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REVISITING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION IN AFRICA: TAKING STOCK OF AFRICAN TRUTH COMMISSIONS' PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES THUS FAR



Tendaishe Tlou

Abstract

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), in particular Truth Commissions, are important institutions which can be established in both conflict and post-conflict periods to ensure that widespread or systematic human rights violations are accounted for and do not recur. Given the violent past and in some cases present human rights violations in African States, independent Commissions play a pivotal role in dealing with the past. However, no concept can be examined in a vacuum. Therefore, it is important to examine Truth Commissions within the context of the Paris Principles so as to ascertain the gains made in the past years of their emergence on the African continent. It is with much sadness that most Truth Commissions are thriving under the weight of authoritarian regimes, thus it is of utmost importance to take stock of the gains made so far in as far as truth, peace and reconciliation processes are concerned. Lessons learned from other countries will enable other Truth Commissions to navigate the rough terrain in Africa, but most importantly self-introspect, improve and shake-off the legacy of failure. Given the mammoth task facing Truth Commissions in Africa, it is pivotal for them to adopt international best practices and constantly look back, self-introspect and learn from each other so as to ensure that they effectively deliver their mandate. This paper will also proffer recommendations so that Truth Commissions are competent in implementing their intervention strategies and are able to navigate the obstacles posed by both non-state and state actors in Africa.

Keywords: Truth Commissions, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), human rights, promotion, protection, respect and Paris Principles.

Introduction

Following the end of the Cold War and the subsequent entrenchment of human rights, good governance and democracy around the world, the greater part of Africa was decolonised and African states moved to adopt National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) to consolidate and to deal with past human rights violations. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) paved way for the Paris Principles discussions in 1993 which led to the establishment of NHRIs which sought to address and redress gross human rights violations committed in the past. This set standards which would see the promotion, protection and respect for human rights at national levels to guarantee non-recurrence. This explains why in 1989 only one country had an NHRI, but to date at least twenty-five countries in Africa have adopted NHRIs in the form of Truth Commissions to deal with the past.

NHRIs are flourishing in Africa as most independent states ratified the UDHR and other United Nations statutory instruments which oblige countries to observe, protect

and promote human rights across the continent. This paper will discuss the main functions of Paris Principles compliant NHRIs –in the form of Truth Commission- within the context of Africa, comparing reality and what Truth Commissions are supposed to do. This shall ascertain if NHRIs are relevant in the observance and protection of human rights in the African continent. The assessment shall be done under the auspices of the mandates of a Paris Principles compliant NHRI, mandate of Truth Commissions as stipulated in national constitutions, progress made so far and the challenges Truth Commissions are encountering in delivering their mandates in both conflict and post-conflict states. The assessment unpacks the competences and responsibilities of NHRIs, but not in any particular order or importance.

Human rights: are the inherent recognition of the dignity and of the equal, inalienable rights of all members of the human family based on ethics and morality (Basu, 2004). They are rights that one has simply because one is a human being...they are equal rights as everyone else is born equal to the other.” (Donnelley, 2003) Shivji (1989) further argues that human rights are a universal moral right, something which all (wo) men, everywhere, at all times enjoy and something which no one may be deprived without a grave affront to justice. However, there is no universally accepted definition of rights, but it is agreed that they seek to uphold and protect human dignity.

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs): are independent public bodies that fight for the furthering of human rights in their country (The Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2018). The Commonwealth Best Practice Guide mentions that “an NHRI should have a broad mandate covering the full range of human rights issues, while taking into account the universality, interdependence, interrelatedness and indivisibility of human rights, which should be defined according to both domestic and international standards of law, whether or not relevant treaties have been ratified by government.” The NHRI of interest in this regard are Truth Commissions that are mandated to deal with past gross human rights violations such as genocides, but also into the future by trying to facilitate substantive institutional reforms to guarantee non-recurrence and promote national healing, reconciliation through truth-recovery and accountability for past gross human rights violations.

Normative Foundations of Truth Commissions

The concept of transitional justice can be traced back to the post-Second World War period in Europe with the establishment of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremburg and the various ‘de-Nazification’ programs in Germany and the trials of Japanese soldiers for crimes committed during the war. Today, transitional justice usually refers to the range of approaches that societies undertake to reckon with the legacies of widespread or systematic human rights abuse as they move from a period of violent conflict or oppression towards peace, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights (See, “What is transitional justice,” <http://www.ictj.org/en/tj/>).

The third wave of democratization of the late 1980s and early 1990s has given transitional justice a new and added impetus. From its roots as a link between transition and justice in the late 1940s, the concept has now been transformed to assume a broader perspective involving a comprehensive re-examination of a society in transition from a retrospective position to a prospective one with democratic consolidation as one of its

primary objectives. Generally, a transitional justice program usually aims to achieve the following goals:

- Halt ongoing human rights abuses;
- Investigate past crimes;
- Identify those responsible for human rights violations;
- Impose sanctions for some of those responsible for serious human rights violations;
- Provide reparations to victims;
- Prevent future abuses;
- Preserve and enhance sustainable peace; and
- Promote individual and national reconciliation.

These goals are usually served through establishing the truth, providing victims of human rights abuses with a public platform, holding perpetrators accountable, strengthening the rule of law, providing victims with compensation, effecting institutional reform, promoting reconciliation and promoting public deliberation.[2]

Background to Human Rights and Nexus with Truth Commissions

On 10 December, 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the 56 members of the United Nations. The vote was unanimous, although eight nations chose to abstain. Throughout history, different schools of thought converged in the generation and evolution of the consciousness of human rights (Chiarrello, 2018). The UDHR, commonly referred to as the *Magna Carta*, extended the revolution in international law ushered in by the United Nations Charter on Human Rights. How a government treats its own citizens is now a matter of legitimate international concern and not simply a domestic issue (Piechomiak, 1999). It claims that all rights are interdependent and indivisible. Its preamble eloquently asserts that, "Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world." The influence of the UDHR has been substantial in the promotion, protection and respect of human rights in the world and the formation of Truth Commissions. The statutes of the UDHR have been incorporated into the constitutions of more than 185 nations now in the United Nations (UN). Although a Declaration is not a legally binding document, the Universal Declaration has achieved the status of customary international law because people regard it "as a common standard of achievement for all people and all nations" (Chiarello, 2018). The upheavals of the two World Wars led to the creation of the UN and led to enactment of international laws that endeavor to safeguard human dignity, beginning with the UDHR in 1948. The UDHR ushered in a new era in the evolution of human rights that would drive the development of the consciousness of human security (Campagnoni, 1995). The Declaration is not a legally binding document. However, through the general acceptance and practice of its principles as law, it has become the internationally recognized legal and ethical framework for international, regional and national human rights mechanisms (Donnelley, 2003). It also serves as a source for other international, regional and national law on human, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights (Steiner, Alston and Goodman, 2008). This paper is analysed within a global context where we have the best human rights regime starting

with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the accompanying United Nations core human rights instruments.

We also have a decolonized Africa that has impressive African-made human rights instruments anchored on the African Union Constitutive Act, the impressive and somewhat unique African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) (Ndlela, 2005). The ACHPR is unique and impressive in that it builds into economic, social and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights (Steiner, Henry; Alston, Philip and Goodman, Ryan, 2008). While the standards are impressive, necessary and useful they are not sufficient. The mismatch between the human rights standards and human rights practices is staggering for all to see and a serious cause for concern. Human rights standards in international treaties and conventions are pretty much meaningless without commitment to implementation. Human rights standards do not self-execute and operate in vacuum. They need human effort and leadership. That is where the missing link is. Against this background, Truth Commissions are seen as domestic tools to ensure the effective protection and promotion of human rights in conflict and post-conflict States.

The Adoption of the Paris Principles and the Vienna Declaration

Despite the UDHR in 1948 and the accompanying United Nations statutes embodied in the Conventions of 1966 which were set forth in two Covenants that is the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (First Generation Rights) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights (Second Generation Rights) (Donnelly, 2003), there was a general consensus that human rights cannot be observed, promoted and protected in a vacuum. The UN and its affiliate bodies envisaged the creation of truth Commissions. Even though the Paris Principles were adopted in 1993, conversations had begun in the 1940s to conceptualise the establishment of NHRIs in the form of Truth Commissions at national level. Lessons of World War II, the accompanying genocides and crimes against humanity needed to be dealt with in countries that were in conflict and also recovering from it.

In 1993, following the end of the Cold War and decolonisation of States particularly in Africa, world leaders met in Paris in 1991 to agree if there was need for NHRIs which was a precursor to the drafting and adoption of what are now known as the 'Paris Principles' in Vienna in 1993. The Paris Principles have given birth and strengthened what are popularly now known as National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), but in particular Truth Commissions which also shows the incremental commitment to the promotion of and protection of human rights at national level.

The Legal Basis of a Paris Principle Compliant NHRI is as follows:

NHRIs are established through a constitutional provision and an Act of Parliament which enables international standards to be domesticated. According to Murray and Viljoe (2007) NHRIs- through an Act of Parliament- should have a clear and defined mandate, function and powers. From this perspective, the mandates of NHRIs as well as their scope are defined and also demarcated.

The legal basis for most NHRIs meets the minimum standards of the Paris Principles. All NHRIs are established and guided by a legislative framework enshrined in the Constitution, while the legal basis for the NHRI comprises of both a Presidential decree and legal framework (Act). In the NHRI to be discussed, it is observed that the legal basis for the institutions comprise a number of decrees and legislation that are recently

supplemented with enabling constitutional provisions and should be benchmarked as international best practice.

Functions of a Paris Principle Compliant NHRI

To assist in the formulation of programmes for the teaching of and research into human rights and takes part in their execution in schools, universities and professional circles such as workshops and public gatherings.

Arguably, the most important function of Truth Commissions is the formulation and implementation of programmes to teach and educate citizens about the past, national healing and reconciliation as enshrined in the Constitution (Section 252 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe). Research and awareness raising is at the core of most Truth Commissions. It is often easy to assume that once a section on national peace and reconciliation is infused as a chapter in the Constitution, everyone automatically knows the content therein. Constitutional awareness, in particular, national peace and reconciliation, must be taught to everyone. According to Freedom House (2018), only 15% of Zimbabwean citizens know the Constitution and what it entails. Hence, education around transitional justice is more apparent now after the adoption of the new Constitution in Zimbabwe, 5 years ago. It lies with Truth Commissions to formulate programmes, in cohorts with the civil society and government to teach and research past gross human rights violations and takes part in awareness raising in schools, universities and professional circles such as workshops and public gatherings (UN Resolution of 1994/ 48/134). Perhaps the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is the most popular Truth Commission in Africa which adopted measures to confront and 'deal with South Africa's past' to ensure that its citizens participate in the national in national peace and reconciliation process.

As it stands, South Africans are among the few Africans who participated in national peace and reconciliation processes and have set an example on how to claim and exercise their constitutional rights religiously as compared to other Africans across the continent. Transitional justice education is important in order for children, youth and adults to participate in transitional justice processes, to respect and uphold the rights of others. Moreover, it's important that duty bearers, such as teachers, police, social workers and other civil servants who act on behalf of the State, know their duties to respect, protect and fulfil the State's national peace and reconciliation obligations whether behind the desk formulating policies or their interactions on the ground with vulnerable citizens (The Danish Institute for Human Rights, 2018). National peace and reconciliation education draws the line between the State and its citizens so that during interactions, no one goes overboard or forgets their roles and responsibilities. The new UN resolution text reads that, "states recognize the important role of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in promoting effective policies on human rights education and training and calls upon them to contribute further to the implementation of human rights education programmes".

