expression in any work of art especially through nudity should be viewed wisely, interpretatively and appreciatively beyond immorality, sin and hell fire as the case may be for Christians. Every art work lover and social critics should first of all understand what triggers the inner self of an artist which he/she externalized through the chosen medium. If this can be achieved, one will begin to understand that happenings, situations and observations inspire

the creative artist to always put on his thinking cap and work towards proffering possible solution.

The Synopsis of '*Women of Hope*'

This is a contemporary dance – drama which mirrors the various experiences women pass through because of tradition, and portrays how a woman was sentenced to death for cheating on her husband. Serious and painful women experiences are put through a symbolic choreographic movement. Based on the high level of humiliation the women in the dance revolt seriously through their nudity dance style and call for fair hearing. It is the moral justification behind their nudity dance style that makes the dance a communicative tool and is not fully criticised by Christians present as an obscene art even though some really criticise it.

Analyses of '*Women of Hope*'

The dance is a ten minute dance-drama on stage, highly energetic from the beginning to the end. It is the use of symbolic body movement under three sub-themes that presents the communicative essence of the dance. It is the categorization of the sub-themes through Brechtian style. The sub-themes are as follows; the victim, the judgement and the revolt.

The Victim: The dance movement here varies from slow beat to high beat; each of these beats is symbolically important. Before the dance, a solo performer dances into the stage with two sign-posts. On one sign-post one reads *the hotel* while on the other one reads *the victim*. After the proper positioning of the sign-posts she dances out of the stage. Immediately a woman is seen dancing showing on a very romantic beat and moving towards the hotel sign-post with her boyfriend. One thing very symbolic about these two lover birds is the inscription on their both backs. The woman's own reads (I'm married, but full of regrets) while the guy's own reads (I'm here to hear you out, you have my shoulder to lean on). So the slow

beating continues which showcases them as two love birds. But at a point, the sounds of the drum change to a more fearful sound and on a very high tone, which shows sign of danger. Immediately the sound is heard a man is seen dancing to show sign of anger, disappointment and his intention to action kill his wife with his knife. But at the back of the man's costume is boldly written (Yes, men are guilty of this offence, but it is forbidden for a woman to try such). The choreographer creatively showcases how the husband beats up the man and sends him out of the hotel room, while he (the husband) choreographically drags the wife to the sign-post written 'The victim', there he threatens to send her back to her parents.

The Judgement: This is another symbolic scene in the dance based on the inscriptions at the back of the judges. On the costume of judges is written (Any offence committed by a woman in marriage should be straight divorce). The woman is brought in before judges to give reasons why she is cheating on her husband. Inside the court, other women with their various husbands were present to witness the court scene. One major symbolic action in this court scene, through the choreographer's choreographic style, is using tempo through drums to portray his actions in the court. For instance, if the victim's husband is talking, the whole environment will be calm and quiet through the slow beat of the drums and mimetic movement of the people inside the court room. But if his wife (the victims) wants to talk, the tempo of drums will go high which simply means she is not allowed to talk. This action is symbolically repeated three times in the dance-drama until the Chief Judge passes his judgement. The act of unfair judgement to woman's explanations gave rise to the nudity revolt of the women in the dance.

The Revolt: This is where the choreographer presents his choreographic style of nudity revolt with moral justification. The nudity revolt here by the women morally is for fair hearing and this stands on the following four concepts. The first is the statement that women are human beings and should be treated

fairly. The second concept states that whenever a woman makes a mistake, she must be heard out before she is condemned. Others include the fact that men are always right in their immoral behaviours while women are always scape-goats, and that total nudity on this ground is for moral justices to be done or we will use our breast to lay curse on men.

Conclusion

The core of this research paper is to refute the misconception of people about art works, especially when it has to do with nudity. The use of nudity in creative works should and will not be interpreted literally, rather its positivism towards change should serve as the moral yardstick in judging them. From this research, the dance, 'Women of Hope', the subjective potency of nudity versus morals always mirrors the society, unveils its ills and proffers an unaltered possible solution towards solving them. Based on this, choreographers and other creative artists become agents of societal transformation and reformation, through their creative ingenuity and unique expressive medium.

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Functional Imagination in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*

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Abstract

*The question of African identity is a major theme that commands great interests in scholarly circles today. To define this identity, one must contend with the question of creativity. The scholar of African descent finds himself in a critical crossroad: either to assume creativity as defined in western heritage as rationality (that is, logicity and scientificity), which involves keeping out certain structures like imagination, emotions, and power from western rationality or to resist the Western version of creativity justifiably by accepting those elements exorcised by it. In Chinua Achebe's writings, we find a copious amount of evidence in support of the latter, a proof that African development and her celebration worldwide would take place in a grandiose way when Africans realize en masse that they hold the aces to their own development and identity. Africa needs functional imagination (human imagination accepted as a valid ingredient of creativity), to get her acts together in the areas of politics, economics, education, technology, and to break away from the frustrations engendered by the presuppositions of logic and empirical science. Being a theoretical work, the research was based on the critical analyses of *Things Fall Apart* and historical records. It holds the human imagination as necessary for holistic account of knowledge and creative development.*

Introduction

This paper will start with an exploration of who constitutes the typical African. One of the ways is defining a nation is by geographical mapping. For one group, an African is a person born in Africa; for another group, he is a person, who lives in Africa. There is yet another group that sees an African as a person of African descent notwithstanding his/her physical location. It is noteworthy that these views have their strengths and weaknesses. This definition forms one of the triggers of the origin of African Philosophy.

Although W.A. Hart was wrongly represented as regards his invitation to the study of the structure of African thought (Ibuot, 2011a, 211-212), there were lots of voices in Europe that really questioned the humanity of Africans. Such personalities include John C. Calhoun (Stein, 1975), Lucy Mair (Stein, 1975), I. Kant (as cited in Eze, 1997), G.W.F. Hegel (1956), David Hume (as cited in Miller, 1987), Karl Jaspers (as cited in Jahn, 1961), Leo Frobenius [1891] as cited in Effiong 2013), Thomas Arnold Toynbee (1934), and Hugh Trevor-Roper (1965&1966). One of the ways this doubt was expressed was in terms of the contribution of Africa to civilization. Is there anything that Africa contributed to world progress? Can the view that Africa heard only the echo of civilization be challenged? Doubting the humanness of the African got raised up to the point of averring that Christian doctrine such as a supreme being was too high a concept for the African (Agbakoba, 2004 & Stein, 1975). Many scholars of African descent rose to address these issues. The fruit of these reactions and responses birthed renewed interests in the African past.

In this paper, the researchers explore another dimension of Nigerian-African underdevelopment; not of the pre-colonial but post-colonial era. In this post-colonial Africa, *Things Fall Apart* comes significantly handy as one wades through various currents in order to construct meaningful life in 21st century Africa, a life relevant today without the loss of its ancestral

rootedness. In this regime western education (formalized socialization and learning), which is limited by logic and empirical science, is highly popularized. Western rationality (logic and empirical sciences) constitutes one of the structured setbacks to creative productivity whether artistic, technological, religious, scientific or ethical in Africa because it negates what is highly lavished in Achebe's prodigious work, *Things Fall Apart*, namely imaginative freedom. The suffocation of this ability in man is rife in western education, which is commonly found in Nigerian schooling system as seen according to the National Educational Research and Development Council, NERDC (2004, 6-8, 10), may not be disconnected from the confusion in African epistemic attempts. It has been argued that confusion gave rise to African Philosophy (Ibuot, 2011a) but western rationality serves to fortify that state of muddle in that it projects a divided personality (Selden, 1988), one out of touch with the fullness of a person. It recognizes a little part of man, namely the mind and only the part said to be 'rational' (if that is possible) and wages war against the other powers of human personality such as imagination, emotion, will, faith/belief and body (Ibuot, 2010b). This war is an attempt at achieving what is, in the philosophy of mind and phenomenology, considered an impossibility, namely analyzing the unanalyzable, the 'I' or self analyzing itself. Put differently, it may be likened to the contradiction invoked by Jesus in the idea of the impossibility of a house divided against itself or the devil casting out itself (Luke 11:17-22 & Matthew 12:25-30 King James Version) – a situation where a thing is itself and not itself at the same time and in the same sense is a violation of the principle of non-contradiction (a statement cannot both be p and not p at the same time and in the same sense). In Achebe, we find a counter, a movement towards the unification of man's inert creative powers.

Objectivity and Western Rationality

For anything to qualify as knowledge and be valuable, that thing must pass the objectivity test. The test of objectivity involves passing through the searchlight of logic and scientific calibration. If anything is of any significance, the principles of logic and of empirical science shall prove it. It is against this background that the various courses in the Nigerian universities must align themselves to objectivity by deploying either the tools of logic as found in the cultural studies i.e. *geistwissenschaften* (Ibuot, 2010a) or of scientific calibration as used in the natural sciences or empirical-analytic sciences i.e. *naturwissenschaften* with its deductive-nomological model. Thus, two kinds of sciences were born. With this idolization of science, the realm of meaningful discourse was reduced to that of objectivity. But, is life and meaningful discourse constituted by objectivity as such, by that forum where signifiers of weakness are expunged?

To achieve objectivity, whether in the logical or scientific sense, it is significant that every signifier of impairment, error, privacy, limitation, or weakness is carefully jettisoned. In logic, it is achieved by expelling certain elements like emotions, intuition, imagination, sex, faith/belief, will, spirit, et cetera, and depending on the three laws of thought (– identity, excluded middle and non-contradiction) and deploying the labels of fallacies. With regard to the empirical sciences, indicators of instability or fluctuation are eliminated by dependence on calibration. And calibration may be understood as involving the deployment of number-markers and any other marker on the instruments of measure. In this way, scientists would avoid the fluctuations and instabilities attendant on human emotions, imagination, faith/belief, will, et cetera. The interference of these elements of change is supposedly surpassed by the markers on the instrument. Objectivity, therefore, concerns a form of knowledge that lies beyond any signifier of flux reminisced by Parmenides' theory of permanence; it also

reminds man of the classic conflict between change and permanence, non-being and being. Although human beings have sort after this type of knowledge for a very long time, it has been argued that this search is humanly impossible (Ibuot, 2010b), except in artificial intelligence and on papers.

As long as human beings are active epistemic and creative agents, having in mind that epistemology invokes creativity just as creativity is an epistemic child, they cannot expunge the play of images – cardinal ingredients of human creativity – whether auditory, kinaesthetic, visual, gustatory or olfactory (Gonzalez, 1993); or belief/faith, that is trust because you cannot start any mental exercise without a certain degree of trust, at least a reliance on the linguistic elements deployed; or emotions, in that man is always in an emotional state. Even if a person claims to be indifferent or apathetic, he/she is still in an emotional state because indifference/apathy is a kind of emotion (Ibuot, 2012, p. 136; Ferder, 1980, 56-81).

The scientist might invoke his calibration instruments as standing above the challenges of flux-indicators. At a closer look, that view may not escape critical confrontation. Scientific equipments do not supply evaluations in a vacuum. They involve certain measurements made up of numbers that have no meaningfulness in them except when interpreted by human beings. And the involvement of human beings in the interpretative process calls up the problems raised against logicity (Ibuot, 2010c). Western rationality is a systematic and distorted representation of human epistemology, which means a retardation of man's progress by at least one step. Yet, it is this format of creative and epistemic productivity that colours Nigeria's education system (Ibuot, 2011a).

Using the human imagination, one of the aspects of man's nature rejected by western rationality, as foundation, this paper demonstrates that man cannot be effectively creative in productivity without a robust and holistic human intelligence – an intelligence that is functionally imaginative. Functional

imagination is not an abstraction but a rich system of images such as auditory, visual, olfactory, and gustatory, which stretches beyond the narrow confines of artificial intelligence; and it is this expansive nature of the imagination that makes it a possibility condition for exploring new dimensions of life and to daringly go beyond "our familiar mooring places" (May, 1975, p. 2). In our opinion, it is the deployment of this kind of intelligence that defines *Things Fall Apart*. The imagination is hereby viewed as a positive element of creative advancement in man, and when allowed to bloom, its effectual impact may be akin to *Things Fall Apart*, which has become an intercultural, cross-cultural and, something of a trans-cultural heritage.

Functional Imagination in *Things Fall Apart*

In *Things Fall Apart*, functional imagination as a process of creativity involving a rich mix of man's power at creating, engaging and displaying assorted images (auditory, visual, kinaesthetic, gustatory, and olfactory) is indubitable. Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* resists the attempt at epistemic stranglehold by western rationality that has one goal, to render human imagination, will, emotion, faith/belief, et cetera dysfunctional, and estranged. This estrangement brings Marxian alienation, provoked by the subjugation/oppression of the labour of the masses (as cited in Engels, 1976), to mind. Probably, this breaking away from the establishment of logic and scientific rationality accounts for the uniqueness of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* in particular.