The fundamental role of transitional justice education is to empower citizens to exercise their own rights and respect the rights of others. However, in most countries such as Burundi, Truth Commissions' work around awareness raising is heavily censored and restricted. It is not easy for the Commission to engage citizens and talk about past atrocities, especially in contexts in which perpetrators are still in power. Even though the

Commission has been formed, programmes related to awareness raising are not supported by the government due to assumptions that the Commission might implicate them in the gross human rights violations, whilst people at community level are intimidated by local structures such as traditional leaders not to participate in the Commission's programmes.

To Publicise Human Rights and Efforts to Combat All Forms of Discrimination by Increasing Public Awareness through Information Dissemination and by Making Use of All Organs

Closely linked to deliberate national peace and reconciliation education is publicising transitional justice and efforts to combat all forms of discrimination through information dissemination (UN Resolution of 1994/ 48/134). All Truth Commissions are endowed with the responsibility to ensure that all citizens are aware of transitional justice developments at national level and that international issues trickle down to the citizens of their respective countries. Truth Commissions must not, either intentionally or unintentionally, hold back any national peace and reconciliation information from people (General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20/12/1993).

In essence, the Commission must produce booklets, pamphlets, simplified and translated versions of human rights material and take steps to disseminate the same across the country, particularly in prisons, schools, hospitals, universities, to People with Disabilities, racial, religious and ethnic minorities, children, women, the LGBTIQ community, migrants and other people. At Commission offices, IEC material must always be available for collection and distribution during information dissemination campaigns. However, most often than not, Truth Commissions are inadequately funded and are not able to produce IEC material in bulk and their public relations departments are rarely functional. This implies that information related to national peace and reconciliation is not sufficiently disseminated and supplied to citizens.

Monitoring the Peace and Human Rights situation in the Country

The Paris Principles prescribe that an NHRI should be responsible for "drawing the attention of the government to situations in any part of the country where human rights were or are violated". This can be done through consistent and constant monitoring of all areas where there is human interaction. A society's ability to manage conflict constructively is tested continuously by risks that "push" toward violence and opportunities to "pull" a society on a pathway toward peace (UN Pathways to Peace, 2018). Risks and opportunities exist at various levels and can reinforce each other. The majority of gross human rights violations today originate from instabilities within states, either as a result of tensions across or between groups at community level and the State (ibid).

Internal factors have a strong influence, particularly on major violent conflicts. Violence and instability locally can impact national stability. To effectively fulfil this requirement, it is important for Truth Commissions to be accessible to citizens throughout the country, particularly confined, rural and marginalized areas. However, what is glaringly evident is that Truth Commissions in Africa are mostly stationed in capital cities and in their existence are not devolving their presence in communities where real issues are and survivors are concentrated. Transitional justice is very complex and needs to be victim-centric. Therefore, Truth Commissions should have provincial and district-based

offices to ensure that their monitoring informs their implementation strategy of transitional justice processes at local levels.

Against this background, when it comes to a broader monitoring function, the readiness to apply international standards becomes even clearer. For example, many Truth Commissions have powers to inspect sites of gross human rights violations and make frequent reference to international standards in their reports on such visits. Nonetheless, Truth Commissions in Africa have not been playing this role and have barely been monitoring communities which explain why conflicts keep on recurring. Monitoring entails identifying possible conflicts, the needs of survivors among other things.

Truth Commissions should influence non-recurrence of violent conflicts, gross human rights violations, torture, mistreatment of citizens and re-victimisation of victims coming from the background that everyone's dignity needs to be upheld at all times. It is important for Truth Commissions to conduct frequent and unannounced visits communities and other places where violations can or will be occurring, but hidden from the public eye. NHRIs must be proactive and not be hesitant to be at loggerheads with the State because it has the sole mandate to promote, protect and ensure the respect of all human rights at all levels of society. Sadly, Truth Commissions in Africa have chosen to be in good books with the States by concealing what they have learned at community levels.

Secondly, Truth Commissions should have sound knowledge of the human rights climate across their respective country. Currently, Truth Commissions seem to be divorced from reality. Broad physical presence, through establishment of local Provincial and District Peace Committees is a good indication of robust monitoring and widespread accessibility of a Truth Commission nationally (Fombad, 2008).

Truth Commissions must not only wait for citizens to bring violation reports to them, but should go out and remain in contact with people so that this assists in the monitoring of the state of human rights at all times. Apparently, most citizens in countries in which Truth Commissions have been established do not even know how to submit complaints, where the offices are located and how to call-in the Commission. Eventually, victims of gross human rights violations do not report their experiences and it appears as if everything is normal. Truth Commissions must be proactive, accessible, transparent, responsive and consistent in their systemic and systematic collection of data in relation to human rights violations (UN Resolution of 1994/ 48/134).

Truth Commissions are viewed as a vehicle for championing 'that' international moral concept. According to Aichele (2010), Truth Commissions should also receive and handle national peace, reconciliation and healing issues and are expected to have authority to investigate the same. In investigating violations, procedures to submit a complaint should be simple, accessible, affordable and speedy. Securing compliance with the Paris Principle's resolutions and recommendations, Truth Commissions are also taken as a crucial element for the development of human rights norms and standards (Osondu-Oti, 2016). In addition, NHRIs have power to refer their findings to courts of law or specialised tribunals for adjudication when their offices fail (UN Resolution of 1994/ 48/134).

Preparation of Reports on the National Situation with Regard to Human Rights in General and on More Specific Matters

National peace and reconciliation processes are complimented by preparation and submission of reports annually to Parliament or whatever body endowed with the responsivity to oversee the work of the Truth Commission. The report culminates out of the monitoring and peace building work done by the Commission recorded throughout the year. The report is based on the national situation with regard to the state transitional justice in general and on more specific matters such as abrupt massacres of citizens or extrajudicial civilian shootings. In Zimbabwe, the National Peace and Reconciliation Commissions is established by an Act of Parliament and is expected to submit a detailed report to Parliament once a year through the Minister of Justice (NPRC Act, 2018). The relationship between Truth Commissions and Parliament is clearly crucial if the former plays an effective role in implementing national peace and reconciliation obligations. Yet in reality, the relationship is a reciprocal, but complicated one. In Zimbabwe, Section 323 of the Constitution dictates that the Commission should present its annual report to Parliament describing fully its operations and activities not later than the end of March in the year following the year in which the report relates, but at the time of submission of this paper the Commission had not submitted its report. Of the twenty-five Truth Commissions established in Africa up to date, the reporting trend has been inconsistent. The Paris Principles stresses the role of the NHRI- but in particular- Truth Commissions to contribute to the reports which States are required to present and submit to United Nations bodies, committees and regional institutions pursuant to their obligations and where necessary, to express an opinion on the subject, with due respect for their independence (UN Resolution of 1994/ 48/134). Since the process of contributing to States' reports would, of necessity, involve some expression of opinion, this principle is presumably intended to refer to two separate roles that NHRIs might play: first, contributing to the state of national peace and reconciliation. Secondly, expressing an opinion directly to the compliance of the State to International Human Rights Standards. The NHRI is expected to refer to the expression of opinion or to the totality of its role in the reporting process (Human Rights Watch, 2008). Truth Commissions are not expected to always agree with the State and the purpose of expressing a separate opinion would be when this differs from the position of the State.

So, the intention is presumably that the overall role of Truth Commissions in reporting is to be conducted in a manner that does not compromise their independence by remaining objective and factual in their reporting. However, the NPRC Act (2018) which operationalize the Commission in Zimbabwe has some claw back clauses which prevents some recommendations to go straight to Parliament and eventually up to the United Nations, but rather the Minister of Justice may decide to remove some sections which he/she may feel that they might cause despondency or is 'a threat to national security.' This undoubtedly takes away the objectivity and factual nature of the report. It is recommended that Truth Commissions should be associated with the preparation of human rights reports and promptly submitted to government in order to intensify the dialogue between the communities affected and the State concerned (Dickson, 2003).

However, Truth Commissions' reporting is often negatively affected by that the leadership selection process is often partisan in nature and most of the Commission heads

are handpicked by political figureheads. In most instances, the State is the main perpetrator of human rights violations (Human Rights Watch, 2008) and also at the center of establishing Truth Commissions. Individuals within the Truth Commissions tend to promote political expediency at the expense of survivors' justice aimed at protecting the status quos. This is usually common in contexts in which the alleged perpetrators are still in power. Thus, most violations are swept under the carpet and victims are accused of perpetration of violations. The most effective NHRIs must generally have a broad and non-restrictive mandate and reach.

Legislative Recommendations for Compliance with International Law

A large proportion of NHRIs have in their mandate a requirement to make recommendations to the Executive or Legislature on international best practices and treaties that should be ratified. NHRIs also monitor legislative compliance and adherence to international human rights law. As indicated above, this function is an explicit requirement of the Paris Principles. Inevitably, Truth Commissions in countries with a low ratification record, such as Uganda, Burundi and Zimbabwe have this as a more central aspect of their work (ICTJR, 2017). States have a tendency of being reluctant to be party to international conventions and operationalize Truth Commissions, as seen in the eight year struggle in Uganda's Parliament to adopt the national transitional justice policy or in Zimbabwe which took six years to operationalise the NPRC. However, Truth Commissions have an important role in interacting with the State and encourage them to adhere to international human rights best practices. Even where States have a stronger ratification record, however, Truth Commissions might still have an important role to play, for example in the case of South Africa, "to promote and ensure the harmonisation of national legislation, regulations and practices with international transitional justice instruments to which the State is party and their effective implementation".

Most recently the African Union adopted the African Union Transitional Justice Policy (AUTJ). Therefore, another important function of Truth Commissions is the harmonisation of national legislation to ensure consistency with international and regional obligations, by proposing laws that will ensure implementation of effective transitional justice strategies and also reform existing provisions that are inconsistent with those obligations (Ghai, 2000). The former is generally easier to effect than the latter, which would require a thorough audit of existing legislation that may develop the capacity and mandate of Truth Commissions.

Challenges and opportunities for Truth Commissions in Africa

Despite the progress made in Africa in terms of the establishment and strengthening of Truth Commissions, examining the continent's peace, reconciliation and justice for victims record eighteen years after indicates that there is retrogression rather than progression (Désiré, 2010). The continent remains quite divided, perpetrators have obtained amnesty and are still in power and finally violence has recurred in most cases. Reality is in stark contrast with intent. In countries such as Burundi and Zimbabwe, Truth Commissions are still not as accessible as they should be. Commissioners are usually preoccupied with high-level activities and do not make time to meet the people and complainants, hence things have remained more or less the same. In most cases, Truth Commissions in Africa seem to deliberately conceal evidence or support the State in doing so. At the same time, Ministers responsible for reviewing and presenting Truth

Commission's reports to Parliament personally omit some information from these reports, implying that Truth Commissions are 'captured' by the Executive.

Most African countries naturally slide back into violent conflicts because Truth Commissions are still not adequately funded and not entirely independent to deal with the underlying causes of conflict. There is insufficient expertise in the Truth Commissions to resolve and transform conflict. A Truth Commission are not yet entirely composed of qualified and well trained, experienced and respected persons from diverse backgrounds that sufficiently reflect the different interests and experiences in society. In many of the Commissions established in Africa, most of the Commissioners have simply been appointed by the President without thorough public consultations and this often gives rise to a sentiment that they are there to serve the government's interests which diminishes the credibility of Truth Commissions.

Association with the government rather than survivors also affects how Truth Commissions engage survivors, what information they constitute in their reports and their general professionalism in 'dealing with the past.' African States are still entrenched by acute economic hardships, wars, and non-democratic practices and human rights abuses implicating the State and para-State actors. Truth Commissions still operate in fragile and non-transitional environments and face greater obstacles in their efforts to 'deal with the past', promote and protect human rights. The requisite political will for 'dealing with the past' in Africa at the moment remains elusive and difficult to attain in the current political context. There are no deliberate efforts by most governments to ensure justice and redress for victims of past and present gross human rights violations and to bring to account those responsible (perpetrators). Despite the coming into operation the 2013 Constitution in Zimbabwe, which established a number of transitional justice mechanisms, the government is still reluctant in ensuring that such mechanisms are implemented in light of the government's reluctance to urgently establish an Independent Complaints Mechanism to bring perpetrators in the security forces to account. In Zimbabwe, the year 2018 saw the NPRC being operationalised by an Act of Parliament on 5 January, 2018. However, the NPRC is still under-staffed, poorly resourced, lack capacity to carry-out its mandate and there is now a widespread perception that it is controlled by the 'invisible hand' of the Executive, just in any other country in which a Truth Commission has been established.