Let us examine a few instances of how Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* x-rays functional imagination; i) as one reads Achebe's work, he/sh may perceive the play of the forces of nature at work in *Things Fall Apart*. One can imagine the burning heat of the dry season, the bitter cold of harmattan, and the near endless downpour common with rainy seasons (Killiam, 1977). Achebe's delineation of the atmospheric conditions unique to Nigeria and the Igbo people of South

Eastern Nigeria, emotionally and imaginatively locates the work in Africa. Africans can identify with these images, which contrast sharply with the weather conditions in the West (winter, summer, autumn, and spring). Achebe's choice of adjectives drives home the nature of the conditions, and the general thoughts and feelings of an African (Igbo) about seasonal definitions of the environment. From Neurolinguistic Programming, Achebe may be said to have deployed images that require man's visual and kinaesthetic abilities (Seymour, 1990; Gonzalez, 1993); ii) take note of the expression: "the difficult art of preparing seed yams" (*Things Fall Apart*, 1958, p. 26). Achebe deploys the image of yam in *Things Fall Apart* to, at once, tilt the reader's imagination to an agrarian society, a common feature of Africa within the colonial and the immediate post-colonial era. Yam is used to express the height of Igbo agro-economic status. This particular crop is viewed by men as the chief crop because it was the crop the males identified with and indulged in cultivating. Just as the men were the heads of families and society in the human realm, yam was the male equivalent in the plant world. The visual sense is at work here. But when we consider the difficulty involved in preparing yam, man's kinaesthetic sense is, for instance, deployed. The kinaesthetic system is the feeling sense in man – it is made up of emotions/feelings and body-felt-sense (Seymour, 1990; O'Connor & Seymour, 1990); iii) again, he paints the image of a people, who are rural and agricultural, yet civil and ordered. Their lives as a people are ordered by the natural order of seasons. In other words, they were pre-scientific without necessarily being disordered and unproductive. Achebe's concern is not the denial of the conditions and stage of economic growth in the Igbo/Africa he was conversant with because every writers write from a base, his dominant and familiar terrain though he may not limit him/herself to it. He does not distort the story yet he does not accept the distortion by Eurocentrists. It is easy to perceive an Africa that was agrarian,

ordered and productive. These images can serve as grounds for hinging and developing a balanced sense of worthiness, humanity and high self-esteem. Though the image of agriculture and productivity can be visualized and felt (visual and possibly kinaesthetic images), civility and order suggests kinaesthetic and tactile images; iv) Okonkwo told his daughter Ezinma to “sit like a woman” (*Things Fall Apart*, 1958, p. 35) and in response, “Ezinma brought her two legs together and stretched them in front of her” (*Things Fall Apart*, 1958, 35). Later on, we heard that “she sat down and stretched her legs in front of her” (*Things Fall Apart*, 1958, p. 50). It is easy, in regard to these statements, to visualize something of the traditional Igbo moral tone – women may not sit like men, for example; v) accounts of the spiritual world functions by the imageries of human beings. The gods and goddesses of *Umuofia* were represented either as males or females. *Ani* was considered the earth-goddess, a female representation while *Agbala* was a male god. The concepts of male and female deities can easily be related to by human beings because it is anthropomorphic, and human beings tend to proceed from the known to the unknown.

An offshoot of this male – female dualism in the Igbo cosmology (*umunna* – *umuada*; yam, male crop – cassava, female crop; *Agbala*, a male god that had a priestess as its official worshipper; *Ani*, a goddess that had *Izcani*, a male priest as its official worshipper) found in *Things Fall Apart* is the idea of balance (Nwodo, 2004) throws up before us the problem of unity of opposites propounded by Heraclitus (ca. 535 – 475 BC). While this may excite one’s interest, we might consider the implication of this dualism for the divisive view that supremacy is not a strange concept in traditional Igbo/African worldview (Ogbenika, 2008 & Abanuka, 2011) because the idea of ‘complimentarity’ at the heart of divinity suggests dependency that counters the self-sufficiency implied in an absolutely supreme being like Agbakoba (2004) argues. Of what significance is it to argue just to prove to Eurocentrists

that Africa had a supreme being in traditional African thought? Remember that it was absent from the pre-Christian (traditional) European society (Agbakoba, 2004 & Ibuot, 2011b).

Matters Arising

It was opined by some people that writing in a 'world language' (346) would impinge on a genuine conveyance of the African experience. Chinua Achebe deflated this myth by relaying the Igbo (African) experience in *Things Fall Apart*. He modified English to capture the African experience of the Igbo world. By the force of deliberate action and high imagination, he deployed English to capture the Igbo dialectal intent specific to his home town of Ogidi and x-rayed the richness of the Igbo language as manifest in her proverbs, idioms, anecdotes, folklores, aphorisms and other wise sayings. Achebe, in the introductory chapter of *Things Fall Apart*, puts up a set of Igbo words like *ekwe*, *udu*, *ogene*, *egwugwu*, *obi*, *alusi*, *okposi*, and *ofo*. Some times, he explains them while deferring to interject his explanations to allow the narrative to flow. Such explanations help the reader. This is how some of Achebe's explanations appear: "His own hut, or obi, stood immediately behind the only gate in the red walls" (Achebe, 1958.11-12); "The elders, or ndi ichie, met to hear a report of Okonkwo's mission" (Achebe, 1958, p.10); "That was how Okonkwo first came to know that agbala was not only another word for a woman, it could also mean a man who had taken no title" (11). In his unique way, Achebe imaginatively represented the African story in English. Is this not one of the reasons for the appearance of *Things Fall Apart* on all the lists of the most read published books of 'the last 100 years'? (Anohu, 2009, p.6)

That Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is a work of fiction is a view universally upheld. To say that it represents or gives insight into traditional Igbo (African) society, even though of the era of colonialism, is an important angle to literary criticism widely assented to. According to Keith Booker:

Things Fall Apart is such an intricately crafted work of fiction that critics have acknowledged its aesthetic merits, while noting the importance of its reminders that pre-colonial African societies were complex and sophisticated structures bearing little relationship to European myths of African savagery and primitivism (66).

Viewed against the backdrop of Eurocentric label that Africa had contributed nothing to world civilization, in general and world literature, in particular, it is easy to appreciate the historical note within *Things Fall Apart*; but this does not dim its fictional character. Rather, it polishes it. A literary work birthed in Africa at a time the continent was seen as a dark spot from where no light of civilization appeared, and weaving within her the intricate threads of fiction and African surroundings in smooth lucidity, is in all modesty a stupendous feat. Where else in the history of human civilization has it been heard that light broke out of a dark hole but in Igboland (Africa), apart from the Judaeo-Christian informed systems. That fiction and history co-mingle in a rich mix in *Things Fall Apart* is ironical, yet irony is an expression of the power of human imaginative skilfulness. Sokolowski assays that

...to recognise that there are two aspects to a situation is a mere rudimentary act of thinking than is inference. It is also a mark of greater intelligence ... for example to appreciate that in difficult situation there is something insidiously desirable and to have a special flavour of both the threat and the attraction is a raw act of insight ... This seat of thinking, this dawning of distinction, is at the origin of the categories that make up our common knowledge (60).

But the human intelligence that can create and/or identify different sides to a situation is that network of high imagination or what Agbokoba (2001) calls 'imaginating' (p. 3). It is

supposedly due to insights such as these that Popper and Eccles note that "... flights of the imagination ... led to the pluralism of human tool making, for the many sidedness of even very primitive civilization, and then to the fact that great inventions were made ..." (455).

Conclusion

If we do not explore better ways of effecting creativity by moving away from the artificial limitations embodied by logical and scientific reasoning, we would be furthering the confusion within the western rational system sold to Africa at no discount. This may partially account for the seeming inability of Nigerians (Africans) to organize their societies in that: i) western rationality is incapable of proffering solutions to the problem of Nigerian statesmen (who are, at the least, minimally schooled in Western rational thought) patronizing the negative supernatural and its varied contradictions – one of which is providing a parallel rule of allegiance where the primacy of the occult are prided against the *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria* (Agbakoba, 2008). The distortion it perpetuates is reflected in the disorder, dishonesty and corruption of public servants (past and present), who plunder public coffers seemingly replicating the looting patterns of rationalist-based colonists (Chinweizu, 1978). With this distortion, it will be herculean for them to support any concerted effort at breaking free into creative productivity. The kind of force or reason that enabled the West to create and keep enjoying the offshoot of creative productivity is not rooted in Greco-Roman logic and positive science, which are fundamentally twisted in its structural build (Pope Benedict XVI, 2011, para. 5 & 6) but in Judaeo-Christian ideology (Daniel, 1968; Stark, 2005; Agbakoba, 2005); ii) the inherently bifurcated western thought system appears to be the philosophical root of the problem of 'split personality' invoked by African scholars as a critique of colonialism. The problem

claims that the African is split in his psyche, neither rooted in the past nor in the modern world. But a precursor of this problem may be the policy of “divide and rule” adopted by British colonists. Nigerians as a result of the 1914 Amalgamation act were torn from their ambit of familiarity and nexus of communal cooperation. This could be seen as alienation at its first level (political), an alienation that was at once personal and corporate. It is this corporate wrench that seems to grow at the heart of Nigeria’s irreconcilable differences today.

The introduction of rationalist-based Western education was alienation at the second level (epistemological) where, in the move to create disorder, internal pariah, and to ‘self-weaponize’ the people against each other, Western rationality (as logicity and scientificity) was introduced. It is a condition where the human being wages war against aspects of human epistemic constitution (that is, against himself/herself) earmarked for non-inclusion because they are held in suspect—imagination, emotion, intuition, and belief/faith (Ibuot, 2010b). Is this not reminiscent of Hobbes’ ‘war of all against all’ (*omnes bellum contra omnia*)? While Western thought recommends that man distances himself from these structures, African indigenous knowledge system embraces it totally just as Chinua Achebe does in *Things Fall Apart*. To reconstruct the individual and corporate lives of Africans, it seems necessary to heal both the personal and corporate personalities of Africa. The reconstruction of individual and corporate selves is needed by Western societies too.

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'Mending the Cracked Edifice': A Reconsideration of Igbo Wars Before 1900

Vitalis Nwashindu

Abstract

War is one of the inevitable social aspects of man, undertaken for diverse purposes-economic, political, territorial, spiritual and cultural ends. As a medium for the establishment of authority, powers and dominance, every society is bound to face this common phenomenon. Pre-colonial Igboland is noted for her indefatigability, doggedness and uncommon quest for survival through warfare. Nonetheless, despite the enviable height attained by pre-colonial Igbo warriors in organization, strategy and production of war materials, notable scholars of ethnography and history have continued to cast aspersions and demeaning criticisms on pre-colonial Igbo warfare. This paper serves as a veritable platform for correcting some misconceptions on pre-colonial Igbo warfare. It is the objective of the paper to unveil some technological and military ingenuities as well as organizational skills of pre-colonial Igbo warriors, contrary to the often assumed position in the literature.

Introduction

One of the inevitable aspects of man's social interaction is war. War is not the continuation of political intercourse with the intermixing of other means as Clausewitz assumed. Clausewitz restriction of war within the boundaries of the state is a limitation to what war entails. War antedates diplomacy and state by many millennia. War is almost as old as man himself, reaching into the most secret places of the human heart, places

where self dissolves rational purpose, where pride reigns, where emotion is paramount, and where instinct is the king. Thomas Hobbes, in his "State of Nature (a pre-government, lawless and violent Society), characterized by mutual suspicion, war and might, gives credence to the antiquity of war in human community.

Biologically, the war-making instinct in man is believed to be enhanced by the electrification of the Limbic System. The limbic system is located in the brain which Neurologists denote as "the seat of aggression". As J. Keegan in *A History of Warfare*, it is the originator as well as the enhancer of fear and threat which degenerates into aggression and defense (3).

As a state of open hostility between nations, groups, families and individuals over an interest, the outbreak of war showcases the ingenuity and survival strategies of man in his society. War studies according to Ukpabi, provide the necessary benchmark for a reappraisal of the people's history and correct some erroneous assumptions or writings from the unsympathetic outsiders assessment and review of the phases and stages of technological and social advancements of a given society (Ukpabi vi). Necessities of war may drive any society to invent or produce what could not have been done in peacetime. This was evident in Biafra Republic during the Nigeria Civil War. The former, having been threatened by annihilation, broke the ground in technological and scientific inventions such as the dreaded Biafra-made bomb *Ogbunigwe*. War is not peculiar to any race, group, or gender. It is a holistic strategic system of exercising conflicting goals. The dynamics of war can be seen in the military tactics, formations and goals. The results of war have a permanent impression in people's minds, thus creating the burning desire and awakening in re-ordering the society in post-war plans"

The objective of this research is to correct some misconceptions about Pre-colonial wars in Igboland, thus, setting the records straight and giving the necessary value

judgment on war strategies, organizations, weaponry and military conventions of the Igbo. The research also refutes the position of some existing literature (especially European literature) on pre-colonial Igbo wars.

**Pre-Colonial Igbo Wars:
Decolonization from European Stereotypes.**

The Igbo here refer to the people who inhabit the southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria living within the five states of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States of Nigeria. There have been scholarly arguments, debates and seminars on pre-colonial Igbo military, war, weaponry and armament. Myriads of literature have either misinterpreted or omitted some key elements of Igbo wars. Before 1950s, the history of the Igbo, just like every other African society came from the Europeans. Suffice to state that some of the early writings of the Europeans about Africans (the Igbo) in particular may have been influenced by racial prejudice or driven by the zeal to attract the sympathy of the European-based financiers by painting sordid and bleak picture of almost every sector of the African society. Writing on the socio-economic and political environment of the Igbo, as well as the economic intercourse between the indigenous Igbo merchants and the British, Ofonagoro gave a lucid picture of the ubiquity of economic linkages and the impact of legitimate commerce on the society. On the Igbo and wars, Ofonagoro subscribed that "intermittent warfare became, in terms of an extended period of time, a persistent feature of life" (83). The position of Ofonagoro on Igbo wars could be summarized as an "unbalanced generalization". Although, war was prominent in pre-colonial Igbo, it was never a persistent feature of life. The testimony of Olaudah Equiano on the centrality of agriculture, rather than war as the chief employment of the people⁹ is a fact that buttresses the position of this paper that war was a last resort and never a persistent

feature of Igbo livelihood. Trade, craft-making, festivities and religion occupied prominent positions in the peoples' schedule than war. The peregrinations of Awka smiths, Aro traders, Mgbowo palm wine tapper and Nri ritual priests were testimonies that war was the least item on the peoples' program. Apart from agriculture, which Equiano described as the chief-employer of the Igbo, trade could be said to be another prominent feature of the Igbo. Laying claims to the importance of trade and its importance to the Igbo, G.T. Basden accepted that "trading is a distinct profession and as such practically fills up the lives of the Igbo, while "marketing is the central feature in the life of every Igbo woman" (194). M.M.Green supports the argument by describing markets as "the most frequent and regular occasions for the assembling of a large number of people" (133). The network of markets and trade routes were indications that war was a rare occurrence among the people. There will be no gain stating that several Igbo communities may have enjoyed long years of peaceful coexistence and undisturbed social interactions, this is what I call *Pax Igbo*. The impact of *Pax Igbo* was captured by R. D.Jackson as he observed that "it was as result of this generally peaceful environment that most areas of southern Nigeria were already densely populated by the nineteenth century" (33). The rise in population necessitated the need for the second migration of most communities in Igboland from their original settlement. Population surge created land hunger that characterized the colonial Igbo society. Similarly, attention is drawn to G.T. Basden's historical analysis of Igbo war. Basden argues that:

In common, I suppose, with all savage peoples, the Ibos, prior to the British occupation of the country, occupied their spare time with fighting. It was rare thing for towns to remain in peace for very long time. During the dry season, fighting was a sort of past times, either between different quarters of the same town or between neighboring towns to break the monotony of the season (11).

Basden's disposition is a limitation to the features of pre-colonial Igbo war. The categorization of Igbo wars as spare time business, leisure or jamboree for the "less busy fellows" and as an avenue to break the monotony of the dry season, calls for a critical scholarly review. Igbo wars were not totally determined by the seasons (dry and rainy). Basden's subjection of wars to seasons is an attempt to place Igbo wars under the influence of the environment, thus, the concept of environmental determinism (where the environment and climate determine human affairs). It should be noted that instinct, psychology and temperaments guided and shaped the patterns and forms of wars and not seasons.

Unarguably, the Igbo of pre-colonial times were largely agrarians, who occupied most of their time in farmstead. The tight-schedule nature of the rainy season should not be an avenue to categorically label the dry season a season rest and holiday. The people (Igbo) were neither the lazy stock nor loafers who absconded from their duties. The notion of spare time (dry season) as wartime was aptly challenged by Ukpabi as follows:

If anything, the dry season would appear to be a very busy period when people gather in the harvest, built their houses, collected the grass for roofing purposes, engaged in long-distant trade (with the rains over and the roads in the wet zones now dry) and generally attended to the chores which could not be dealt with earlier in the year (11).

Mgbowo-Nenwe wars over land were perennial, defiling the seasons and climatic factors. The death of *Egabor* (Mgbowo daughter married to Nenwe man, viz-a-viz) by maltreatment sometimes dragged the two communities into wars of revenge. The warring parties never waited for the dry season to launch their respective attacks, in a bid to break the monotony of the season. Owerri area of Igboland presented lucid pictures of wars over farmland. Obibi, for instance, was surrounded by not

less than nine other village groups. If her land became inadequate for her needs, she had no alternative but to endeavor to extent her boundaries by war¹⁶. The need to appropriate more lands could be attributed to population surge and not mostly to establish tribute-paying colonies as were in most Yoruba and Hausa wars.

More so, several wars in the north-eastern part of Igboland (Ezza and environ) were largely over land. Ezza expansion and conquest were unimaginable, as the people expanded beyond their natural frontiers to the point of threatening their Idoma, Nkanu and Cross River neighbours¹⁷. Ezza wars of expansion were not seasonal but motivated by social factors such as population surge, the desire to acquire more lands for agriculture in order to feed the teeming population, as well as the quest to dislodge her rival groups.

As a passion and ego driven venture, detached totally from environmental factors, wars (head-hunting) in pre-colonial Ohafia was a means of asserting masculinities and status. The warrior class *Ufum*, was honoured for their head-hunting ingenuity, while the effeminate and fearful men *ujo* were treated with enviable deference and intimidated in the society. Njoku made a clearer statement of the polarization of the society according to war achievements and gallantry, thus:

This inner core (ufiem) was revered and adored by all and sundry. Their arrival at a gathering of the community at the village square was announced with ikoro beat and the sound of Opu ike, the trumpet of bravery. Their names and prodigious acts of valour and heroism became themes of edifying songs in the repertory of the traditional heroic singers..... The death of a member was commemorated with Okerenkwa celebration, the highest heroic honour that could be bestowed on a dead man in Ohafia (64).

Ohafia, Abam and Edda societies obviously cherished warfare and head-hunting as a means of exercising masculinities and

powers in their societies. The trio found an ample opportunity in defending Aro economic interest through warfare. Although, Talbot discredited the intentions of the above listed war-like groups by asserting that "the warriors who were under the control of the Aro were rewarded with the sum of money paid in advance as well as with the landed property of the captives" (as cited in Dike and Ekejiuba 191). Green also followed the steps of Talbot, as the later emphasized that "certainly, in the olden days much sporadic fighting must have gone on, but it is not easy to assess the scale of it. The Aro people were hiring mercenaries and raiding for slaves in a large way" ⁽¹⁵⁰⁾. Talbot and Green's commercialization of Igbo wars and their impression that the warriors fought mainly for pecuniary considerations is a misinterpretation. The notion of commercialization of Igbo wars was aptly challenged by Dike and Ekejiuba. The duo argued that the relationship between the Aro and their soldiers of Abam, Ohafia and Idda was a symbiotic one. While the trio helped the Aro in her economic and political expansion in Igboland, the Aro provided an ample opportunity and theatre for the trio to exercise their traditional exercise of getting the enemy head in warfare. The Abam, Idda and Ohafia, Dike and Ekejiuba maintain,

Eagerly welcomed appeals by the Aro to assist in subjugating dissident towns. At the end of any operation, the warriors took back the heads of the slain for initiation, ritual and ceremony. The main incentive to give military aid was therefore to a desire to acquire status; pecuniary and other material considerations were secondary (166).

Presentation of enemy head was a means of distinguishing brave men from the effeminate men in the society. It was one of the benchmarks for role differentiation and title-taking in Ohafia, Idda, and Abam communities of Igboland.

The scholarship of pre-colonial Igbo wars got another criticism from C.K. Meek when he argued that "warfare among the Igbo was more of affrays and raids than organized campaigns" (242). M.M. Green's *Igbo Village Affairs* is another

testimony of misinterpretations of Igbo wars, as Green asserts that "fighting was therefore probably a rather scrappy, sporadic affair, a recognized leader or chief evidently did not exist in the military anymore. Outsiders to the village group who were killed could of course be eaten" (65). The above misinterpretations of pre-colonial Igbo warfare as sporadic and unorganized affair should be revisited and corrected appropriately.

Given the fact that the army in the Pre-colonial Igbo was the citizen army (*levee-en-masse*) was never a guarantee that professionalism and leadership were lacked in the military activities of the Igbo. The rationale for constituting non-professional armies may be due to the decentralized nature of the Igbo political structure as well as the small size of the polity. The typical Igbo polity "was too small in geographical size as well as in population. Most of them were too small to accommodate full-time office-holders and soldiers simultaneously" (65). If professional army was maintained, there could be shortage of labour force especially in the agricultural sector, trade and manufacture which were the mainstay of the people's economy. This scenario was an opposite of Yoruba and Hausa/Fulani political arrangement where the polity is centralized and the Emir and the Oba wielding powers with professional armies that guard the centralized state. The lack of professional armies in some Igbo communities was a notable reason for Meek's criticisms. It should be noted that the political arrangement of any given society most times, determines the nature of her army.

Nonetheless, in spite the absence of a standing army in many communities of Igboland, Wars were never unorganized; the Igbo had evolved some systematic and strategic measures of engaging their enemies in battles and protecting their zones from attacks. The Igbo evolved both direct and indirect military training in order to keep the citizens' army fit and ready.

Writing on the centrality of military training among the people, Emezue asserts that:

In some communities, military training was formalized as part of manhood initiation, while in others, the onus of acquiring military training and skills lay with the individual. Some communal activities of the Igbo were indirectly aimed at helping youths acquire the hardiness necessary for military service. Perhaps the most important of these was wrestling (134).

Notable among the Igbo communities that evolved direct military training in pre-colonial period was the Nike of Nkanu land. Nike had a reputation of being the strongest of all other Nkanu communities. The secret of Nike's military prowess was the mandatory military service for all males born on Nike market day. This group of males were castrated and confined to the bush for military training for most of their teenage and early adulthood. The military fraternity was called *Agu Ato*. *Agu-ato* armies were taught the rudiments of military tactics and ways to bear pains and torture (134). *Agu-ato* group could be likened to the ancient Spartans of Greece, who would rather die than concede defeat in the battlefield. The pre-colonial expansionist policy of Nike and the "unrestricted" acquisition of lands through wars could be attributed to the military ingenuity of the *Agu Ato* warriors.

The assumption that military leadership was lacking in Igbo wars was aptly challenged by the Ohafia society of cross-river Igbo. The Ohafia had evolved an enviable and disciplined military hierarchy. In Ohafia, the *Omere isi kpara ndu* class of *ufiem* (notable warriors) were distinguished for their uncommon leadership qualities in warfare. Writing on the leadership ingenuity of the above mentioned class, Njoku asserts that: "These (omere isi kpara ndu) were heroes among heroes, Pearls among glittering jewels. It was this calibre of people who led Ohafia youths to war as generals. Odu umirima eji ogu. It was

they also who dominated the Ite-Odu, the society of brave and accomplished hunters and warriors" (64).

War veterans educated the youths on the use of weapons and marksmanship in the military. Olaudah Equiano upheld the existence of military training in his Igbo society when he noted that "we have fire-arms, bow and arrows...we have shields also which cover a man from head to front. All are taught the use of these weapons" (8).

Similarly, military training was almost a norm in Ohafia, where the children were taught the acts of bravery, valour and physical endurance at early state of life. Mock battles, wrestling contests, shooting competition with an animate or inanimate object as targets was prominent. The essence was to equip the young with the military heroism which the society finds essential. It is inconceivable, Ukpabi noted, that

A people who spent so much time and energy debating whether to go to war or not, who pulled their military resources together in order to maximize efficiency and to achieve the desired objectives, and whose battle preparations lasted several days and even involved bringing in diviners and medicine men to fortify their soldiers, should, after all this, leave the actual combat to chance by not providing the necessary leadership or organization which would coordinate the efforts of the men in the battlefield (26-27).

The instinct to survive sometimes lures the people to adopt preemptive military measures such as erecting military watchtowers in strategic locations in the community. As forest dwellers, the military tower became a prominent defense feature in Igbo military history. Most communities used the tallest tree in the domain as a military tower, while others built platforms at strategic positions in the community to monitor the advancing enemy. The watchtower, according to Dike and Ekejiuba, was an integral part of the system of defence. They maintain that

They were found in the thickly forested area and consisted of platforms built on trees, especially Iroko and silk cotton trees. They were about thirty feet from the ground. The principle village war signaller, well concealed on the top of the tree, would survey, give the signal and direct attack on the enemy.

The platform provided refuge for women during protracted fighting (187).