Key institutions of government critical to the processes of 'dealing with the past' such as the security and justice systems are yet to be reformed. Section 210 of the Zimbabwean Constitution, which provides for the establishment of the Independent Complaints Commission Mechanism to receive and investigate complaints against the security services, is yet to be operationalised. The gap enabled government institutions, especially in the case of the 1 August, 2018 shootings and state-led violence in the aftermath of the #14 January Zimbabwe shutdown protests, to continue to perpetrate human rights violations with impunity while victims have no access to remedies.

However, significant gains have been made and maintained in recent years. Progress towards respect for human rights and the rule of law in 'dealing with the past' have stayed on course in countries such as South Africa, Kenya and to some extent Zambia. We are yet to see what unfolds in Gambia, Zimbabwe, Burundi and Uganda among others in which either a new Truth Commission has been set-up or national transitional justice policies have been adopted. Within this context, an examination of the

performance of the African NHRI's should continue, whilst resources should continuously be allocated to these institutions.

It only seems difficult until it is done.

Conclusion

NHRIs, particularly Truth Commissions, are useful institutions and can make an immense contribution to 'dealing with the past' if the right conditions for their operating are created. These include financial support, independence to exercise their mandate without State interference, operational and human resources capacity and objectivity in delivering their mandate. However, at present, Truth Commissions in Africa suffer from not only structural problems and functional deficiencies, but they also lack adequate mechanisms for enforcement of their mandate.

Mere institutionalization of Truth Commissions is not enough, unless it helps transform conflict and effectively 'deal with the past'. NHRIs in the form of Truth Commissions should not be confused with the courts and other quasi-judicial institutions or other government bodies. These are governance entities that serve different, but complimentary purposes. The idea underlying the establishment of NHRIs is to ensure that they remain vigilant over those who hold and exercise power so that their conduct conforms to national and international human rights norms in dealing with the past and guaranteeing non-recurrence of gross human rights violations.

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THE AFRICAN WOMAN AND THE HEGEMONY OF TRADITION: A SOCIO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF BUCHI EMECHETA'S *SLAVE GIRL* AND *HEAD ABOVE WATER*



Ngozi-Kris Ogbodo and Marinus Samoh Yong

Abstract

The woman has suffered marginalization from the beginning of time if one considers the Biblical story of creation. While in Europe and America a lot of efforts have been made over the years to bridge the culturally imposed void that puts the woman on the back bench, the African woman's story still needs to be loudly told and critically analyzed with the intention of making it a topical issue in a world that needs to be constantly aware of this cultural injustice. The black woman, who occupies the geographic and cultural space south of the Sahara, has borne the brunt of culturally and historically imposed marginalization for as long as she has lived. For centuries she has been battered, trampled upon and relegated to the background in the scheme of things in virtually all domains of human endeavor. In this paper our aim is to analyze the nexus that so tenaciously hinges the black woman to the African tradition and thus expose the aspects of the African tradition responsible for the subjugation of the African woman. To effectively drive home our point we have chosen as our corpus two novels: Buchi Emecheta's *Slave Girl* and *Head above Water*. Since the African tradition is an important theme in our analysis, we shall depend on the cultural theory to achieve our goal in this paper.

Keywords: black woman, African tradition, culture, marginalization, colonization, slavery

Introduction

If one lends credence to the biblical account of creation recorded in Genesis chapter 2, verses 21 and 22 (*Holy Bible* 2013:3) that stresses the relegated position of the woman vis-à-vis her male counterpart within the society then one can imagine how long ago the woman started groaning under the heavy weight of male dominance. This is not to say that other myths of creation do not exist in which the woman is given a more privileged position so far as creation and her place in society are concerned. We shall, however not delve into what other religions posit in terms of the woman's status from creation because doing so would imply taking a trajectory that is way beyond the scope of this study. It would not be out of place though if one considers a mythological account of the creation of man and woman from an African perspective with particular reference to the Yoruba culture. This is especially relevant since we are talking of the subjugation of the African woman. According to Thomas Gale in an online publication "Gender and Religion: Gender and African Religious Traditions".

The Yoruba cosmological myth states that Oludumare (God) sent seventeen primordial divinities to earth at the beginning of time, Osun being the only female among them. The sixteen male divinities ignored Osun and excluded her from all decisions. In reaction to this, Osun gathered all women together and

formed the Iya Mi group, which disrupted the smooth running of the universe with their powers and the earth became ungovernable for the sixteen other primordial divinities. Oludumare advised them to make peace with Osun so that all might be well again. They did, and everything returned to normal.

In this account we can single out two points for analysis: inequality in gender representation and Osun's reaction. It is quite obvious that Oludumare exercised bias in favour of the male divinities when he set them forth. If one male is capable of showing how domineering he is vis-à-vis one female, one can only imagine what would happen if sixteen men are pitted against one woman. So in the Yoruba story of creation we also find male dominance.

Osun's reaction is quite intriguing because it seems to set the tone for feminism even from creation. She did not just succumb to the patriarchal injustice against her by the sixteen other divinities – she reacted by revolting to the extent that governance was interrupted until she was accorded her rights in the society. Osun's temerity is in tandem with the resolve of the West African woman prior to colonization as Nwando Achebe recounts in "Women and Authority in West African History":

Strikes and boycotts often meant that West African women would ignore their household or marital responsibilities. For instance, West African women could "boycott" or abstain from sexual intercourse with their husbands. J.S. Harris reports on a case when a community of Igbo women repeatedly asked their clansmen to clear the paths leading to the market. When they did not, all the women in the village refused to cook for their husbands until they did. The boycott worked because all the women of the village cooperated. Husbands could not ask their mothers or sisters for food.

Despite this effective coordinated result from the resolve of an aggrieved group of women as evidenced in the traditional African society, the African woman still suffers tremendously under the weight of traditionally prescribed tenets.

The relevance of our submission in this study is hinged on the fact that despite the myriad of efforts put in place to at least shore up the woman's dignity in the African cosmology there are still traditional practices that impede her emancipation. Our aim in this paper is therefore to analyze the nexus that so tenaciously hinges the black woman to the African tradition and thus expose the aspects responsible for the subjugation of the African woman. To effectively drive home our point we have chosen as our corpus two novels: Buchi Emecheta's *Slave Girl* and *Head above Water*.

Before delving into the analysis of our corpus we wish to throw some light on certain aspects of the African tradition that impede on the liberties of the African woman. These aspects include discrimination and violence, obnoxious rites associated to marriage, female genital mutilation, son preference, etc.

Harmful Traditional Practices, Discrimination and Violence

In 1945 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which "prohibits all forms of discrimination based on sex and ensures the right to life, liberty and security of persons; it recognizes equality before the law and equal protection against any discrimination in violation of the Declaration". (Fact Sheet No. 23, Harmful Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children).

Despite this declaration, discrimination against the woman persists. As far back as 1995, not less than 135 countries had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. This ratification definitely is targeted at traditional cultural practices, values and beliefs that impair the freedom of the woman. Most of these cultural practices have been entrenched in African communities for generations. According to Fact Sheet No. 23, some of these practices are:

Beneficial to all members while others are harmful to a specific group such as women. These harmful traditional practices include female genital mutilation (FGM); forced feeding of women; early marriage; the various taboos or practices which prevent women from controlling their own fertility; nutritional taboos and traditional birth practices; son preference and its implications for the status of the girl child; female infanticide; early pregnancy; and dowry price.

Wester (3), on her part, suggests that in Sub-Saharan Africa women face human rights abuses more than anywhere else in the world. She makes us understand the confusion in the resolution of some gender problems when she says that although the colonial powers left behind judicial systems that may be considered national in African nations, customary courts are allowed to exist. According to her, despite the fact that this arrangement is “designed to be culturally inclusive, these systems neglect gender as a category of analysis and often trap women’s human rights between formal law and traditional culture.

Oloruntoba-Ojo and Oloruntoba-Ojo (6) examine the position of the African woman from the standpoint of “imagery and categorizations that ironically reinforced the colonial tags of African intellectual inferiority”. They criticize Senghor for setting the tone for the glorification of the African woman with the ironical legacy of creating the impression that only her body counts. According to them “...the trouble is that the association of males and females with separate and fixed biological and psychological characteristics leads to hierarchical social power dynamics within society that is generally unfavourable to the genders, and is particularly oppressive to the female”. The earliest realization of this is at birth “when a nurse or midwife announces ‘it’s a girl’, this is not merely stating the sex but engaging a social performative that keys into existing social norms and established semiotics of gender differentiation” (Oloruntoba-Ojo and Oloruntoba-Ojo, 7). To justify this discrimination that begins at birth, Fonchingong (135) considers reactions of husbands after the birth of children in *Things Fall Apart* and *The Concubine* by Achebe and Elechi Amadi. In *Things Fall Apart*, Okonkwo slaughters a goat to celebrate the birth of a third son in a row by one of his three wives. The same is not the case in *The Concubine* in which Madume is unhappy because his wife cannot produce a male heir.

African writers continue to write on these issues because, despite international human rights laws, they persist. It is obvious that those who are supposed to implement these laws are complicit in these attitudes that demean the African woman morally, psychologically, physically and economically. Fact Sheet No. 23 says that these obnoxious traditional practices persist because “...neither the governments concerned nor the international community challenged the sinister implications of such practices...Harmful practices such as female genital mutilation were considered sensitive cultural issues falling within the spheres of women and the family”.

Besides the negative impact of harmful cultural practices on the woman as explained above, another burden the woman has to bear is domestic violence. While this is a universal phenomenon which is not limited against the women folk (Grovert, Domestic Violence against Women: A Literature Review) its preponderance in Africa is legendary. This explains why the topic keeps on recurring in literary texts that seek to expose this negative attitude that affects the African woman. Fulu and Warner (4) contend that “Violence against women and girls has historically been silenced, overlooked or condoned”. As if to justify why writers should continue to harp on this negative societal phenomenon and why critics should not cease bringing it to the front burner, they state that “violence against women and girls is now widely recognized as a fundamental violation of human rights, and a problem with considerable social and economic cost to individuals, communities and countries” (Fulu and Warner, 4). To better analyze these issues as presented in our corpus, we need to rely on the culture theory.

Cultural Theory

According to Encyclopedia.com, cultural theory is a term that has been applied to diverse attempts to conceptualize and understand the dynamics of culture. Some of its major concerns border on culture and nature, culture and society, high and low culture, cultural tradition and cultural diversity. Quite broad in scope, cultural theory can be viewed from different theoretical prisms such as structuralism, Marxism, feminism, etc. Some theorists who have shaped the theory include Raymond Williams in *The Long Revolution* (1961), E.P. Thompson in *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), Louis Althusser who related cultural theory to Marxism, Antonio Gramsci who charted new ways of conceptualizing the role of culture and cultural practices in class formations and Michel Foucault who shaped a more discursive understanding of cultural language and how power and representation work. The relation that exists between race, ethnicity and culture has also surfaced as a primary concern of cultural theory. Recently feminist arguments have greatly influenced cultural theory. This has elicited a lot of discussion about the “ways in which gender identities are formed within cultural languages and through cultural practices” (Encyclopedia.com)

Tyson (297) talking about cultural criticism states that “while we are constrained within the limits set for us by our culture, we may struggle against those limits or transform them.” This struggle to transform the negative aspects of the African tradition on the liberties of women is the driving force behind the literary creations of many authors including Buchi Emecheta. It is mainly due to the overlap of other relevant theories, as expressed above, that we have deemed it necessary to depend on the cultural theory for our analysis. The interplay between culture, society and cultural diversity that is at the root of discrimination against women can be better handled by exploiting the cultural theory. Obnoxious traditional practices deeply rooted in the history of the African culture have succeeded in relegating the woman to the background. An analysis of our corpus would expose how Emecheta contributes her literary voice to fight African traditional “values” that negatively affect the Black woman. It is now expedient that we consider the biography of this erudite author who has done so much in favour of her fellow women suffering under the heavy weight of male oppression firmly rooted in Africa’s history and tradition. The relevance of this section is not unconnected with the

autobiographical import in her works especially *Head above Waters*, one of the novels being analyzed in this study.

Buchi Emecheta

Buchi Emecheta was born to a poor Igbo family on the 21st July 1944 in Lagos Nigeria. That she grew up as a second class citizen seems to buttress the point that in most parts the world women are seen as such vis-a-vis their male counterparts. As was the norm in the country, though her parents preferred to educate her brother because he was male, she was reluctantly sent to primary school after which she won a scholarship to attend the prestigious Methodist Girls High School in Lagos. She lost both her parents to death at a very early stage of her life. She finished her secondary education at the age of sixteen and was immediately married to Sylvester Onwurah to whom she had been engaged since she was 11 without her consent. She started having and taking care of her children at the age of 17 and had finished child bearing at the age of 22. She started work at the American Embassy, a job she later left to join Sylvester who had left to London for further studies. Her marriage did not last due to abuse, violence and irreconcilable differences. As a result, she became a single African woman with five children to care for in a land so far from her own. For the sake of her children she was prepared to go the extra mile to make the marriage work. This resolution was only broken when her husband out of jealousy, tore and burnt the manuscript of her first novel "The Bride Price". She left him taking along all her children.

As her fame grew both in the United Kingdom and the world at large, she assumed the enviable position of a strident vocal representative of many hapless women, especially those of colour. Her literary engagement that dwelled on the plight of the woman earned her the status of a feminist, a label she was reluctant to be associated with. According to Bisi Fayemi Adeleye, in her tribute to Buchi titled "The First Class Citizen" she said that in those years of sixties and seventies, black women writers, activists and scholars were cautious about feminists who were propagating feminists' theories and analysis which were not really showing empathy to the experiences of women who were not white, middle class and well educated. Although they were leading black feminists like Angela Davis, Bell Hooks, Amina Mama, Audrey Lorde etc. who before then had started offering a profound analysis of the intersections of gender, race, class, age, ability, sexuality, mental status, historical experiences etc. These feminist critics thought that their white counterparts seemed submerged in their own narrow understanding of what universal liberation for women should be, the voices of whom, later crystalized into solid framework for Black/African Feminist theory and practice evidenced in the writings of most feminine activists and feminists (Adeleye 1).

Adeleye (1) goes further to say that black African women reject any ideology that refuses to take into consideration the African women's unique identities, her strong communal ties, her understanding of motherhood as a source of power and not oppression and a commitment to overcoming her historical disadvantages brought about by years of slavery and colonialism alongside the men in her communities. This explains why Emecheta, though having lived a hard life because of her gender, race and class, did not want to disavow her African roots in pursuit of a strange ideology that could take away whatever remained of her identity and dignity. She thus refused to identify with the name

“Feminist”. Though she conceded to the fact that she was a Feminist with a small ‘f’ her literary creations clearly show that she is a Feminist with a big ‘F’. She was a voice for the many ladies all over the world, women born into the hostile world during their existence.

It is now expedient that we present, in brief, the main threads that hold together Emecheta’s narratives in the works under review. The lasting impression both novels leave on the reader is their autobiographical tone that harps on the African traditional or cultural tenets that support the subjugation of the African woman. In order to really capture the depth of emotional, psychological and physical trauma meted on the main characters of these narratives, *Slave Girl* and *Head above Water*, we have decided to use as sub headings metaphorical representations of the titles of the works. While “the slavery of a slave girl” suggests pain and deprivation under the yoke of culturally or traditionally imposed discrimination against the girl child, “Surviving with head above water” carries with it a grain of hope. Despite the “slavery of the slave girl”, in her adulthood she must, on her own, conquer the tides of discrimination by swimming ashore to freedom with her “head above water”.

The Slavery of a *Slave Girl*

The story in this novel revolves around the life of a young Igbo girl in rural Nigeria. Born in the early 20th century to the family of Okwuekwu and Umeadi, she is the first female infant to survive in her family after series of still births and infant deaths. Her parents rejoice greatly. Emecheta notes that such joy over the birth of a female child is rare: “Such children were not normally particularly praised creatures, but her father had lost so many that they now assumed a quality of preciousness” (12). With the help of the charms her father risked his life to get from Idu in Benin Kingdom; precisely from the Oba of Benin, she lives. Unfortunately, after losing her parents to influenza her value fades to the extent that, in spite of the tattoo on her face to prevent her being sold into slavery, Okolie her elder brother sells her for almost eight pounds into domestic slavery to a rich and influential distant relative, Ma Palagada. He uses the money to prepare for his coming of age dance. She feels betrayed, but finds solace and comfort in the hand of friendship extended to her by the other female slaves, an act which does not stop her from learning painful lessons of what it means for one to lose one’s freedom and be owned by another. Ojebeta does not part with her charms though she does not wear them as she used to when she was living with her parents or in her village. She hides her charms and goes to commune with them whenever she feels lonely. From the time she realizes the loss of her freedom, she resolves to buy it back and to her village; a dream she realizes after the death of Ma Palagada.

Surviving with *Head above Water*

Head above Water, an autobiography of Buchi Emecheta begins with reminiscences of her story teller mother Ogbueyin who inspired her to tell stories but in a more refined way: writing. She emphasizes on the relationship between a story teller and a writer. She talks about herself, her experiences as a female child and the preference of the male child over a female one. She says in the novel, “...It was decided that I would not need much education, so my younger brother started school before I did... when my father died and there was no money for such luxuries as sending already me to school, when there was a boy to educate” (45). She talks about attending the prestigious

Methodist Girls College, Lagos. She gets married and has her first child at the age of 17 and another at nineteen. Thereafter she moves to London with the two babies to join her husband. She discovers that life there is different from what she expected. As the Igbo put it, “*Uto akilu abughi ihe ona ada na nti*” (the sound of the bitter kola nut differs from its taste). She endures abusive marriage which ends in divorce. She and her five children are then abandoned her husband who even denies their paternity because she refuses to give them up for adoption. She is stuck with them with neither a real job nor a university degree. For their sake, she decides to weather the stormy tides and swim ashore with her head above water. She pulls herself from the ditch for their sake (39). She tells her story of survival, of perseverance, of persistence, of how she single-handedly raised her 5 children, while studying to get a degree in sociology, pursue her dream of becoming a writer and how her relationship with Chidi, a long standing male friend gave her the support she needed.

African Tradition and the Black Woman: an Analysis of the corpus

In this section of our work we analyze how Emecheta, in the two novels chosen for this study, lays bear with seething clarity the obnoxious complicity between tradition and male dominance to the disadvantage of the hapless female folk. She stresses the psychological and physical effects of arranged marriages, violence and lack of value for the girl child. In *Slave Girl* her critical search light is beamed on the following stages of development of the African woman: infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. She equally makes it clear that is an accomplice in her own predicament vis-à-vis the hegemony of tradition and its masculine advocate. The woman's dependency and ingrained habit of accepting a subordinate status in the society encourages male dominance and the application of African traditional norms on her. No wonder Matiangi posits that Emecheta tries to present her central vision of female bondage, her underlying metaphor of African womanhood as a condition of victimization and servitude (n.p.). Ganga (2) captures the same sentiment when he says that “Emecheta in her fictions gives expressions to the aspirations and problems of the woman of colour”. A consideration of the following subheadings would definitely do justice to the analysis: imposition of male dominance, influence of culture and tradition, religion and quest for freedom.

Imposition of male supremacy

The imposition of male supremacy is a tenet in the traditional African society to which the woman is tied. The social status of the male child differs from that of the female and women are taught from childhood to accept the prohibitions placed on them by the society. Emecheta, in both novels, portrays the woman as a human being who is deprived of actualizing and believing in herself. Her identity is always appended to the male around her, be it brother, father or husband. Emecheta says in *Slave Girl* “All her life, a woman always belonged to some male. At birth you were owned by your people and when you were sold, you belonged to a new master, when you grew up, your new master who had paid something for you would control you” (113). One further notes this cultural disregard of the woman during her marriage. She is not expected to make a choice. Her suitor or husband is chosen for her by the male folk in her family. For instance, in the case of Ojebata her in-law wanted her to marry his nephew irrespective of her feelings towards him. For Emecheta, a husband was already chosen for her at the age

of eleven. The woman is expected to get married without questions because she is expected to fetch wealth to the family from the bride price.

In *Slave Girl* there is virtually no much difference between enslaving and marriage. This act of being owned simply means being enslaved. Emecheta clearly shows this enslavement in *Slave Girl*. When the wife of the King of Idu in Benin Kingdom died, her slave was pushed into the grave to be buried with her. The slavery of the woman is also emphasized in Emecheta's *Joys of Motherhood*, through the protagonist Nnuego representing the Igbo woman. She is portrayed as a slave to everyone around her: slave to tradition, to her husband and her children. A life Emecheta lived as she tells her story in *Head above Waters*.

Influence of Culture and Tradition

In both novels one notes the influence of culture and tradition in the life of the woman. Conditions that enslave the African woman are clearly presented in both works. They deprive the woman of her identity and freedom as an individual. In *Slave Girl* Ogbanje Ojebeta, was sold into slavery by her brother Okolie, who thought he was "marrying" the little girl of seven away to their distant relation, Ma Palagada. Here the author shows the tradition and the society at large as the culprit and as being responsible for the plight of the woman and for the ordeals she is subjected to. In *Head above Water*, we see that one of the problems Buchi has with her husband is the fact that she is outspoken. In the traditional African culture women are not supposed to have their say. All required of them is total submission to the whims and caprices of the men folk. Men therefore place low premium on the woman (Okengo Matiangi, 38) and inflict painful and degrading actions on her. For instance, in *Head above Waters*, Sylvester uses abusive words and beats Buchi; inflicting physical, psychological and emotional pain on her. It is certain that Sylvester burns her first manuscript in order to drown her voice which definitely was shouting in defense of the African woman. His action that smacks of censorship in its darkest form is certainly borne out of his African traditional upbringing that taught him that the woman must be silent.

Also in *Head above Waters*, Emecheta writes about her experience at the loss of her father. Her mother becomes homeless as soon as her father died. The tradition makes her get inherited by her husband's brother with no considering her feelings or her opinion. She was passed down like one would an object. This gross disregard of the African woman is expressed thus by Matiangi "Apart from refusing to accord the woman her rightful and natural place as a mother, extreme patriarchy turns a blind eye to the fact that the woman is a worthy party in any family" (n.p.). Besides, this tradition makes demands that render the woman's humanity 'void'. One notes that it is not only the inherited woman whose feelings are not considered, the other wives are treated in like manner. The Igbo tradition and cultural practice deprives the woman from any form of inheritance. This is seen in the Palagada family. Ma Palagada makes the wealth but the glory and respect are not attributed to Ma Palagada. Even when Ma Palagada dies her property is shared amongst the males in her life. The daughters are not considered. Another factor that encourages women subjugation as a result of cultural or traditional imposition is the emphasis placed on male children. A woman is not considered a worthy mother if she does not give birth to sons. Female children are considered to be of less value than the male children, until they reach the age of marriage when she is expected to

bring wealth to the family from her bride price. So a woman's worth is measured by the number of sons she bears to her husband. So because of this stigma the tradition has put on the woman, as if she determines the sex of the baby she brings bears, any woman who does not give birth to male children, feels unworthy, less of a woman and less privileged.