In Mgbowo community of Enugu State, it was the duty of *onye ujam* (whistler) to direct the warriors in the battlefield from the pinnacle through his symbolic whistling. The warriors had already been acquainted with the various sounds blew from the pinnacle of the tree (watchtower). *Onye ujam* reveals the movement of the enemy from his vantage point and proffers the necessary defense or attack mechanism to be adopted by the ground army.

As a counter to Green's description of Igbo warfare as scrappy sporadic affair, Njoku gave a lucid account of the ingenious military organization and war strategies of the Cross River Igbo warriors of Ohafia, Abam and Edda confederacy thus:

At a far distance to the attack, the Ohafia, Abam and Edda fighters pitched their camp, Ogbo agha. Veteran warriors were sent out to reconnoiter the targeted community. They would study the layout of the community carefully, noting possible escape routes, paths to farms, sources of water and public latrines and so forth. The information thus obtained enabled the war leaders to decide when and how to launch an attack... the war leaders rehearsed coded signals for all to grasp (79).

On cannibalism, it is unarguable that there were traces of cannibalism in the pre-colonial Igbo wars, but it was not a general feature among the people. Warriors could have ventured into cannibalism as a survival strategy when virtually every means of sustenance had failed. More so, some traces of

cannibalism in Igbo wars should not be likened to savagery, but a kind of spitting the enemy, even at death. The Igbo adage "*onye ka mmadu ka Chi ya*", meaning that one who is stronger than his enemy is also superior to the god of his enemy could have motivated any cannibalistic tendency. Cannibalism in Igbo wars could be a way of demonstrating both physical and spiritual superiority over the enemy. Cannibalism is a habit, a norm and a cultic tradition in some societies; therefore, since no Igbo society took to cannibalism as a habit, the rare occurrence of such in the battlefield should not be used to label the society a community of cannibals. The pre-colonial Igbo warriors could have taken to such act as a kind of response to a challenge. Such challenges like hunger, frustration and defeat could not have been averted by any other means but taking to the flesh of the enemy. This was evident in Ngwaland during the wars of resistance against colonial intrusion.

The practice was not peculiar to Igbo warriors, as it was evident that cannibalism surfaced in some other societies of Europe and Asia in the ancient and medieval wars. Post-war rituals, purifications and cleansing were noted in pre-colonial Igbo wars. Post-war cleansing was a traditional means of exorcizing the warriors of the ills and atrocities of the war. The value the Igbo attached to life necessitated the rites of purification. Spilling of human blood unjustly was condemned, let alone feeding on human flesh. The subjection of warriors to post-war rituals and purifications as a prerequisite for re-integrating them into the society and warding-off the "obstinate evil spirit" of the beheaded foe indicate the sanctity of life among the Igbo.

Another platform for refuting Green's assumption that Igbo wars were scrappy and possibly unorganized, is the existence of war laws, ethics, conducts and rules, upon violation would lead to summary execution and death. War rules according to Odocmena

Incorporate a number of humane principles. For instance, evidences abound of maintenance of truce on religious festival days of any of the parties involved in the war. Also, each party informed the other of any other emergency, like the death of an important person, for which a truce was necessary; such truce was honoured by both parties (44).

Certain categories of people enjoyed war-time immunity and protection, these include: women, children, *nwadiala* (Children who share affinity either paternal or maternal with the warring parties) priests, blacksmiths and so on. Evidences abound of the peregrinations of Awka, Nkwere, Abiriba and Agbaja smiths who enjoyed special rights of passage wherever they went, even in war-torn zones. This was because of the value the Igbo attached to iron working and blacksmithing. The death of a blacksmith creates an adverse effect on the socio-economic lives of the community, the reason may be because, only few individuals or families had the legal and religious patency of smiting business. Secondly, the importance of iron products (hoe, cutlasses, spear, gong, royal costume, and so on) in agriculture, warfare and religion also elevated the immunity of the smiths in Igboland.

Igbo art and weaponry were also discussed in the negative and underdeveloped bases. In his comparative review of pre-colonial warfare in West Africa, Northrop argued that "in comparison with the Yoruba and Dahomean states, warfare east of the Niger was a very underdeveloped art"³⁵. Northrop's disposition could have been influenced by the centralized nature of Yoruba political administration and the large number of subjects under an Oba. The centralized nature of the polity created an ample opportunity in the evolution of a central military institution with career soldiers therein. This was an opposite of many Igbo communities, whose decentralized political system could have affected the creation of professional military institution and career armed forces. The categorization of Igbo wars as underdeveloped art could be refuted with

reference to the people's innovation and technological advancement. The Igbo were/are known for their ingenious production of iron tools. The activities of Awka, Nkwere, Abiriba, Agbaja and Agulu communities in metal works and iron foundry were evidently recorded in the pre-colonial history of the people. Igbo Smiths were boundless in their enterprise. The peregrinations of the above mentioned craftsmen were concisely noticed in the ubiquity of Awka smiths in the Niger Igbo communities; Nkwere smiths domination of Ogoni district and Abiriba blacksmiths in the Cross river areas. The products of Igbo smiths include swords of different sizes and shapes, bows and spears, machetes and other war implements.

Production of iron tools formed part of Igbo metal work. In Mgbowo, the Amauzu clan of Imcama were known for their proficiency in iron production. The importation of European made iron tools and guns was a great revolution to the indigenous metal crafts men, as the later readjusted his mode of production and attempted an improvement towards replicating the exact shape, texture and color of European iron tools.

In the northeastern part of Igboland (Izza), swords and cutlasses were notable weapons. The popular aphorism *Izza ogbu mma* (Izza, the perfect sword users) depicted the passion and love for indigenous metal crafts. More so, since head-hunting was a notable aspect of some 'war-like' Igbo communities, cutlasses, clubs and swords became the primary weapons of the warriors, who would prefer a 'face-to-face' war as a mark of gallantry and bravery before killing an enemy, to taking an enemy life from afar with a gun. Igbo warriors were known for their physical dexterity and combatant nature and not perfectionists in the use of long-range explosives.

Conclusion

The decolonization of Igbo military and warfare from the bondage of the aliens should be the paramount objective of socio-cultural historians of African studies. This research has

argued that the Igbo, despite the citizen army system and relative lack of a standing army, developed enviable military tactics, conventions and advancements in weaponry. The research is a revisit and an appraisal of some European ethnographical and historical reports of the Igbo.

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Analytical Evaluation of Supernatural Realities in Nigerian Films: Ernest Obi's *Idemili* and Afam Okereke's *Billionaire's Club* as Paradigms

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Abstract

*This study examines some social realities of the dramatization of the supernatural in Ernest Obi's *Idemili* and Afam Okereke's *Billionaire's Club*, and how these portrayals relate to the subsisting social worldview on supernatural in Nigeria. Thus, this study aims to illuminate on the nuances of the dramatization of mysticism and the ethereal as manifestations of actual and typical realisms in contemporary Nigeria society. To realize this aim, this study adopts critical discuss analysis in evaluating relevant aspects of the selected films. Similarly, this study adopts Ann Bowers and Isabel Allende's contextualization of magical realism theory as our preferred conceptual frame. Essentially, this theoretical leaning aims at re-assessing the dimensions to social worldview of Nigerians on the relatedness, relevance and efficacy of the supernatural in human circumstances, from diverse perspectives. In this regard, this study evaluates the shades of bias to the mystical and supernatural, as well as how the philosophically and ideologically driven mystical logic is articulated in the selected films. Lastly, the relevance of these enactments to the subsisting social worldview on supernatural in Nigeria form part of our thematic purview.*

Introduction: Literature Review and Synopsis of Focal Studies

This paper examines the social realities of the supernatural enactments in *Idemili* directed by Ernest Obi and the *Billionaire's Club* directed by Afam Okereke, in a bid to appreciate the subsumed dimensions and nuances of their inclination to subsisting social worldview on supernatural in Nigeria. Thus the immediate point of departure is to clearly grasp the implicit meanings of the thematic expressions of this paper's title and abstract, such as supernatural, magical realism, Nollywood, and subsisting social worldview on supernatural in Nigeria. According to James H. Olthuis, "a worldview (or vision of life) is a framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view the world and our calling and future in it" (2). Furthering, he notes that "this vision may be so internalized that it goes largely unquestioned; it may be greatly refined through cultural-historical development; it may not be explicitly developed into a systematic conception of life; it may not be theoretically deepened into a philosophy; it may not even be codified into credal form" (Olthuis 2 - 3). Nevertheless, Olthuis explains that "this vision is a channel for the ultimate belief which gives direction and meaning to life", hence "it is the integrative and interpretative framework by which order and disorder are judged, the standard by which reality is managed and pursued" (3).

It is plausible to say that the concept of worldview on supernatural in Nigeria analyzed from a particular point of view is akin to an octopus because it embodies numerous trajectories. Thus it is improbable that this study claims it has the all encompassing definition of all manifestations of social worldviews on supernatural in Nigeria. However, we have elected to discuss one of these obvious arms of 'the octopus', which is the abiding proclivity towards get rich quick syndrome through supernatural and diabolical rituals, and the steadfast acknowledgment of human travails and tribulations as results of

human manipulations of supernatural influences as projected in the selected films. To grasp sufficiently this paper's contextualization of the supernatural and diabolical rituals as projected in the films under study, we align our purview with Peter Eastwell. He posits that the supernatural and metaphysical are usually characterized by descriptors as "that outside the observable universe, violating natural laws, and pertaining to god or a deity and is commonly associated with things like spirituality, occultism, spirits, the divine, the miraculous, fairies, vampires, ghosts, goblins, and other unearthly beings, including angels" (Eastwell 18). Similarly, Edward Norbeck observes that those realities referred to as supernatural, represents "all that is not natural" by which he means those realities which are "regarded as extraordinary" and "not of the ordinary world" as well as "mysterious or unexplainable in ordinary terms" (11). In accord with these descriptions is Theodore Petrus and David Bogopa's study, which outlines some examples of mystical realities such as witchcraft, which they observe, "involves the use of supernatural forces for evil or harmful intent" (3). Furthering, Petrus and Bogopa note that mostly, "the practising witch is a highly ambiguous figure, as he/she operates in both the natural and supernatural realms" (3). Hence, they observe that "the witch is both a human being, with a natural, physical body, and, at the same time, also a 'superhuman' being, able to control both natural and supernatural forces for evil" (Petrus and Bogopa 3). Again, Petrus and Bogopa note that mostly in those communities were believe in the efficacy and influence of the supernatural forces on humans and his environment is abiding, any unnatural events that occur in such communities, "such as random lightning strikes that destroy property or kill people and livestock, as well as inexplicable illnesses or deaths, are attributed to witches" (3). Projecting further on the social construction of the Witch supernatural reality, Petrus and Bogopa note that:

Humans are believed to possess the capacity to bring the natural and supernatural forces together, either for the benefit of their societies, as in the case of traditional healing, or for the detriment of society, as in the case of witchcraft or sorcery. The implication is that forces in both the natural and supernatural worlds are, in themselves, neutral, thus it is human beings, who manipulate these forces, who will determine whether they will be used for good or evil (8).

To Alexander Animalu, Igbo worldview reflects the strong reality of the supernatural as an unavoidable force in the life of a community and man as an individual, thus, the Igbo reverence for "the heavens above, the earth below it and the underworld beneath the earth" (10). Animalu's view is in line with Donatus Nwoga's observation that the Igbo recognize the existence of "the physical, the spiritual and the abstract" (17). Similarly, Elizabeth Isichei on her contribution on traditional Igbo society explains that "to the Igbo, the Secular and the Sacred, the natural and the supernatural, are a continuum" (24). These social realities, ideology and philosophy informed by Igbo acknowledgement of supernatural influence and existence is encapsulated and conceptualized in the theoretical frame of magical realism¹. As Ursula Kluwick points out, "over the past few decades, magical realism has developed into a truly international literary phenomenon", even though there is clear evidence of varying trajectories and perspectives to the articulation of this theoretical frame (1). However, from observation the convergence in perceptual inclination amongst scholars is that magical realism can be attributed to the existence of variance in the nature of phenomena which form their basis of analysis and suppositions. In this regard, Kluwick suggests that this variance exist because "various critics have drawn attention to the significance of the geographical and

cultural contexts of magical realism" (1). Consequently, Brenda Cooper notes that "local context is of central importance in magical realist writing" and critical reading (37). Thus, in her study on West African perspectives on magical realism, Cooper observes that the writers' perspectives "are moulded and constructed out of West African cultural and religious heritages" (37). Similarly, Maggie Ann Bowers observes that "the key to understanding how magical realism works is to understand the way in which the narrative is constructed in order to provide a realistic context for the magical events of the fiction" (21). Therefore magical realism, Bowers contends, relies upon the presentation of real, imagined or magical elements as if they were real" (21). Again magical realism, Bowers observes "relies upon realism but only so that it can stretch what is acceptable as real to its limits" (21). Furthering, Bowers explains that:

The extraordinary in magical realism is rarely presented in the form of a dream or a psychological experience because to do so takes the magic out of recognizable material reality and places it into the little understood world of the imagination. The ordinariness of magical realism's magic relies on its accepted and unquestioned position in tangible and material reality (22).