Marriage is another willing tool in the hands of tradition. When Buchi quit her marriage in *Head above Water*, virtually everybody wanted her to go back to Sylvester who reminded her confidently that his mother had paid five times more than what is normally paid as bride price "on her head" thus making her fully his. He put it thus: "My mother has paid your bride price. Your people asked and accepted more than five times the normal price and I think you should be pleased. Not many families are willing to pay that much on a woman. Not after the recent war at home, so you should be very pleased" (88). It was for this reason that Sylvester had the audacity to consider Buchi as an expensive item he paid for. This buttresses the fact that through tradition the woman is enslaved. In another occasion when his children wanted him to leave their mother's car, he retorts: "It's my car; your mum is my wife...so she is mine and everything she owns is mine". (P. 91).

Motherhood with all its glory is also used negatively by tradition to torment the African woman. In both novels, the society bestows on her other tasks other than giving birth to children. She is expected to bring up the children in such a way that they understand the culture and tradition of the land, even if such knowledge is against her. No wonder Emecheta, in *Head above Water*, sacrificed her life for the comfort of her children. She laboured so hard and spent all her life to make her children comfortable. She likened herself to Nnuego in *Joys of Motherhood* who labours so hard, sacrifices so much, devotes her life for her children. Nnuego hawks and does all sorts of odd jobs to secure a fortune to educate and feed her children. In *Head above Water*, irrespective of what the society says about motherhood, Emecheta has a different view. If the society sees it as glorious and prestigious, Emecheta portrays it as enslaving, conforming and demeaning. According to Matangi "She does not conflate motherhood with positive features or institutions like negritude enthusiasts who conflate motherhood with 'Africanness'. Emecheta's conception of motherhood is thus a departure from not only negritudist forms of thought but also from the family common African notion of motherhood". (39)

Religion

In our study of these two books we see the role played by religion (Christianity) in the enslavement of the African woman. One sees the female character longing to free herself from slavery getting more enslaved in the church. Talking about her mother in *Head above Water* she says "... My mother, that slave girl who had the courage to free herself and return to her people in Ibuza, and still stooped and allowed the culture of her people re-enslave her, and then permitted Christianity to tighten the knot of enslavement" (3). Amanda, her black co-worker in the *Head Above Water* she says that Amanda getting herself attacked by the black boys in 'The Seventies' might have been because "she held the old ideas of the missionaries who came to Africa in the early days, hoping to bring Christianity to the savages, when in fact the black natives were being prepared to meet the doom either at the hands of the slaver or the colonial officers" (137).

Quest for Freedom

Emecheta does not expect the woman to just sit down and accept what the society metes out to her. She encourages her female characters to stand up to the society in matters concerning them. This is seen in both novels. In the *Slave Girl*, Ojebeta, though sold by her brother into slavery, takes the bull by the horn when, at the death of Ma Palagada, decides to act. This is in spite of the fact that Elizabeth, Ma Palaga's daughter wanted to take her along and continue the slavery since Clifford showed no interest in the little girl. Instead of waiting for Clifford to come and save her, she decides to go back to Ibuza. In Ibuza when her in-law, Eze refuses her getting married to Jacob. She hears during a quarrel with her "big mother" later that Eze wanted his poor cousin to marry Ojebeta and if she refused, he would cut her hair or rape her. She tells Jacob with whom she leaves for Lagos despite her family's refusal of the marriage between them. "... It was with great surprise that they were told that Ojebeta had gone to Lagos and for good, and that she had gone with Jacob, who had sent his people to inform them not to worry" (175). Also in *Head above Water* one observes that even Emecheta herself refused to sink though tradition and society wanted her to. After separating from her husband, she knew that he was not what and who she could live with. She didn't mince words in telling him to leave her alone and move permanently out of her life. She said "I would rather have a marriage in which we would be companions and friends, a marriage in which each member would perform his or her own role, and in which neither role, least of all the kitchen one was looked down upon" (97). She took and abode by the decision in matters that concerned her.

Conclusion

One observes in this work that the African woman's major problem is that the tradition tries to strip her of her self-confidence thereby making her over dependent on the man. Depending on the man to take decisions concerning her, to direct and control her affairs and dictate to her how she lives her day to day life. We see in the major characters in our novels of interest that Emecheta encourages every effort or development that can enable the African women to be herself and live her life; and if it involves rebelling against the culture and tradition that inflict pains on her and prohibits her in living her life by herself and decide her fate, so be it. Emecheta's sensitivity to the condition of the African woman and the demands that tradition, culture, religion and society as a whole place on her is very evident in the two novels analyzed in this study. She encourages the woman to break the yoke that the society has placed on her neck by self-development, self-confidence, ambition, hard work, wisdom and focus. She should prove to the society that she is not as vulnerable, helpless and hopeless as tradition, with the complicity of its male custodians, has erroneously painted.

This study has made us to understand why Emecheta writes her own Feminist with a small 'f'. Though she shares the views of western feminists that the man is a major contributor to the woman's woes, she does not advocate for lesbianism or separation; but like most African feminists, she thinks that both sexes should be re-educated and the woman should make her voice heard. She advocates for co-existence of both sexes without attaching more importance to any sex. She advises the woman to think about herself first of all. Nothing is worth her sacrificing herself for, not the man nor the children.

These statements tally perfectly with the tenets of feminism as a literary theory, but as mentioned earlier, our preference for the more broad-based cultural theory, which absorbs feminism, structuralism and others, is hinged on the depth to which the traditional roots of discrimination of the African woman has gone. Even world bodies find it difficult to uproot the fibrous and tap roots of official, customary and legal complicity against the black woman. It is our hope that many others like Emecheta should continue to write against this societal malaise that started during creation according to the Yoruba myth. Like Osun, all women should rise and claim their right to freedom.

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MORPHO-SYNTAX OF NOMINAL IN PROVERBS IN CHINUA ACHEBE'S *NO LONGER AT EASE AND ARROW OF GOD*



Clifford Irikefe Gbeyonron and Dominic Kule Manzo

Abstract

Chinua Achebe is an acclaimed user of proverbs. These proverbs have nominal groups. As a result, this paper presents an analysis of the use of nominal groups in selected proverbs in his second and third novels. In order to achieve this, five proverbs in each of the novels were purposively selected and analysed. Furthermore, Fillmore's Case Grammar and Halliday's position on the components of nominal group were used to analyse the nominal groups in the proverbs. While some of the nominal groups are just head, some are structurally made up of a head with a pre-modifier or post-modifier, or head with a pre-modifier and post-modifier. It is concluded that the use of nominal groups in the proverbs make them to depict characters, ideas and settings vividly. Thus, budding artists should emulate Achebe.

Introduction

Novel is one of the sub-genres of literature. It is categorized under prose. As a result, Price (1973) states that: "The purpose of a novel is to reveal life under a certain aspect, to shape it so as to make sense of a roughly formidable kind – the formulation of its theme (268)." In essence every society has its literature and all languages that are codified attempt depicting their societies aesthetically via the written form of literature and not restrictively oral literature. In the case of African literature, Nnolim (1983) underscores that: "As a literature of a people it cannot be fully understood by the simple separation of form and content, for literature is part of a social situation and must be approached primarily as a mode of collective belief and action (35)." It should be noted that the form is defined by language. This reveals the relationship between language and literature. In consonance, Steiner (1973) posits that: "The health of a language is essential to the preservation of a living society. It is in literature that the language is most truly challenged and guarded (177)." This means that despite the fact that literature depends on language for it to reflect or refract the virtues and vices manifested by human and non-human characters in spatio-temporal settings; literature is a repository and preserver of language. The language of literature is unique. It is in most cases different from other forms of language usage. In view of this, when it comes to linguistic stylistics, Barthes (1973) counsels the stylist to use poetics which is "... a form of analysis which provides an answer to the question: 'what makes a verbal communication a work of art?' (191)" This can be regarded as 'new stylistics' which Leech and Short (2007) describe as a field that "...has applied techniques and concepts of modern linguistics to the study of literature (1)." This type of study reveals the linguistic and, by extension, the aesthetic values of works of art.

The late Professor Chinua Achebe is one of the greatest African writers that Nigeria has ever produced. Ohaeto (2000) affirms this when he quoted the Sunday Times of November 16th, 1990 thus: "... great artists are ageless because great works of art are timeless. Achebe therefore, is not just Eagle on Iroko; he is Eagle above seasons (280)."

He was born in Ogidi, in present day Anambra State of South-eastern Nigeria on 16th November, 1930. He worked in the broadcast media and the academia. As a novelist, poet, essayist, literary critic, autobiographer etc., Achebe received various honours and awards. He was awarded a fellowship of the Modern Languages Association of America, plethora of doctorate degrees by Nigerian and foreign universities; he is the second recipient of the Scottish Arts Council's Neil Gunn Fellowship after the Nobel Laureate, Heinrich Boll. He also won the Commonwealth prize for poetry in 1972. He is amongst the first winners of the Nigerian National Merit Award (1979) and the first Langston Hughes Award for Black Achievement in 1991. A year before (that is 1990); he had a serious car accident which forced him to move to the United States so as to receive medical care. He stayed in the United States where he died in the year 2013 and was buried in Nigeria.

Africans use proverbs in their conversations, according to Achebe (1958): "Among the Ibo the art of conversation is regarded very highly and proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten". (4) Despite the fact that in the Igbo society a speaker who could use language effectively and had a good command of idioms and proverbs earn some respect from his fellows and was often recognized as a leader in the community; not all Igbo speaker have the oratory skill of using proverb. It is true that Achebe uses proverbs in his works. He uses them as a narrator and also uses them in his characters. But then, not all characters use proverbs. For this reason, Banjo (1996) underscores that: "The writing of realistic novels calls for linguistic verisimilitude, which in turn calls for linguistic differentiation of the characters. Achebe's genius lies, in part, in his ability to differentiate his characters linguistically ... (129)." Overall, proverbs are syntactic structures. Nnolim (1983) agrees that: "A proverb, of course, is a sentence or phrase which briefly and strikingly expresses some recognized truth or shrewd observation about practical life and which has been preserved by oral tradition (36)." As such proverbs are evidently repositories of grammatical structures. Thus, in his analysis of the use of language in Achebe's *A Man of the People*, Bamigboye (2015) states that Achebe "... made use of carefully selected syntactic patterns to enliven his audience and engage them throughout the work (103)." These syntactic patterns are replicated in the proverbs that appear in all his novels.

Despite the fact that Achebe is of Igbo ethno-linguistic background, he uses the English language in his works. He uses *Igbonized* English. As such, Izevbaye (2012) emphasizes that: "Although English has occupied some of the linguistic space of Igbo, thereby perhaps inhibiting the development of the language... there is a sense in which it is Igbo that has colonized English through the creative agency of Achebe (81)." This agrees with the position of Palmer (1979) which provides that: "Without seriously distorting the nature of the English, Achebe deliberately introduces the rhythms, speech patterns and other nuances of Ibo (76)." Similarly, Ayoola (2012) states that: "Achebe's creative genius is best savoured through his skilful transfer of Igbo lyricism and verbal repertoire into English (203)." This technique is also called transference.