Similarly, Wendy Faris observes that magical realism subsumes the enchanting, disturbing elements and atmosphere of human existence with the insistent quotients of magic within realistic discourse (103). Thus, Faris notes that "magical realism often gives voice in the thematic domain to indigenous or ancient myths, legends, and cultural practices, and in the domain of narrative technique to the literary traditions that express them with the use of non-realistic events and images" (113). The perspectives enunciated by Ann Bowers and Wendy Faris reveal that magical realism provides a theoretical frame through which we can appreciate, classify and discuss variously, human experiences, perceptions, belief systems and

realities as multifarious phenomena subsumed within the expression, the supernatural. This is in line with Kenneth Reeds position that magical realism represents the “spiritual reconstruction by the reconciliation of mankind’s devotion to the world of dreams and adherence, to the world of reality” (177). In summary, these perspectives as Isabel Allende opines places the conceptualization of magical realism as “a way of seeing in which there is space for the invisible forces that move the world” such as “dreams, legends, myths, emotion, passion, and history” (54). Thus these insights will serve as foreground in our bid to discuss analytically the social perception of the supernatural and mystical realities in the films, *Idemili* and *Billionaire’s Club*.

Social Realities of the Supernatural in *Idemili* and *Billionaire’s Club*: The Connectedness and Relevance to Social Worldview on Supernatural in Nigeria

Nollywood films evidently are hybrid entertainment and enlightenment platform, which in many ways exhibit, recreate, mirror, as well as re-enact the past and subsisting realities of Nigeria and Nigerian sensibilities. Again, to a palpable extent, Nollywood films, in many ways embodies the shades and nuances of ‘Africaness’, from multi-dimensional perspectives and intricate web of socio-cultural inter-connectedness. To a significant level, arguably Nollywood films have been able to promote and redirect Nigerian peoples’ belief system towards the supernatural phenomena, with the attendant debates. Thus, Nollywood films such as *Idemili* and *Billionaires Club*, each differently x-ray the social realities of supernatural phenomena as they affect Nigerian people’s belief system and social worldview on supernatural. In *Idemili*, the story revolves around the selection and coronation of a priestess to the deity Idemili. This story relates how a community waited for the deity to select her priestess after many years, following the abdication of the chosen one. Thus, after many years in abeyance, the oracle

reveals who she has selected to serve as her priestess in a most uncanny and mystical manner. In *Idemili*, the Chief Priestess of Idemili exhibited agility and pace which is paranormal in nature, thus supernatural. This is because normal human being cannot move at such pace; in an instance it appeared the individual did outrun birds, which were chasing her at such point. To this effect, we are inclined to suggest that the Chief Priestess was under the influence of a supernatural being. Thus, its supernatural effects make us perceive and believe that, in extreme cases, some human actions have some supernatural or mystical inclinations. The young priestess in the film *Idemili* portrays some form of spiritual possession which creates in our minds the enormous or extra-ordinary powers she possesses. In appreciating the subsisting social worldview on supernatural in Nigeria and the socio-religious belief system, Nigerians, from our field study, appear more to acknowledge the notion that supernatural powers exist and that it is efficacious.

To buttress this point, in Obi's *Idemili*, there are instances where the people consulted the priestess of Idemili, solely soliciting her intersection as regards to the need for improved fertility in their land as well as the plea for protection against adversities such as famine, drought, and war among others. This suggests the commonly acknowledged believe among the Igbos, as projected in the film, on the efficacy of the supernatural. Again, in some scenes in *Idemili*, the transmogrification of the birds to monsters, which combines human and bird's physicality, denotes an element of mythical social construction of reality within Igbo sensibility on the supernatural as mostly encapsulated in Igbo folk tales. Based on our field study, though many respondents note that the reality of transmogrification is strange, yet they confirm the abiding belief system amongst the Igbo, which accommodates transmogrification as a widely acknowledged mystical reality.

In Afam Okereke's *Billionaires' Club* the story revolves around a man named Zed, a subsistent small-time drug-store

keeper, who had always wished for better life, and a nearly frustrated young lady who passionately seeks divine intervention for a husband. This is because she is getting older, thus nearing the age at which she will be deemed too old for reproductive marriage. She makes melancholic prayer for a husband after she could not take any longer her mother's negative remarks and cold shoulder because she was a spinster. After two weeks of prayers, she receives two serious suitors after a long wait and she accepts one of the suitors, called Zed. In turn Zed bumps into an old school mate, who is wealthy. Overwhelmed by emotions, Zed overtly sought business connections from this old school-mate of his. In response, this old school mate, Don accepted Zed's plea and promised to assist him. To fulfil his promise, Don introduced Zed to his diabolical cult, where Zed was coerced to sacrifice his new born baby for reward of enormous wealth. Not long after, the repercussion of sacrificing his child and allowing his wife killed, began to manifest as nightmares, frightening apparition of his late wife's ghost, and finally a mystical sickness. Zed's ailment apparently defies orthodox medical diagnosis and therapy, thus from culture specific understanding, the whole circumstance points towards mystical reality as the remaining plausible explanation to his mysterious ailment, hence the evaluation of these occurrences as mystical realities. Still on the supernatural effect in Okereke's *Billionaires Club*, the scene that involved the characters DB, Don and Zed, where they were discussing on how Zed could be initiated in there occult group, contains distinct portrayal of supernatural manifestations. To support the above statement, Zed's baby became sick the moment he washed his hands in a carved image as instructed by DB. The rite performed by Zed though unknown to him centres on our inability to visualize and interpret some spiritual undertone of some induced actions.

Again in *Billionaires Club*, the situation or circumstance where an individual perceives and communicates with the dead

whereas others around cannot do the same is widely perceived as weird and paranormal, hence the perception as that with overt supernatural connotations. The scene where Zed did his traditional marriage with his second wife, and the dead wife Victoria appeared as a ghost during the ceremony, is also paranormal. But, DB in his spiritual and mystical embodiment perceives Victoria's presence and appears in the same place with her and puts her inside a bottle. The implication of this suggests to us that those killed unjustly often torment those who killed them. The existence of ghost or a dead person creates in our minds the peculiar role they play in our society. To assert this point, Victoria's appearance to her mother with the cries of her baby is no doubt to clarify the issue of the circumstances surrounding her death. Zed in his evil and diabolic nature told his mother-in-law lies about the death of her daughter and new born baby. In *Billionaires Club*, it is supernatural for DB to reduce Victoria to a handy object to the extent of putting her inside a bottle. In our change agenda, people who possess mystical/spiritual powers could be agents of both good and evil deeds. People strongly believe that, those with extra-ordinary powers can apply it to salvage a situation. Similarly in *Billionaires Club*, the character DB who has a rotten incurable wound infested with maggots on his head and still lives normal life like every other human being is undoubtedly paranormal. People seem not to live with such a complicated sickness as part of the path with the demonic forces that are their benefactor. However, the incongruity of this concept evident in DB's role is no doubt a supernatural effect as we had in *Idemili*. The social realities of the supernatural effect on the selected Nollywood films link the interaction of the priestess which suggests that the oracle Idemili chooses the process her chief priestess emerges. And this process is influenced by supernatural attributes and beyond what human beings perceive with ordinary or physical eyes.

In our personal interaction with Ichie Oliver Eze, an elderly Igbo man, about the appearance of the dead, he posits that, if one wants to ascertain the remote cause of one's relative's death, that he or she can consult the oracle known as *Amala Egazi* in Udenu Local Government Council in Enugu State, Nigeria. Ichie Eze contends that after performing the required sacrifices and rites, the dead individual's ghost will appear and relate to the inquirer significant details as regards to how he or she died (personal com., 2016). Similarly, an elderly woman called Lolo Ekemma Akpala from Abagana village in Njikoka L.G.A., in Anambra State, notes that through consultation with the oracle, information on why a ghost appearance or apparition of a dead person has occurred can be ascertained (personal com., 2016). Both accounts from Ichie Eze and Lolo Akpala, point towards locale specific worldview on supernatural reality.

Conclusion

In the world over, supernatural phenomena are universally known. Different cultures and religions have their own evidence of this manifestation of the supernatural elements irrespective of their various worldview. According to Oliver Onyekwere and Martina Uche, "belief system is regarded as an integral part of human life in Africa. In Nigeria, for instance, it helps the people despite their political affliction, ethnicity, religion and other cultural worldview to explain natural occurrences of past and present everyday life [...] belief system goes on to assist man to direct, control the course of nature and how the invisible world impinged on the physical world" (63). The fact is that these supernatural activities are either for good or bad of the society and the people. Sometimes they serve as judge meting out punishment to the wicked and rewarding the good or to protect as seen in the selected films. Through these selected movies one realizes that the facts about supernatural phenomena have been brought to the doorstep of individual in the society. It's an obvious fact that the media and film industry had taken upon

themselves to project on screen since their main aim is to re-enact live event or occurrences to entertain, sensitize and orientate the audience. To create the effect of verisimilitude, these directors used new media art technique to realize and actualize the effect of this supernatural evidence in the society and equally show the relevance of this phenomenon. Through these selected films, directors have been able to highlight the nuances of these supernatural activities in the society which people have come to realize and see the danger or consequences of being wicked and indulging in evil activities. These elements of wickedness and evil practices are rampant in Nigeria. A situation where young men due to laziness on the one hand, and on the other, the insane proclivity to become rich too fast, begin to seek easy way out, such as engaging in diabolical cult, where they sacrifice innocent soul for rituals. Cult as projected in the films is not just for the purpose of making the members rich, it is portrayed as a means of empowering members to protect themselves against adversities and as a source of enabling mystical power for purposes of attacking others at will. Despite the fact that some tend to neglect these supernatural evidence probably because they have not experienced it themselves or due to exposure to a conflict ideology, however amongst Christians, acknowledgement of these mystical phenomenon are abiding. In essence the use of these selected films points out the nuances of these supernatural in orientating, sensitizing and awakening the consciousness of the people in the society. This draws some obvious realities to certain facts in the society which people tend to ignore, hence the need for behavioural re-evaluation and change. Finally, the dramatization of the supernatural in the films under study, projects an abiding phenomenon of peoples' proclivity towards the mystical in their reaction to subsisting social circumstances, whereas the change agenda remains a feeble politically correct mantra.

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Music, Narration, Mimeses and the Mytho-epic Essence: A Folkist Interpretation of Two Nigerian Plays

Cindy Ezeugwu

Abstract

For most researchers of African theatre forms, indigenous elements from the people's orature have yielded and continued to provide many materials for dramatic construction. African literary theatre in the past has searched for a form for African drama with the view to make their theme, plot and subject matter familiar to the audience and make them feel at home with it. Thus, this desire and the urge to find a platform for the development of African folktale, necessitated Sam Ukala to formulate the theory of folkism which has its root in the culture and tradition of the people. Folktale plays finds its origin in myth, epic, legend, folktales, saga, novella, anecdote, herotale, animal tale and sage. It is in this context, that this paper examines two plays; Langbodo and Akpakaland and attempt to interrogate the elements of music, mime and narration in these traditional epics using the emergent folkist critical yardstick. In doing this, it argues that beyond the façade of adventure and fantasy, Langbodo and Akpakaland are a fitting study on the efficacy of indigenous music, narration and mime to orchestrate and redefine the African performance aesthetics within the template of contemporary literary dramaturgy, giving it life, profundity, rhythm and accessibility.

Introduction

Much has been written on traditional elements in modern African drama. By the same token, scholars and practitioners have advanced several critical and theoretical parameters to articulate this new and engaging genre. One of this critical ideal is folkism. Folkism is founded on the design of indigenous African performance aesthetics. It is an artistic philosophy and critical school which contends for the need to exploit and explore the elements of language, narration, mime, traditional folklore and history in the creation of indigenous African drama. According to Godfrey Enita, Sam Ukala, the exponent of folkism, defines it as "The tendency to base literary plays in the history, culture, and concerns of the folk, and to compose and perform them in accordance with African conventions for composing and performing the folktale (49).

While highlighting the essence of folkism, Steve Oguide avers that,

Folkism derives from the total apparatus of traditional theatre. It aims at recreating that ambiance, that delicate balance between ritual and inspiration. It seeks to recreate in contemporary performance and written text, the idiom and the nuances of oral performance without losing the immediacy of contemporary frame of reference. It is a complex of form, setting, theme and performance within a traditional setting (5).

Sam Ukala, has this to say about some features of folkism,

Indigenized English is broadly like language of African folktale in performance, easy to comprehend, dramatic, that is, easy to articulate... pleasurable to hear because of its music,...rich in idiophone. In addition...imagery, proverbs, analogies, and other elements of formal indigenous speech are, when appropriate, woven into the indigenized English of literary theatre in order to enhance its literariness. It also

absorbs untranslatable or popular vernacular words to boost its local colour (281).