Achebe's style of writing is based on the use of proverbs, sayings, riddles, songs and idioms derived from the Igbo traditions and customs. Young (1973) concurs and states that: "One can also be sure about the deliberateness of the use of proverbs by writers such as Achebe... (37)." In consonance, Fashina (2009) reports that: "Glimpses of

values of African culture and philosophy are resident in Achebe's fascinating proverbs, idioms and linguistic expressions (261)." On the source of the proverbs in the works of Achebe, Achebe (2012) himself elucidates that: "I borrowed proverbs from our culture and history, colloquialisms and African expressive language from ancient griots, the worldviews, perspectives, and customs from my Igbo tradition and cosmology... (55)." These proverbs are transmitted in English in Achebe's works of art. This is given the fact that he originally writes his works in English. However, this is not without some problems to the non-native Igbo and non-native African reader of Achebe's novels. In view of this, Gangopadhyay (2012) provides that: "... these proverbs are there to create a world outside of English language, to create another linguistic universe unknown to native English speakers (152)." There is a relationship between language and literature. This makes literary materials open for analysis morphosyntactically or stylistically. It should be noted that the language of a literary piece of writing represents the medium of its message. In view of this, Leech and Short (2007) counsel emerging 'new stylists' to discern that: "There is a cyclic motion whereby linguistic observation stimulates or modifies literary insight, and whereby literary insight in its turn stimulates further linguistic observation (12)." Thus, stylistic analysis or the morphological analysis of a literary text makes one not to just respond to a literary material by appreciating its aesthetic, ludic or didactic values but also makes one establish the internal structure, strength and weakness of the language used in the text.

Literature presents human and non-human characters in spatio-temporal settings engaged in some activities which can be depicted via the word class *noun*. These substances and ideas have attributes and they can be presented in sentences to perform some syntactic functions. This can be achieved by the means of using the nominal group. Cassirer (1965) had earlier raised consciousness on the place of nominal in language where he states: "The science and philosophy of language have long concerned themselves with the controversy as to whether the original words of language were of *verbal* or *nominal* nature, whether they designate things or activities (266)." Matthews (2007) defines nominal as any grammatical structure "having a syntactic function like that of a noun or noun phrase (264)." Wright and Hope (2005) report that: "Noun phrases consist of one **head noun**, which must always be present, and a number of further elements, all of which are optional. Noun phrases can therefore consist of only one, or very many, words (2)." This means that a noun phrase and by extension a nominal group can be used with or without pre-head or/and post-head modifiers. It should be noted that where only one word is present, that word would be either a noun or a pronoun. The pre-head modifier could be preceded by a determiner and/or enumerator. For example in the nominal group: *The first black car in the city*, *the first* is determiner + enumerator; *black* is pre-head modifier, *car* is the head; and *in the city* is the post-head modifier.

Halliday (2004) emphasizes that the basic experiential structure of the English nominal group is made up of the obligatory *thing* and some other optional elements such viz. *deictic*, *numerative*, *epithet*, *classifier* and *qualifier*. It would be pertinent to reiterate that not all nominal groups have all the slots filled. Thus, the slot that is obligatory is the head (thing). This slot is in principle filled by a pronoun, a proper name or a common noun. In some exceptional cases as in an elliptical nominal group, the head may be a determiner or a deictic. It is apposite to underscore that when a pronoun or proper name

appears as the head, it rarely needs any further specification. As such, they do appear without pre-head or post-head modification. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002) deictic is "... a term for a word or phrase which directly relates an utterance to a time, place, or person(s) (147)." Thus, elements that are deictic indicate whether or not some specific head is intended; and if so, which one. This could be specific or non-specific. Specific deictics are expressed by the means of demonstratives or possessives as in *that school* and *our leader* respectively. Indefinite markers are used to express non-specific deictic. As in *some hour ago* and *no vendor came* etc.

To Trauth and Kazzazi (2006) numerative (also called numeral) is a category of words that mainly consists "... of adjectives (*six months...*) as well as substantives (*a dozen eggs*), indefinite pronouns (*all...*), and adverbials... Semantically they form a uniform group in as far as they designate numbers, quantities, and any other countable divisions (820)." It should be noted that numerative could specify order as in first, fourth etc. According to Crystal (2008), an epithet is "... a word or phrase which characterizes a noun and is regularly associated with it (171)." An epithet attempts to answer two main questions viz.: What do you think of the Head? And what is the Head like? (Thompson, 2000) Typical examples are *arrogant soldier*, *purple hibiscus* etc. Classifiers are sometime equated with numerative.

However, a post-head modifier is a structure that is typically an embedded phrase or clause, attached to the nominal just after the head. It is also called *qualifier* because of the function it performs in the nominal group. Conscious of the fact that proverb has grammatical attributes and realizing that some writers use proverbs that are about people, non-human beings, places etc. in their prose works, this study was conceived to establish whether Achebe uses the nominal group in the proverbs presented in his second and third novels with the intention of analyzing their morpho-syntactic internal structures and functions.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The primary objective of this study is to analyze the nominal group used in some proverbs by Achebe in his second and third novels viz.: *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God*. In order to achieve this, five (5) proverbs were purposively selected from each of the two novels. Each of the ten (10) proverbs was subjected to morpho-syntactic analysis. In each case, the proverb is presented; the nominal group (s) is/are marked and then analyzed based on the identification of head. Furthermore, the pre-head modifier(s) and/or post-head modifier(s) are highlighted and the function the nominal group performed is stated in respect of the whole structure that made up the proverb.

This work depends on the position of Leech and Short (2007) which postulates that techniques and concepts of modern linguistics can be applied to study literary texts. In consequence, Halliday's (2014) deictic (D), epithet (E), numerative (N) and qualifier (Q) etc. were used in marking the pre-head (prH) and post-head (psH) modifiers. In addition, Fillmore's (1977) theory of case grammar was used to assign semantic roles to the head (H) and other nominal groups as they appeared in the sentences that made up the whole proverb in each case.

Analysis

No Longer at Ease

1. ... if you want to eat a toad you should look for a fat and juicy one. (p.156)

The Nominal groups are:

- (a) *You* = H (you)
- (b) *A toad* = prH (a); H (toad)
- (c) *You* = H (you)
- (d) *A fat and juicy one* = prH (a fat and juicy); H (one)

The first NG is *you*. It is a pronoun and the H. It does not have a prH or psH. It is the agent of the argument *eat*.

The second NG is *a toad*. It is made up of a prH (a) and a H (toad). It is the patient case of the argument *eat*.

The third NG is *you*. It is a pronoun and the H. It does not have a prH or psH. It is the agent of the argument *look*.

The fourth NG is *a fat and juicy one*. It is made up of a prH, *a fat and juicy*, and a H, *one*. The H (one) is a non-specific D. The prH is made up of a D (a), E² (fat + juicy). The fourth NG is the anaphoric referent of the antecedent *a toad*.

2. He that fights for a never-do-well has nothing to show for it except a head covered in earth and grime. (p.156)

The nominal groups are:

- (a) *He that fights for a never-do-well* = H (he); psH (that fights for a never-do-well)
- (b) *Nothing to show for it* = H (nothing); psH (to show for it)
- (c) *A head covered in earth and grime* = prH (a); H (head); psH (covered in earth and grime)

a. The first NG is *he that fights for a never-do-well*. It is made up of a H which is the pronoun *he*. The psH in this NG is *that fights for a never-do-well*. The psH provides more information on the H. The psH also has a relative pronoun; *that*, a D (a) which is the prH of the compound structure *never-do-well*. While *he* is the agent of the argument *fight*, *never-do-well* is the benefactive of the argument *fight*.

b. The second NG is *nothing to show for it*. It is made up of a H which is *nothing*. *Nothing* is a non-specific Dc. The H also has psH which *to show for it*. *It* which is a pronoun refers to the idea of *fighting for a never-do-well*.

c. The third NG is *a head covered in earth and grime*. It has a H which is *head*. It also has a prH element, *a*, which is a D and a psH *covered in earth and grime*.

3. A person who has not secured a place on the floor should not begin to look for a mat. (p.54).

The nominal groups are:

- (a) *A person who has not secured a place on the floor* = prH (a); H (person); psH (who has not secured a place on the floor)
- (b) *A mat* = prH (a); H (mat)

a. The first NG is *a person who has not secured a place on the floor*. It is made up of a prH, *a*, which is a D and a H, *person*. The H is the agent of the argument *secured*. The psH is *who has not secured a place on the floor*. It attempts to provide additional information of the H thus it is Q. However, the psH has two NPs. They are *a place* and *the floor*. The structure of each of them is prH (a) + H (place) and prH (the) + H (floor). They are locatives.

b. The second NG is *a mat*. It is made up of a prH, *a*, which is a D and a H, *mat*. The NG is the objective case of the argument *look*.

4. Shall we kill a snake and carry it in our hand when we have a bag for putting long things in. (p.72).

The nominal groups are:

- (a) *We* = H (we)
 - (b) *A snake* = prH (a); H (snake)
 - (c) *It* = H (it)
 - (d) *Our hand* = prH (our); H (hand)
 - (e) *We* = H (we)
 - (f) *A bag for putting long things* = prH (a); H (bag); psH (for putting long things in)
- a. The first NG is *we*. It is a pronoun used without a prH or a psH. It is the agent of the argument *kill*.
- b. The second NG is *a snake*. It is made up of a prH (a) and a H (snake). It is the patient case of the argument *kill*.
- c. The third NG is *it*. It is a pronoun used without a prH or a psH. It is the patient case of the argument *carry* and by extension the anaphoric referent of the antecedent *a snake*.
- d. The fourth NG is *our hand*. It is made up of a prH (our) which is a possessive Dc and a H (hand). It is the instrumental case of the argument *carry*.
- e. The fifth NG is *we*. It is a pronoun used without a prH or a psH. It is the agent of the argument *have*.
- f. The sixth NG is *a bag for putting long things*. It is made up of a prH, *a*, which is a D and a H, *bag*. The H has a psH which is *for putting long things*. The psH has an NP, *long things* which has the structure E (long) + H (things).

5. ... a man should not, out of pride and etiquette, swallow his phlegm. (p.141)

The nominal groups are:

- (a) *A man* = prH (a); H (man)
 - (b) *His phlegm* = prH (his); H (phlegm)
- Note that *pride* and *etiquette* are nouns but deliberately not analyzed because they were used parenthetically.
- a. The first NG is *a man*. It is made up of a prH, *a*, which is a D and a H *man*. It is the agent of the argument *swallow*.
- b. The second NG is *his phlegm*. It is made up of a prH, *his*, which is a possessive Dc and a H, *phlegm*. It is the objective case of the argument *swallow*.

Arrow of God

1. If the lizard of the homestead should neglect to do the thing for which its kind is known, it will be mistaken for the lizard of the farmland. (p.17)

The nominal groups are:

- (a) *The lizard of the homestead* = prH (the); H (lizard); psH (of the homestead)
 - (b) *The things* = prH (the); H (things)
 - (c) *Its kind* = prH (its); H (kind)
 - (d) *It* = H (it)
 - (e) *The lizard of the farmland* = prH (the); H (lizard); psH (of the farmland)
- a. The first NG is *the lizard of the homestead*. It is made up of a prH, *a*, which is a D, and a H, *lizard*. The H has a psH which is *of the homestead*. The psH which is a Q has an NP, *the homestead*, which is made up of the structure prH (the) + H

(homestead). It attempts to describe the type of lizard in question. It is the agent of the argument *should neglect*.

b. The second NG is *the things*. It is made up of a prH (the) and a H (things).

c. The third NG is *its kind*. It is made up of prH, *its*, which a possessive Dc, and a H, *kind*. It is a possessive anaphoric referent of the antecedent *the lizard of the homestead*.

d. The fourth NG is *it*. It is a pronoun used without a prH or a psH. It refers to *the lizard of the homestead*.

e. The fifth NG is *the lizard of the farmland*. It is made up of a prH, *a*, which is a D and, a H, *lizard*. The H has a psH which *of the homestead*. The psH which is a Q has an NP, *the homestead*, which is made up of the structure prH (the) + H (farmland). It attempts to describe the type of lizard in question.