The above view avails us a panoramic view on some of the quintessential features of the folkist critical parameter, which forms the theoretical nexus of our investigation of Wale Ogunyemi's *Langbodo* and Sam Ukala's *Akpakaland*.

Taking other opinions on folkism, Ifeanyi Ugwu, is of the opinion that folkism can be viewed as "an indigenous dramatic aesthetic principle which may be derived from the use in the African literary theatre of folk linguistic, structural and performance styles"(7). In the same vein, Austine Anigala; posits that "folkism is a dramatic concept derived from the African folktale narrative technique...it is a strategy of using traditional folktale aesthetics in creating a dramatic work that is reflective of the African way of life..." (5). Ruth Epochie-Olise, takes the definition of folkism further by adding that,

To Africans, folklore is an art that is used for entertainment and pedagogical purposes. The mode for narrating these folktales depends on each community, while some (adult and children) would gather at the village square on moonlit evenings taking turns to tell tales, others would stay back in their various compounds with their immediate families with an older person telling the story (142).

From the views expressed above, we can attempt a summation of some of the elements of folkism as the manner and method of creating and performing traditional folk orature which derives its roots from the culture and traditions of the people for which it is meant for and which it gives contents to. It is an artistic philosophy and way of performing art that appropriates the ideals of myth, commensality, instruction and aesthetics to orchestrate a synthesis of traditional performance theory, form and practice. Some of its quintessential elements include but not limited to the artistic vision, belief, artifacts,

song, masking, music and mime of the cosmos of the folk. This will suffice for our theoretical incursions into the ideal of folkism. An attempt would be made below to give a brief account of the incidents that constitute the plots of *Langbodo* and *Akpakaland*. After this, we shall examine how elements of music, narration and mime contribute in giving artistic shape to the folkist critical paradigm.

Langbodo by Wale Ogunyemi, is a play that is reminiscent of the past, a reality of the present and a reflection of the future and it is replete with the Yoruba folk-tale and derives its material from diverse Nigerian indigenous tribal myth and culture. The play is relevant to the socio political, cultural and economic lives of the people of Nigeria, it is an epic drama which is adapted from D.O Fagunwa's classical book *Ogboju Ode Ninu Igbo Irunmole* (A Forest of a Thousand Daemons) The plot structure of *Langbodo* appears lose thereby defying the traditional assumption of sequence of chronology with the living communing with the dead, and animation of the inanimate. The plot encapsulates various socio political issues bedeviling Nigeria. *Langbodo* tries to proffer solutions to these many issues that are weighing the nation down. The theme of the play has remained topical and timely as it tries to capture the themes of perseverance, courage, resilience, sacrifice and selflessness and advocates for the need for national unity. The play is embedded in strong traditional folklore both in form and in content. It opens on a musical note with the story teller Akara oogun, coming out in the traditional mode as a raconteur, performer, protagonist as well as a visionary; he starts by engaging the audience with instructions of what is expected of them in the play, and invites the audience to participate.

OLD AKARA OOGUN:... Our story tonight is a veritable Ogidigbo, It is I, who will drum it and you the wise heads who will Interpret it...for a start, if you want this dance to be a success, here are two things I must request of you. Firstly, whenever a character in my story speaks in his own

person, you must put yourselves in his place and speak as if you are that very man .And whenever the other replies, you must relate the story to yourselves (1).

As Ukala observes;

The performer-audience relationship in folkism may seem reminiscent of Brecht's epic theatre. Yet of course the traditional African folktale aesthetics, from which it derives, predates Brecht. Besides, crucial differences exist between folkism and the epic theatre, which turns the spectator into an observer who stands outside...whereas folkism enables the audience to stand outside or inside" (287).

The appointments of the six hunters set the tone of the play. The spectacle is aided by the vitality of actions achieved through a well diffused actor-audience relationship, this can be observed from the ritual beginning with a ritual metaphor of song, drumming, dancing and sacrifice .The drumming and dancing at the beginning of the play, is partly a mimetic action which heralds the arrival of the king and his wives, while the communal tone that seats the play also reveals the dramatic qualities that inhere African communal practices as is evidenced in the willingness of Akara oogun and the six hunters to sacrifice themselves and risk their lives in pursuit of a wild expedition for the good of their land.

The story unfolds using the epic-odyssaic style and it is the combination of this style and the mythic element that has led us to use the term mytho-epic in our categorization of the play. Emboldened by his fame and success as a hunter, Akara oogun is chosen by the king for an urgent expedition of national interest which entails going on an unprecedented trip to a strange land in search of a metaphoric mount Langbodo. Akara oogun narrates the exploits of the six almost irrepressible hunters, that he chooses for the perilous and grandstanding expedition to the land of the animals and the land of the dead in

search of cultural unity and identity with the mandate that he is expected to meet with the king of that land and receive from him a singular object that "if it comes into the hand of any king, that king's domain will be spared from the horrors of war, disease and famine..."(6). The object is expected to restore peace to their land and revive their community with the good things they will acquire from their sojourn, and since no good thing comes easy, during the cause of the journey, the hunters learn a lot about human foibles and excesses and the urgent need for them to come together under the umbrella of love, tolerance and peace. They encounter stiff adversity on their way, including several gut wrenching incidences that snatched away some of their members and decimated their number, they grapple with all kinds of odds almost to the point of being dispirited, but not enough to deter or discourage them from their task. The first encounter they had on the way was their being trapped by trees.

The hunters wrestle with many demons, animals and gnomes in the forest and apart from their physical strength, they also have special natural trait that is useful to some extent especially when they run into problems. For instance, Kako's invincible club can knock down an elephant, though it failed him at some point. Olohun Iyo's sweet singing voice can lure any bird to sleep. While Imodoye, uses his knowledge and wisdom to think and reason intelligently each time they are in trouble. The hunters lost three of their members, Kako whose temperament remains his albatross and who is clubbed to death by an angry mob in the course of their expedition, while Ife Iye's love and passion for birds makes him to disappear with them. Invariably, Elegbede's lack of faith and pessimism is perhaps his undoing and his refusal to trust the second medium lead to his drowning in the river. Kako, while running away from the enraged villagers who were pursuing him, ran into Akara Oogun and informs him that Aramonda is dead, according to Kako, "Aramonda died while making love to his

neighbour's wife"(60). Imoyode offers to treat Kako's injury but Kako advises him to continue with the task assigned to them.

The mob finds Kako groaning and clubbed him to death and dragged his corpse away. Akara Oogun, Olohun Iyo and Imodoye were able to get to the Promised land but were quite perplexed to discover much to their shock that there is no physical mount Langbodo anywhere in sight. The Oba commends the three surviving hunters for their bravery, forbearance, and resilience. He informs them that there is "nothing to give, nothing to take, nothing to discuss good hunters"(65). The Oba adds that what they seek for, has already been given to them in bits during the cause of their journey. When Akara Oogun inquires about the 'object' in Oba's possession, the Oba has this to say;

OBA: ...those beautiful words of advice, those touching and penetrating Words of admonition are enough...(65).

Mount Langbodo is a metaphor for a place of revelation, wisdom, knowledge and understanding of what brings peace, progress, unity and oneness between the individual and the society. As a proof that he got to his destination, the Oba gives Akara Oogun an elephant tusk. The First Medium forcefully takes the tusk from Akara Oogun and he beckons on the older Akara oogun for assistance without success, the older Akara Oogun continues with his story. This design is thus, used to amplify the social and moral nature of folk performance of the mytho-epic genre, which often seeks to entertain as well as to teach and which at times leaves the story either ending abruptly or inconclusively, thereby creating room for the story to continue at another time or is left for the audience to imagine or guess what should be the conclusion.

Our second play *Akpakaland*, is written by Sam Ukala and like *Langbodo*, *Akpakaland* employs the traditional elements

of Ika culture and tradition of Delta Igbo orature in its construction. The plot tells the story of Akpaka the president of *Akpakaland* and his five wives. The head of the wives Fulama, from the province of the rich grew jealous of the fourth wife, Unata from the province of the poor because Fulama sees Unata as an apparent threat to her position as a result of Akpaka's open show of love towards her.

Fulama, deploys all manner of lies and inference to tarnish the image of Unata. She plans for Unata to be publicly humiliated by bewitching her through making her to grow a mysterious tail with the charm she craftily got from Enwe the native Doctor. Unata mysteriously grows a tail and Fulama alerts her husband king Akpaka about it, she made him agree that all the wives must strip naked before the entire community. After a long period of pain and mockery of Unata by Fulama, Unata and her father were able to get the native doctor to turn around the situation and in the end, Fulama's plan backfires, the tail is transferred back to her by Enwe, and the king finds out that Fulama is the culprit, she is disgraced and her act of jealousy and wickedness exposed. An attempt to subvert justice, leads to a scuffle between the province of the poor and province of the rich which culminated in Fulama losing her life through an unintentional gunshot.

The plot of *Akpakaland* is very popular in several Igbo sub-groups and has served as a veritable oral material in instructing girls of marriageable age on the need for humility, peaceful co-existence and tolerance. The play advocates for the triumph of good over evil. In the end, Fulama ends up reaping the fate of what she has designed, planned and executed for her co-wife. Unata just like Akara Oogun, realizes the virtues of good sense and resilience at the critical moments of their odysseys when they are faced with life threatening situations and the only way out was not giving up at their moments of danger, frustration and pain.

King Akpaka is an epitome of bad leadership, corruption and tyranny, a man who often connives with his sycophantic and kowtowing ministers and chiefs to inflict untold hardship on his subjects. Following the revolt by the oppressed people from the province of the poor in their quest for justice, Akpaka, his ministers, Iya Fulama, Seotu and Yeiye are subdued and humiliated with each of them ordered to kneel down with their hands raised in submission and defeat.

Music, Narration and Mimesis in Langbodo and Akpakaland

Immanuel Nwachukwu, opines that music and dance have life, potency and energy which is perceived differently by human mind (298). While Meki Nzewi, explains that ; “ in theatre, we find music ,dance and drama structurally unified in the idealization of a theatre presentation” (42). Music and dance, have their roots in the culture and tradition of the people. According to Arnold, Udoka, it is believed that “in the pre colonial times, music and dance united Africans with their gods and also helped them to articulate and objectify their philosophical beliefs, myths, legend and history”(278). Although Ogunyemi was loyal to the novel he adapted, he asserts freedom in certain significant areas. He introduced a lot of songs and dances and uses folklore to ventilate the structure of the play and to teach moral lessons.

Langbodo invokes audience participation through direct addressing of the audience by actor-narrator model and in combining mimeses with narration. Through this design, the playwright makes accessibility of the plot easier for the audience. Also by picking the actors from the audience, it gives the audience a sense of participation and makes for dramaturgical virtuosity. This parallels what obtains in some traditional African performances where the audience sometimes fuses with the performers. Ogunyemi, employs music realized in song, chants, incantations and dance as well

as language to achieve organic unity in his play by the oral traditions of the Yoruba people woven into a long narrative, a diffusion of character types that admits the shades of the living and the dead in social and natural life.

In *Langbodo*, the hero commences the narration thus, becoming in himself the fictional author referred to in the narrative and in spite of the fantasy-likeness, which can be likened to animist realism, Ogunyemi's play bear quite close resemblance to the real Yoruba environment both literally and metaphysically as it encompasses a world of witches, gnomes and animals. *Langbodo* appeals to the perception of the audience through the use of familiar images and festivals drawn from the Yoruba folkloric tradition and from the major ethnic groups in Nigeria and some of these images are reflected in the portraiture of rural aesthetics from the hunting and fishing scenes, marriage rites like Sharo marriage festival of the Fulanis, Bori marriage rites of the Hausas, the coming of age initiation dance of the Cross River people etc. The playwright also employs the symbolic mode in a condensed pattern of communication through proverbs, riddles and ordinary speech, idioms and magical language of incantation and praise chants.

Ogunyemi also experiments with various forms to attain dramatic dialogue and speech ranging from the direct and simple to the esoteric and cultic. Olu Obafemi however, contends that his use of different dialect in the same play appears incongruous. He states that,

I have tried to direct critical attention and the perception Ogunyemi's dramatic form and vision to other dramatic form and to achieve this, my investigation has concentrated on the influence of the traditional festival theatre forms, his play draws together all indigenous art whether verbal, musical, mimetic decorative or otherwise (93).

Bode Sowande, in analyzing Ogunyemi's use of words, has this to say, "Ogunyemi employs cultural elements only as mere materi for adornment... where he ought to have interpreted, Ogunyemi in fact transposes thus missing the dramatic function of the cultural and historical materials, songs, poetry and proverb which he evokes in his play" (103).