2. ... a toad does not run in the day unless something is after it. (p.21).

The nominal groups are:

(a) *A toad* = prH (a); H (toad)

(b) *The day* = prH (the); H (day)

(c) *Something* = H (something)

(d) *It* = H (it)

a. The first NG is *a toad*. It is made up of a prH, *a*, which is a D, and a H *toad*. It is the agent of the argument *run*.

b. The second NG is *the day*. It is made up of a prH, *the*, which is a D, and a H *day*. It is the locative of the argument *run*.

c. The third NG is *something*. It is a non-specific Dc element. It was used without a prH or a psH.

d. The fourth NG is *it*. It is a pronoun used without a prH or a psH. It is an anaphoric referent of the antecedent *a toad*.

3. The fly that has no one to advise it follows the corpse into the grave. (p.27)

The nominal groups are:

(a) *The fly that has no one to advise it* = prH (the); H (fly); psH (that has no one to advise it)

(b) *The corpse* = prH (the); H (corpse)

(c) *The grave* = prH (the); H (grave)

a. The first NG is *the fly that has no one to advise it*. It is made up of a prH, *the*, which is a D, and a H, *fly*. The H is the objective case of the argument *advise*. The psH is *that has no one to advise it*. It attempts to provide additional information of the H thus it is Q. However, the psH has two NPs. They are *no one* and *it*. *No one* is a non-specific Dc while *it* is a pronoun which was used without a prH or psH. *It* is the anaphoric referent of the antecedent *the fly*. The first NG is the agent of the argument *follows*.

b. The second NG is *the corpse*. It is made up of a prH (the) which is a D, and a H (corpse).

c. The third NG is *the grave*. It is made up of a prH (the) which is a D, and a H (grave).

4. Unless the wind blows we do not see the fowl's rump. (p.61)

The nominal groups are:

(a) *The wind* = prH (the); H (wind)

(b) *We* = H (we)

- (c) *The fowl's rump* = prH (the fowl's); H (rump)
 - a. The first NG is *the wind*. It is made up of a prH (the) which is a D, and a H (wind). It is the objective case of the argument *blows*.
 - b. The second NG is *we*. It is a pronoun used without a prH or a psH. It is the agent of the argument *see*.
 - c. The third NG is *the fowl's rump*. It is made up of D (the) and a possessive noun (fowl's) in the prH slot. The H is *rump*.

5. An old woman is never old when it comes to the dance she knows. (p.69)

The nominal groups are:

- (a) *An old woman* = prH (an old); H (woman)
- (b) *It* = H (it)
- (c) *The dance she knows* = prH (the); H (dance); psH (she knows)
 - a. The first NG is *an old woman*. It is made up of a prH which has a D (an) and an E (old) in addition to a H, *woman*. It is the agent of the argument *comes*.
 - b. The second NG is *it*. It is a pronoun used without a prH or a psH. It is the cataphoric referent of *the dance she knows*.
 - c. The third NG is *the dance she knows*. It is made up of prH (the), a H (dance) and a psH (she knows). The psH has a pronoun (she). It thus a H used without a prH or a psH. It is the agent of the argument *knows*.

Conclusion

This work attempts to apply Fillmore's and Halliday's theories to analyze the nominal group of some proverbs used in Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* and *Arrow of God*. Five proverbs were analyzed in respect of each of the novels. The five proverbs in each case were purposively selected. The elements that made up the nominal group of each of the proverbs were revealed. The nominal groups were in the forms of having just a head, a head and pre-modifier, a head with post-modifier or a head with its pre and post-modifiers. Attempts were made to present the case each of the nominal groups indicates. It was found that agentive, benefactive, objective, instrumental and locative cases were used in the cause of presenting the nominal groups of the proverbs in the novel. It is concluded that the use of nominal groups in the proverbs make them to depict characters, ideas and settings vividly. Thus, budding artists should emulate Achebe. In addition, it is suggested that applied linguists teaching English as a second language should use the proverbs in the novel to teach the nominal groups component of English grammar.

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LANGUAGE AND THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF 'SELF' AND 'OTHER': THE STAKES OF CAMEROON ANGLOPHONE IDENTITY IN ANGLOPHONE ELITE DISCOURSE



Ernest Wanyu Nyamkoh

Abstract

This paper probes into Anglophone identity stakes in Anglophone elite discourse against the assumption that the post-independence construction of such an identity engenders xenophobic undertones that underlie discontent from domination/pejorative projection of Anglophones by the Francophone majority and socio-political frustrations of this group. The post-independence Anglophone/ Francophone identity alignment resulting from the country's dual colonial heritage that patterned Cameroonians into binary identity kits marked by biculturalism and bilingualism within a multicultural/lingual configuration remains a call for concern. Stereotypes about culture pre-eminence remain alive and serve as a breeding ground for linguistic exclusion. Such "self" glorification subsumes fear of identity loss. This paper uses the Socio-Cognitive Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of Van Dijk to answer the following research question: How do ideologies about identity function in the discursive construction of Anglophone Identity in Anglophone elite discourse in Cameroon? The assumption in this paper is that the construction of Anglophone identity in elite discourse is imbued with discriminatory ideologies which serve to legitimize exclusion and discrimination. The analysis demonstrates that in the process of Anglophone identity construction in elite discourse there are substantial xenophobic undertones marked by suspicion, fear, and stereotypical perception of the Francophone counterpart resulting in the struggle to sustain their identity kit projected as facing a threat from the Francophone majority. Such Anglophone identity claims have profound implications on the resentment exhibited through protests by the Anglophone minority since the 1990s. The crisis in Cameroon is also a crisis about identity as Anglophone Cameroonians battle to preserve their cultural identity purportedly threatened by the Francophone majority.

Key Words: Socio-Cultural Exigencies, Identity, Anglophone, Elite Discourse

Introduction

Cameroon's socio-political landscape is still shaped by its dual colonial cultures and history and has been marked by tension and suspicion. The post-colonial (re)unification of Cameroon and the adoption of English and French as official languages are the basis for the binary identity alignment of Cameroonians: Anglophone and Francophone. This post-independence construct has its roots in the colonial history and heritage which define each of these groups as an entity. English and French are the starting point of such identity alignment; that is, Anglophone Cameroonians speak English (and/or Cameroon Pidgin English-CPE) and Francophone Cameroonians speak French. However, the evocation of English/CPE as markers of Anglophone identity is resisted strongly by the 'Anglophones'. Consider the following quotation for the place of English in the construction of Anglophone identity.

Anglophonism' goes beyond the mere ability to speak or understand the English language. It speaks to a core of values, beliefs and ways of relating to the other inherited from the British who ruled this region from 1916 to 1961. Anglophonism is a culture, a way of being which cannot be transmitted by merely learning a language.¹

The foregoing hesitance is the basis for which this paper seeks to demonstrate that in-group identity ascription (Anglophone identity) presages xenophobic undertones; a phenomenon which Nyamkoh, (2017) refers to as Francophobia; that is, the fear and stereotypical perception characterized by suspicion of the out-group (Francophones). Contrary to the "former" prejudicial and pejorative representation of Anglophones by some Francophone Cameroonians as reported in (Anchimbe, 2007, Nkwetisama, 2016) through derogatory terms such as; *anglofou*, *anglofools*, Anchimbe (2007) reports a gradual, if not rapid positive changing perception of Anglophones and English. This may explain the recent increase in the demand for the English language by Francophones in the country that, however, raises fears and suspicion among the Anglophones who see this as both a threat to their identity and a quest for "their" values.

Group identity always involves evaluative beliefs of what "we" are/are not and what "they" are/are not. This process involves the evocation of positive values that make the group cluster together and give them the moral backing it requires to oppose the "other". The group is "an incarnation of positive/good values" while the out-group "embodies negative/bad" values. Identity construction is, thus, a subjective evaluation of oneself vis-à-vis others or one's cultural group vis-à-vis other groups involving an ideological propensity which in turn influences their perception of themselves and of others as they interact with one another. It is against this backdrop that this paper departs and argues that the crisis in Cameroon is also a crisis about identity as Anglophone Cameroonians battle to preserve their cultural identity purportedly threatened by the Francophone majority, (Konings & Nyamnjoh, 1997; Tangie, 2011 cited in Camilla Tabe & Njofie Fieze, 2018).

The Origins of the Cameroonian Anglophone Cultural Identity

The territory known today as Cameroon was a German Protectorate which was disproportionately divided between France and Britain when the Germans were ousted from the territory during the First World War. France was given $\frac{3}{4}$ (present day Francophone Cameroon)² while Britain took the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ (present day Anglophone Cameroon).³ The two territories were governed independently by Britain and France under the League of Nations Mandate system from 1919 to 1945 and later under the United Nations Trusteeship system from 1945 to early 1960. (Konings & Nyamnjoh, (1997); Verkijika 1999) The UN Trust Territory of French Cameroon got independence in January 1960 while the then UN Trust Territory of British Southern Cameroons was still under the mentorship of the then colonial master, Britain. In the UN organized plebiscite of 1961 the British Southern Cameroons voted in favor of unification with the then independent *La Republique du Cameroun* against integration with the independent

¹ (Extracted from *The Guardian Post*: No 1081; 2016, page 6)

² Geographically this part corresponds to eight of the ten regions of the country

³ Geographically this part corresponds to two of the ten regions of the country

Federal Republic of Nigeria. The two Cameroons entered into a Federation in 1961 and adopted a French-English bilingual language policy and a bi-cultural system of administration. However, the Federal system was later abolished in 1972 in favor of a united republic styled the United Republic of Cameroon. This move was and is still seen by the Anglophones as an attempt to do away with their cultural identity and they began to nurture feelings of marginalization which were to be felt later after 1984 when the President Paul Biya reverted to original name of the French Cameroon at independence in 1960, *La Republique du Cameroun* (the Republic of Cameroon), Verkijika, (1999).

The above historical overview may lead one to thinking that the concept of Anglophone as used in the literature today, and in this paper covers people who are found in a single geographical location. This will be a false impression. Throughout human history people have been constantly migrating and their identities are constantly being (re)shaped. Cameroon could not be any different. Of course, there are many of the then Southern Cameroonians who migrated and settled elsewhere in French Cameroon and beyond and French Cameroonians who migrated and settled in the then British Territory of Southern Cameroons. The term Anglophone as understood in this paper refers to those Cameroonians whose ethnic/ancestral origins are found in the then territory of the British Southern Cameroons irrespective of their current geographical locations and or linguistic background. This definition does not cover those who settled in this territory and who are currently living there but the ethnic/ancestral origin of whom is found in the then French Cameroon, (Konings & Nyamjoh, 1997;).

Previous Studies and the Statement of the Problem

Previous studies on Anglophone identity in Cameroon have focused on socio-historical, anthropological evolution and the unease resulting from the claims laid by this group in the country while little attention is paid to the role ideology plays in legitimizing these claims into material discourses, as far as I know. Ngome (1993) probes into the construction of Anglophone identity by Francophone majority and observes that there is substantial xenophobia in the way the latter regards the former. Konings & Nyamjoh, (1997) attempts to define Anglophone in Cameroon as a cultural group observing that language is just one element of that identity while (Besong, 2003, Farenkia, 2014, Nfi 2014) complement Ngome and argue that Francophone Cameroonians have a negative perception of Anglophones and English which are relegated to the background and treated with contempt. Verkijika, (1999) remarks that, "Francophones and Anglophones are still strange bedfellows." Reacting to the Cameroon's minister of communication's declaration that there is no difference between Anglophones and Francophones in Cameroon over Aljezera Television in 2017, a Francophone female journalist challenged the minister claiming that in Francophone regions the term "*bamenda*" is a derogatory expression used to qualify Anglophones as "*stupid*". While there is consensus with respect to mutual suspicion between Anglophones and Francophones in Cameroon little attention is paid to the role ideology plays in the construction of Anglophone and Francophone identities and the strategies used to legitimize exclusion and discrimination/prejudice. This paper therefore makes a contribution to this effect.