Towing the same line, Olu Obafemi, is of the view that Ogunyemi, "merely documents history without any serious interpretation of the material he is using beyond mere expression of the obvious"(93). He goes on to say that "Ogunyemi in handling historical events to create plot, theme and character does not lift his gaze beyond history to make his material relevant to the present"(93). A more serious area of weakness is that Ogunyemi fails to achieve any climax in the play as the main issues were not resolved in the play neither does the audience told if Akara Oogun and his team were able to succeed in their mission or not as is evidenced in the last scene;

OLD AKARA OOGUN: My story continues however. But meanwhile. Let it receive solid kola...so till we meet again fare you well (69).

In *Akpakaland*, we experience an epic celebration of the process whereby evil is engendered and punished. Folklore not only inform Ukala's dramatic vision, but constitute the framework on which the vision is achieved. He uses story telling /performer cum protagonist and audience participation embellished in dance, song, mime, idiom, chants, movement and dialogue to tell the story of *Akpakaland* and the aesthetic appreciation of the story involves the auditory, visual and kinetic sensibilities together with a considerable amount of Ika Delta Igbo world view. To Felix Ekwuoha-Ugboda, ... "no event in Africa passes without music and dance... music and dance are two complementary art forms...music making is a

combination of song, instrument, incantation, dance with other paraphernalia, that accompany the performance" (35).

In *Akpakaland*, Ukala invariably uses a mode that is relevant to the culture, tradition and history of the people and it is presented using the folkloric ideals. A dramatic work which is rooted in the culture and tradition of the people and most times uses their traditional songs for aesthetic purposes. The play is richly embellished in proverbs, Ika traditional dances and songs, chants, idiom and riddles. The narrator /audience participation is also incorporated to boost the call and response technique. According to Ebochie-Olise, "*Akpakaland* is built on Ika culture and tradition, though using a wider problem that is not only related to his people in denotational manner, but to the whole nation in connotational manner 'as well'(144)". The play opens with the raconteur introducing the play through the call and response method.

Idiom is used in *Akpakaland* extensively as a form of embellishment and to add meaning and weight to the story. As Chinua Achebe rightly states; "idioms are oil with which we use in eating yam"(22). Idiom is richly used in *Akpakaland* such as;

FULAMA: The woodpecker that pecks a stone will lose its beak (40).

AKPAKA: ...I am not cotton that glides wherever the wind blows (48).

IDE: The animal that befriends the monkey must fold its thumb.

ENWE: Or the monkey will break it off.

AKPAKA: ...The human ear catches strange news as the nose of the bee catches the smell of palm wine (44).

Like Wale Ogunyemi's *Langbodo*, in *Akpakaland*, the major geo-political zones are also represented by Akpaka's wives. Fulama symbolizes the North West, Yeiye stands for North East and Seotu represents South-West, While Unata may be

said to symbolize the South-East and Iyebi represents the South-South.

Conclusion

So far we have attempted to examine Ogunyemi and Ukala's utilization of music, narration and mimeses associated with African folklore to propose that harmony can only be restored, trust reestablished and tragedy averted if the nation through the personal sacrifices of every member of the community offer selfless service to their people without rancor and bitterness.

Langbodo, reflects the Nigerian diverse culture, and is a rousing showcase of total theatre, music, dance, well spiced proverbs, idiom, chants and incantation. The work is intended to help resurrect our collective sense of responsibility and restore our national right to cultural continuity. In *Langbodo*, Ogunyemi assembles Yoruba folklore and theatre together to form a composite narrative, thematically; his play explores the divide between a troubled nation and the search for a solution for the trouble. As Ogunyemi opines,

I wrote this play drawing much from the diverse cultures of Nigeria .It starts with Oyo state as a spring board catapulting the sojourners to Anambra state and from there to the North coming down to Rivers, leading them to Bendel through Cross river only to be superimposed by Oyo the initial starting point (Preface to *Langbodo*).

Akpakaland on the other hand, reflects the call for socio-political, cultural, economic and leadership change in our country .Epochi-Olise, talking about the need for reform says that "for any positive reformation to take place, there is need for the rejection and denunciation of political perfidy, economic perversion, ethnic conflicts and oppressive and autocratic leadership"(145). While in *Langbodo*, Ogunyemi

advocates for the need for the nation and the entire citizens to retrace their steps and change their way of doing things and embrace peace, Ukala's *Akpakaland* appears to see violence as the only effective channel to be used in overhauling the corrupt and despotic leadership in the country so that "the prevailing anguish of the masses could be tackled once and for all and the injustices and the corruption of the elite dealt with"(149). Ukala is able to achieve this by allowing Fulama to be exposed and disgraced. Both *Langbodo* and *Akpakaland*, extensively utilizes the themes of equity and resilient as tools for moral instruction and social regeneration. Using the avenues of music, narration and mimeses, the two plays, highlights the fact that these traditional performance materials which are elements of folkism do not only serve as a channel for entertainment but also to educate us on the need for peaceful co-existence and tolerance. It is in this regard that Chibueze Orie, posits that; "Sam Ukala's folkism is imperative and significant in African literature, considering that it is a theory that presents a picture of an African folk... in linguistic nuances, cultural index and total world view that are peculiarly African" (120). Towing the same line, Ruth Epochic-Olise, states that "The African culture and tradition is unique, useful and very rich. As such, her citizens have refused to abandon them. Rather they select the familiar and valuable things using them in an imaginative and creative way to arouse and incite the spirit of inquiry, resistance and freedom among the people" (142).

Langbodo and *Akpakaland* are a fitting study on the efficacy of indigenous music, narration and mime to orchestrate and redefine the African performance aesthetics. Ukala and Ogunyemi in the two plays studied above, have made good use of traditional African myth orchestrating it to comment on contemporary issues. This mythic material is given dramatic currency through the artistic use of story telling and narration, traditional idioms and proverbs. These

elements are given moral implications thus, imbuing in them the sententiousness and moral thought which is one of the hallmarks of folkism.

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Industrial Relations Crisis and Conflict: An Analytical Study of Causes and Effects Relationship in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper appraises industrial relations crisis and conflict in an organization with major emphasis on analysis of the causes and effects relationship; the psychological effects of discontent which usually leads to frustration and later, aggression from individual to group and proffer a lasting remedy to the scourge of industrial crisis and conflict in Nigeria. The paper found that the causes of industrial relations crisis and conflict were socio-economic, government policies and psychological factors. More crisis and violence due to perceived inequity and inequality in the wealth distribution by the state. The paper recommends the Nigerian environment be analyzed and appreciated before the introduction of policies, which ought to be inclusive of the various stakeholders as the case may be.

Introduction

Production is the heartbeat of a nation and its significance cannot be overstated. For production to take place effectively, two basic factors are very necessary – labour and management. Fashoyin, (1980) has defined labour as a unionized group whose major objective is the improvement of terms and conditions of employment of members through the collective bargaining process. On the other hand, management is the body, a group of persons, a committee, or a hierarchy of officers

coordinating the factors of production including labour towards the realization of the organization's objectives (Fashoyin, 1980; Ubeku and Abel, 1983; Smith, 2006). Management and labour have objectives which are complementary to each other and each depends on the other for survival. For production to go on uninterrupted therefore, both labour and management must be ready to give their best (Nnabuife, 2000).

The mutual and cordial relationship expected of both labour and management unfortunately is usually disrupted as a result of industrial unrest, conflict or dispute which is usually prevalent in organizations. On the part of labour, as far as conflict is concerned, they sometimes feel indispensable believing that they make greater contributions without which the product or service objective cannot be realized. Moreover, labour have always been seen by management as the "Oliver Twist" of the organization always asking for more. Management, on the other hand, posing as the entrepreneur, believes that without its huge investment in land and capital, labour can produce nothing. The fact still remains that the wage of an entrepreneurship is profit and management counts on the revenue generated from the organization to compensate labour as well as make her profit. From the foregoing, it can be seen that both are compensated from the proceeds realized from production. It then becomes imperative that both should work harmoniously to sustain a continuous healthy industrial existence and growth. But knowing that no relationship is devoid of misunderstanding, conflicts always ensue which causes should be located and appropriately dealt with due to their obvious implications on the growth and survival of organizations. Conflict is disagreement, (Susan, 2012) but contrary to popular belief conflict does not necessarily involve fighting. Conflict exists in any situation where facts, desires or fears pull or push participants against each other or in divergent directions.

This paper therefore attempts to discuss the causes of industrial crisis and conflict, the effects of industrial crisis and

conflict on the organization in particular and the national economy as a whole, the psychological effects of discontent which usually leads to frustration and later, aggression from individual to group and proffer a lasting remedy to the scourge of industrial crisis and conflict in Nigeria.

Causes of Industrial Relations Crisis

Often, studies on industrial crises perhaps illustrates more on the distributional impact of fund supported programmes to the extent that variables such as changes in real wages and unemployment can be seen as influencing collective political behaviour over time (Griffin, 1939; Yoder, 1940; Rees, 1952; Edwards, 1981). Industrial crises are expressed openly either through strikes or suppressed voluntarily or involuntarily through frustrating bureaucratic delays or poorly and ineffectively expressed, and therefore remained unexpressed. Industrial peace is therefore more apparent than real, as the absence of strikes does not suggest that other forms of protest activities are not going on. However, the correlates of Industrial crises according to Fajana and Ige (2009) can be itemized as external factors exemplified by governments policies, environmental (social, economic and political) factors, and psychological ones as suggested by frustration and aggression theories by Doob and Sears (1939), Ahmed and Mapletoft (1989), Berkowitz's (1978), Alexandra (1999) and Maire (2004) amongst others. A critical evaluation of some of these external factors are further considered hereunder.

Government Policies

The nature, dimensions of government policies have often times led to a massive protest in Nigeria. For instance, the policy on removal of fuel subsidy in 2011, led to a wide protest by Nigerian. The feeling of the masse were not being considered as Okonjo-Iweala agreed that citizens' cynicism and lack of trust in the government were the reasons for the elongated debate on

subsidy removal, insisting that the government was sincere with its policies (Mbamalu, Fanimu, Onomo, Aduba and Salau (2011).

Industrial crisis or conflict is not usually thought to directly influence the wider collective political conflicts since labour-management disagreements cannot be easily traced to the actions and inactions of the national government. Although strikes and other forms of industrial crises are not always explicit or unambiguous expressions of collective political unrest, they can serve as a relatively good proxy for collective protests, as they require collective action, organization and focus on a set of specific but not necessarily mutually exclusive grievances. To the extent that the strike is illegal in some countries, the mere deployment of strikes is seen as a form of protest not necessarily against the employers, but the state authorities whose labour and economic policies might be perceived as anti-labour. Moreover, like collective political protests, industrial strikes have goals and methods as well as costs and benefits. The objective of a national or general strike is possibly to cause the state to change its policies in favour of the labour movement; that is an attempt to obtain a better share of national resources and some socio-economic factors that needs to be considered below.

Socioeconomic Factors: Economic models of industrial crisis exemplified through strikes activity posit a positive relationship between economic prosperity and industrial disputes (Griffin, 1939; Yoder, 1940; Rees, 1952). Notwithstanding the apparent robustness of these findings, the extent to which they can be generalized to Less Developed Countries (LDC) such as Nigeria still have to be examined. For instance, the non-economic factor of unionization is thought to affect industrial conflict by political-organizational theorists, whereas studies' concentrating on LDCs concludes that the link between union membership militancy and industrial conflict is not a very good one.

The records of government's attempts at channeling labour protests into safer channels are indeed very well documented. For instance Otobo (1988) traced this trend in Nigeria from colonial times to the present time. In the past, labour discontents were regarded as politically motivated and effectively controlled by recourse to armed police. In the present time, such unrests are controlled through anti-labour legislation such as the ban or hedging of strikes and deregistration of unions that contravene essential services law for example. On the whole it would appear that the link between union membership, union militancy and industrial crises is not necessarily a strong one, especially coupled with the fact that the strike is just one form of industrial protests. Thus, the effects of demographic variables of the relevant social group have to be considered. In this wise, population growth, urbanization, education, and social awareness levels are also factors which may affect the amount of political instability that a country can experience through expressions of industrial discontents. However, the former is often thought to exert more statistical significance over political instability than the later (Hibbs, 1973).

Nevertheless, it appears that none of these findings can be generalized across countries because they are often based on cross sectional data. Yet, they are not usually collected in the same way in all countries, and moreover, panel data would seem to better express trends rather than a one-time survey of the issues. This paper at this point, discusses the psychological effects of discontent which usually leads to frustration and later, aggression from individual to group.

Psychological factors: Theories of instability exist in the literatures that help to illustrate the diversity of the issues involved. For instance the frustration-aggression theory will be readily referenced here. In discussing issues of frustration and aggression, individual or group's response to frustration is often exhibited by anger as noted by Dollard et al. (1939) classic literature on psychology of behaviour (Homans, 1965).

However, Adam (1965) and later Mowday (1979) posit that there is inequity when a worker perceives an obverse relationship between his inputs and outputs relative to that of relevant others which can also be linked to equity and other motivation theories. For instance, the gains made by academic staff in Nigerian universities in the early 1980s was based on the differential contributions of legislators vis-à-vis university lecturers that made the latter insist on comparability of remuneration with the former (Fajana and Ige, 2009).

However, relative deprivation theory emerged to explain how the perceptions of inequality and inequity are reached. Relative deprivation as conceived by Merton and Rossi (1957) occurs when equity, has been aggravated and frustrated. The relatively deprived unit (individual, group) feels that it has been frustrated in attaining an outcome or goal to which it feels legitimately entitled and as such, gets aggressive and antagonistic. Ted Gurr (1968) tried to distinguish between four different forms of deprivation viz: decremental, aspirational, progressive, and persisting deprivations. However, it is still unclear whether such anger or frustration will generally be translated to collective political violence. Anger is a first-order condition for violence, though violence is not necessarily a second-order (that is, sufficient) condition. For frustrations of this sort to be converted to political violence, three conditions have to be met. According to Cooper (1974), anger must be felt collectively as intolerable and the group must feel an amount of social and legitimate support for their action and secondly, such a collectivity must have enough resources to be able to translate its discontent into viable action. Lastly, the benefits of violence must be commensurate or outweigh its costs (Cooper, 1974). Be that as it may, with this theoretical background on frustration-aggression and violence, we shall examine how the state in Nigeria has not only deprived but also, frustrated her workforce using funds supported programmes on industrial relations activities to the point of violence and aggression.

Effects of State-Induced Repression and Coercion

The capacity of political authorities to exert coercive control is a factor that may influence the amount of political instability that a country can experience (Ake, 1969). Empirical attempts at measuring this link have failed to yield any statistically strong relationship which is probably, because the measures adopted are not the appropriate ones. This is in agreement with the views of several scholars when for instance, indicators such as defense spending is seen as a percentage of the GDP, military manpower per 10,000 population, and internal security forces per 10,000 population are usually adopted in studies (e.g. Gurr, 1968; Hibbs, 1973). It is very doubtful whether these variables really measure actual acts of coercion. Though, a large army for example may not prevent benevolence on the part of a 'democratic' military regime; which may tend to discourage coup attempts by the military personnel. The extent to which the acceptance or otherwise of the leadership by the military affects the desire or otherwise for coups have not been systematically studied as intuition gives a possible lead that the acceptance by the rank and file of the military will further depress the desire for countercoups. Although, this will not necessarily remove grievances that may come from civilians administration, the deployment of state coercive actions notwithstanding tend to suppress it. Furthermore, if the state has a history of coercive response to political agitations as known in Nigeria, then we need to serve some notes of warning to supporters of coups, other internal wars, and other collective protest activities. Some of the consideration for coups d'etat requires further discussion. Three factors which are often identified as predictors of successful or unsuccessful take over of governments are;(1) degree of political institutionalization in the country,(2) size of the military relative to the rest of the population,(3) history of such incidence in the country; that is, if it happened before, then it could happen again.

These studies give the impression that political instability especially strikes and other forms of industrial protests are correlated with a variety of social, economic and political factors. It is the validity of this impression that this paper further assess next in Nigeria using IMF programmes and instability.

Some Factual Evidence from Nigeria

The record of IMF- type adjustment programme in Nigeria dates back to the early 1980s when it was found that payment imbalances had started to emerge. But then, only budgetary expenditure, interest rates, credit ceiling, debt management and prices were the policy areas focused (ECA, 1984). The Fund (i.e, IMF) was invited to intervene in Nigeria's economy around September 1986. It was at this time that foreign exchange management was introduced. As if to corroborate the claim made by the Fund itself, the reasons for the invitation centered on decelerations in the Nigerian economy. However, in explaining this deceleration, the Balance of Payment (BOP) is used to indicate the current account balance, exchange rate, direct investment, import and export as well as trade balance as at 1985. Furthermore, in the face of mounting foreign debts and declining oil revenue from exports, sequel to the big crash in the 1973-75 oil market, the nation was faced with serious economic problems, which perhaps necessitated the intervention of the IMF. The increasing trend of prices in the Nigerian economy from the 1975 base year was coupled with unemployment, which was on the high level of about 6 per cent. It seems that the situation was indeed already at a crisis level, thus the motivation to invite the Fund and similarly, this position seemed to be supported by the trend in industrial production. This is because, for most industries, there was the shortage of foreign exchange as Nigeria's creditors were no longer willing to honour letters of credit during 1985-86 suggesting that less than installed capacities were being used. This had implications

for employment. However, given this type of economic situation, it would not be inconceivable that workers, whose incomes are fixed, are very likely to react to the hardship being experienced as we shall discuss later in this paper.

The economic situation of Nigeria workers did not change after the funds were accepted due to the conditionality and rather than the industrial relations activities to be less turbulent. It witnessed more crisis and violence due to perceived inequity and inequality in the wealth distribution by the state. This resulted in trade disputes and work. Though theoretical literatures have concluded that strikes may not be the only form of protests in industry, they nevertheless are perhaps the most visible evidence of discontent in Nigeria. The rate of filing disputes and use of strike weapon however declined rapidly after 1982, that is, during the recession years. This would be explained by recourse to theory suggesting the infeasibility of the strike action as a method of furthering the purpose of labour during a period of recession (Kassalow, 1983). Most labour-management relationships were more cooperative than distributive and conflictual as there was the desire on the part of both labour and management parties to vanquish their common enemy, viz the recessed economy. There was the deployment of concession bargaining and other cooperative forms of relations. However, sequel to the introduction of the recommended in respect of foreign exchange management in 1986, reports of disputes and strikes increased considerably. In 1988, strikes were 156 cases and in 1990 they were 174. 1993 recorded 160 cases of disputes and in 1995 there was a decline. Given the experience with the Fund's conditionality and the response of workers, it would not be a mere co-incidence that conflict activities recorded during 1988 -1994 increased significantly and from the year 1995 - 2002, there was a decrease in conflict activities. Rather it becomes very probable that the effects of the Fund conditionality must have accentuated the rate of Industrial disputes, as was the experience of countries that had

similarly taken IMF supported programmes in the past. The Nigerian government has consistently hedged the right of workers to strike. Some of the relevant legislations are: The Trade dispute Act of 1969, 1976, 1996 and 2005 (Fajana, 2006). This hunch for a connection between Fund programme and industrial instability is endemic when the nature and causes of conflicts are examined during period after the imposition of Fund's conditionality. Largely there were retrenchments in the public sector because the Fund had recommended that commercialization, liberalization, deregulation, privatization etc were requisite if the nation was to be meaningfully bailed out of economic mess. This trend has remained contemporary hence; there were serious objections in the public sector from workers who feared job loss. Private sector workers also faced serious threat of job loss because employers were operating at less than their installed capacities. Similarly during the period after the introduction of structural adjustment, which was among the recommendations of the Fund, prices continued to soar to the high heavens. This is evident in the recurrent increases in the price of fuel. This also arose largely because contractionary monetary policies meant that there was inadequate cash in the economy to purchase the output of industries. The industries had produced with considerable imported inputs, procured at the very high market determined foreign exchange rates; hence the high prices of products. A study of the end use of imports for 1982-88 by Ajakaiye (1988) showed that the very expensive foreign exchange is now in the form of raw materials (1982 = 16.7%; 1987 = 37.5%).

The upward trend in prices explained the increased cost of production arising from imported inflation which necessarily passed on to prices as well as the consequences of unrepentant increase in fuel prices, detrimental to prices. The response to unsold goods and services has been to reduce capacity utilization and increase layoff. Though layoffs, further weakens effective demand necessitating additional layoffs, and further

depression in workers' welfare. The growth implications of the structural/recovery programmes are yet to be evaluated. Nevertheless, this point cannot be expected to seriously invalidate the trend that has been identified from the preceding analysis; that is the emerging trend is a continuous deceleration in the welfare of workers, a pressure, influenced by political leaders at both the state and federal levels, and indeed suffers from corruption and inefficiency.

Response of the State to the Agitation of Workers in Nigeria

The Constitution of Nigeria provides for an independent judiciary; however, in practice, the judicial branch remains susceptible to executive and legislative branch although less was implemented than under previous military government of Abdusalam Abubakar. Army, police, and security force officers regularly beat protesters. The Government in Nigeria has continued to infringe on citizens' privacy rights; however, there were no official reports of members of the armed forces looting property, destroying buildings, or driving persons away from their homes. The Government generally, had disrespect for the freedom of speech and the press as security force beat journalists, while government seize newspaper print runs, harass newspaper printers, editors, advertisers, and distributors. Though this trend had continued to decline after the installment of a civilian government (Human Rights Reports, 2004). Nevertheless, the described scenario created chaotic and frenzied industrial relations environment with grave implications for the system as we shall note below.

Implications, Recommendations and Conclusion

Having explained some of the problems hauled on workers as a result of government adjustment policies and programmes, the reactions of workers are not unexpected. However, the reaction of labour is particularly smothered by the lack of power to pursue its interest with vigor. It is therefore possible that the

method, which is being largely used to register industrial protest, is other than the strike. This view is more likely to hold in Nigeria because of the nature of the political environment, and the experience of previous strikers. With the deployment of armed troops of policemen invited in the event of strikes, it is usually risky adventure for organized labour to embark upon strike actions (Fajana, 1990, 2006). Instead of deploying the strike action, the labour movement, constrained by the state repression within the environment, is left with the choice of deploying other forms of conflict. Unfortunately these other forms of conflict are usually neither well recorded nor effective. Thus the use of such conflict pursuing goals during the recession might have increased considerably. What is evident in the available data however is the fact that the use of strikes has increased significantly from 156 in 1988 to 174 in 1990. By 1993, there were 160 cases and a decline was experienced from 946 in 1995. Of course, what is expected is that strikes will not occur massively or frequently. It is thus surprising that some increase was recorded in the frequency of strikes during the period, and up to the early 2000.

One obvious implication of this finding is the tendency for other pressure or interest groups within the economy to utilize the weakness of the efforts of labour to instigate other forms of political conflicts. Given the coercion and repression that are required if the Fund supported programmes are to succeed, it would take groups with equal countervailing power to challenge the policies and trends in the economy. Thus, actions like coup d'etats, assassination of newspaper editors, internal wars or threats of cessation, public demonstrations, deaths from political violence, armed attacks, and riots, which have wider implications for political instability might gain increased attraction to groups who are actually or perceived capable of deploying such actions. Thus, the anti-SAP riots of 1989 was met on the part of the state by the adoption of relief measures which were intended to give the adjustment programme a

human face. The action of the state is perhaps to prevent political instability, which might be generated by aggrieved lower participants in the economy. Groups who perceive them as alienated to forcefully remove the administration that is perceived as oppressive may make the attempt. Such groups might want to appeal to the labour movement to give its support. The assumption in the main is that labour is already laden with serious discontent with the situation, and would readily offer the support, which might give such illegal executive transfer more success and legitimacy.

This assertion seemed evident in the experience of Nigeria with two coup attempts of the 1980s. In 1985 and 1990, the administration of General Babangida was attacked forcefully but the two attempts were unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the plotters on each occasion had relied on the support of civilians especially workers to come out and demonstrate open solidarity with the rebels. Major Orka in 1990 specifically included "the spate of unacceptable strike actions" in the reason for attempting to take over government (Fajana and Ige, 2009).

This paper recommends that the peculiarities of the Nigerian environment be analyzed and appreciated before the introduction of policies, which ought to be inclusive of the various stakeholders as the case may be. Also, the alternative to strike needs to be exploited and in so doing, the dispute settlement machineries should be reviewed, granted some form of autonomy such that the procedure is made faster, free and fair for confidence to be established in the judgment and awards of the machineries. The issue of violation of labour leaders by the state needs to be addressed and resolved accordingly. The paper recommends that there should be the provision of basic amenities like electricity, water and good roads so that jobs can be created and the rate of unemployment reduced.

In conclusion, the paper has argued that, based on the Nigerian experience, there is a connection between IMF-type programmes and instability in some of the countries that adopt

them. Structural supply oriented policies such as reducing the size of the public sector and the removal of state resources from that sector to the private sector (privatization), creating financial intermediaries, promotion of savings, and discouragement of wasteful spending by increasing real interest rates all help to reduce the welfare of workers. Reactions to this deprivation, frustration, anger and the coercion and repression of state agencies has shaped the choice of conflict strategy, by limiting this to other forms of conflict activities, although some strike actions were used in spite of the risks involved. While other forms of conflict activities continue, such as rumours, reduction of output, and self-withdrawal for instance, a frustrated and coerced labour movement is potentially a political risk as disgruntled military or civilian dissidents could capitalize on such situations to call for support in respect of an illegal take-over of the executive.

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