Objectives of the Study

This paper aims at examining the role ideology plays in identity construction and the linguistic strategies used to legitimize exclusion and discrimination/prejudice against the out-group.

Research Questions

How do ideologies about identity function in the discursive construction of Anglophone Identity in Anglophone elite discourse in Cameroon?

What linguistic strategies are used in the discourses to legitimize exclusion and discrimination against the out-group (Francophone Cameroonians)?

Research Hypotheses

The assumption in this paper is that the construction of Anglophone identity in elite discourse is imbued with discriminatory ideologies. Evaluative structures in the discourse serve a legitimizing effect as they reinforce exclusion and discrimination/prejudice.

Theoretical Framework of Analysis

This paper employs the Socio-Cognitive Approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) propounded by Van Dijk to analyze identity as an ideological construct. The 'Ideological Square' proposed by Van Dijk used in political discourse analysis is applied in the analysis to critically examine the discursive linguistic strategies used in elite discourse to self-evaluate the in-group and the out-group which serve to legitimize exclusion and discrimination. This therefore links identity to ideology and demonstrate that ideology is at the service of identity construction.

CDA and the Identity Construction

Identity is a very complex term which a single definition cannot purport to cover exhaustively. In the context of this paper the term is used to refer to the process of "self" and "other" definition; an assemblage of socially constructed characteristics involving a common origin, historical, linguistic as well as ideological repertoire claimed and or assigned to group members, (Armstrong 1982 cited in Schustereder, 2011). Group identity as understood in this paper is a set of non-axiomatic values constructed as group intrinsic worth to which all members lay claim. People usually represent themselves as belonging to one group through the evocation of values and or experiences which are purportedly shared by all members of the group in contrast to out-group members. Wodak, (1999) refers to this process as the construction of "sameness" and "difference". In this antithetical identity alignment Van Dijk, (1998, 2006b) observes that in-group values are projected as positive in opposition to out-group values. It is from this premise that the present paper departs to demonstrate that current trends in the process of Anglophone self-identification engenders positive self-evaluation and a stereotypical perception of the Francophone Cameroonian. Anglophone identity is discursively constructed beyond ethnic lines to involve trans-ethnic values which purportedly delineate them as people belonging to a common "state" culture.

The Data and Method

The data sources consisted of articles, write ups, Memoranda and editorials which were written by Anglophone elite and opinion leaders as well as religious authorities and published in *The Guardian Post* between 2010 and 2017. Two of these editorials were written as open letters and were subsequently published as

editorials in the newspaper. Some appeared in interviews conducted by journalists of *The Guardian Post* with Anglophone elite on the question of the “Anglophone problem” which were then published thereafter. Others were written as editorials by civil society activists for the newspaper on the same issue and published in *The Guardian Post*. The units of analysis are lexical and stylistic. At the lexical level nouns and descriptive adjectives were considered in relation to the social actor they describe or name. At the stylistic level the following stylistic devices; parallelism (contrast), implication and rhetorical questions are analyzed.

Results and Discussions

In-group (Anglophone) values are discursively constructed in opposition to out-group (Francophone) values at the expense of the latter through the following ideological paradigm. Being an Anglophone is ideologically-identical to:

- **Patriotism and love;**
- **Parsimonious, Managerial Consciousness and Honesty;**
- **Dynamic flexible, while**

Being a Francophone is ideologically-synonymous to:

- **Lavishness;**
- **Fraudulence; and**
- **Domineering**

The construction of the foregoing in-group and out-group values is achieved through the following stylistic devices; parallelism (contrast), implication and rhetorical questions. Parallelism is a strategy used to contrast two things that could be people, ideas or concepts. Following this view Anglophone Cameroonians are discursively projected as the antithesis of the Francophone counterpart at the expense of the latter. Implication on its own part studies the underlying meaning of a communicative text in its pragmatic context. Rhetorical questions deals with assertions that are done through questions which do not require any answer but rather leaves the listener or reader with the possibility of judgment. This is linked to the politeness structures in communicative texts. The above three strategies are analyzed below to demonstrate how they are used to ascribe identity traits onto social actors in discourse. See the text below.

...the French and the English educational systems are very different. If they were not different, ...therefore Anglophones have certain values...you do not see Anglophones from Limbe, Buea and son on sending their children to Francophone schools in Duoala, Bafoussam, Yaounde etc..It is a fact that we have certain values which Francophones admire. That is why they are scrambling to send their children to Anglophone schools to acquire these values...Anglophones have a different education and philosophy, are patriot and love Cameroon. So the time has come for an Anglophone to be given the chance to take Cameroon forward by reflecting in his government these values which Francophones flock to Anglophone Schools to learn...⁴

The author begins by declaring that the Francophone and the Anglophone sub-systems of education (as they are called in Cameroon) are different. He based on this difference to

⁴ (Extracted from *The Guardian Post* No 1064, 2016, Page 10)

align opposing identities for Anglophone and Francophone Cameroonians by claiming that “Anglophones have certain values” which Francophones “do not have.” He further sustains this view by emphatically stating that “It is a fact that we have certain values which Francophones admire.” By drawing such a contrast between the two actors he purportedly claims “they are scrambling to send their children to Anglophone schools to acquire these values.” The author uses the topos (fallacy) of difference to ascribe positive traits onto the Anglophones and negative ones onto the Francophone counterpart. This is achieved through the use of deictic expressions; *they*, *their*, *these* and *we*. The first two are used to construct Francophones in the following clause; they are scrambling to send their children to Anglophone schools to acquire these values. They (Francophones) are constructed as ‘scrambling’ to ‘acquire’ values which ‘we have’ and, which by implication, they ‘do not’ have. Describing the act of schooling in terms of ‘scramble’ and ‘flock’ intensifies the illocutionary force of the sentence. Schooling is not constructed as the quest for knowledge but is interpreted as the quest for ‘our values’ vaguely described as ‘values which Francophones admire’. The act of describing ‘Francophone’ children in ‘Anglophone’ schools through the following action verb-‘scrambling’ and the process verbs- ‘flock’ and ‘sending’ has the effect of representing Anglophones as ‘possessing’ ‘positive’ values which Francophones ‘lack’. It is therefore a strategy to ascribe positive values onto the Anglophones at the detriment of Francophones through implication. Some of these values discursively purported in the text are ‘patriotism’ and ‘love’ for the other in the clause; *Anglophones...are patriot and love Cameroon* in which the backgrounded social actor (Francophones) is deduced to be constructed as ‘is not patriot and hate Cameroon’. The author avoids using the antonyms so as to sound polite. Through parallelism, an Anglophone is identical to Parsimonious, Managerial Consciousness and Honesty while a Francophone is tantamount to lavishness/Fraudulence. Consider the text below.

An Anglophone can only be an assistant to a Francophone when there are significant financial Resources to be managed. After the financial resources are mismanaged, an Anglophone is appointed to turn the situation around... His Francophone replacement is currently mismanaging the place, and it is clear that an Anglophone will again be appointed to head Chantiel Naval when it would have been completely run down...⁵

By deducing that an Anglophone will be appointed to save Chatiel Naval when it will be mismanaged is to claim that Anglophones “always” do so. He achieves this through the topos of generalization in which in the sentence “an Anglophone is appointed to turn the situation around.” the subject of the sentence “an Anglophone” does not refer to any specific person of that background but gives the impression that anyone who lay claims of that identity probably is as such. He further buttresses this view by claiming that “his Francophone replacement is currently mismanaging the place.” and ardently stating that “it is clear that an Anglophone will again be appointed to head Chantiel Naval when it would have been completely run down.” Parallelism is achieved in the text using the following verbs: the phrasal verb (run down), (turn the situation around) and (*mismanaging*). To run down and to mismanage are both used to refer to the Francophone

⁵ Extracted from *The Guardian Post*: No 0379, 2010, Page 3

while turn the situation around is used to refer to the Anglophone. Rhetorical questions are used to assert that Anglophones are patriotic, dynamic and adaptive while giving the impression that Francophones are not. The authors in the following sentences are asserting the above claim.

Can we of the North West and South West region speak English in Ebolowa or any other Francophone zone?⁶

Who is more nationalistic and patriotic than the other? The Cameroonian who embezzles billions with impunity or the Cameroonian who calls for a debate on federalism?⁷

The speaker in the first excerpt posits that Cameroonians of the North West and South West regions (Anglophones) are dynamic and adaptive because they vary their language choice with the linguistic realities of the situation. They “speak French in Francophone regions and English in English regions” while Francophones, by implication do not. They (Francophones) “speak only French wherever they are”. The speaker in the second text discursively links Francophones to embezzlement and Anglophones to patriotism. By leaving the reader with the choice to decide the author avoids being rude and impolite by asserting directly. The authors implicitly represent Francophone Cameroonians as “embezzlers” and their Anglophone partners are “patriots”.

Indicators of Fear and Suspicion

The construction of in-group and out-group (Anglophones and Francophones Respectively) reveal fear and resistance of the out-group by the in-group. The representation of Anglophones as a ‘dominated’ and ‘marginalized’ group implies a psychological dread with the implication of mentally resisting the Francophones. Such a context influences the production of discourse (discourse structure and lexical choices) and comprehension. Van Dijk (2009). See the text below.

Flooding Anglophone Cameroon with Francophone Administrators and Workers’... there seems to have been a conscious effort made to flood the North West and the South West regions with Francophone Heads of service... the situation is aggravated by the fact that these Francophones administrators are often overbearing, arrogant...⁸

Francophonisation’ of the English educational subsystem and the Common Law system’...The flooding of state Anglophone educational and legal institutions with French-trained and French speaking Cameroonians...⁹

Gradual Erosion of Anglophone Identity’ ... Anglophone Cameroonians are slowly being asphyxiated as every element of their culture is systematically targeted and absorbed into the Francophone Cameroon culture and way of doing things...¹⁰

The above text discursively constructs the Anglophone as a ‘victim’ of domination and assimilation. The social actors represented here are: government (constructed as Francophone), Francophones and Anglophones. The social actions represented are

⁶ Extracted from *The Guardian Post*: No 0823, 2015, Page 2

⁷ Extracted from *The Guardian Post* No 1064, 2016, Page 10

⁸ Extracted From *The Guardian Post* No 1081, 2016, Page 6

⁹ Extracted From *The Guardian Post* No 1081, 2016, Page 6

¹⁰ Extracted From *The Guardian Post* No 1081, 2016, Page 6

assimilation and domination. The government is represented as responsible for Anglophone 'victimization' while Francophones are represented as the dominating group. The process verbs 'flooding', 'flood', 'asphyxiated' and 'absorbed' where Anglophones are constructed as undergoing these processes means that some agent is responsible for such an action (here the government), which is equally represented as negative and undesirable. Such a negative representation of the social action through derogatory nouns (francophonisation and erosion) reveals fear and mental resistance or psychological unease with the out-group. The presence of the out-group is perceived and represented as a menace to the survival of the in-group. The act of speaking French and the presence of Francophones among Anglophones is represented as 'francophonisation' and 'absorption' of the Anglophones. The action is equally represented as 'intentional' perpetuated by government to 'erode' Anglophone identity.

Conclusion

This paper sought to examine the stakes of the Cameroonian Anglophone identity vis-à-vis the Francophone within the context of post-independence hybrid identity (re)make. The configuration of dissimilar Anglo-French colonial legacies in Cameroon with a non-proportionate geo-political and demographic balance has created mutual suspicion and tension among Cameroonians; a scenario which has continued to foster intergroup opposed ideologies. The discursive construction of sameness and difference theoretically challenges co-existence and tolerance and reveals that this feeling of culture pre-immense serves as an ideological benchmark against which Anglophones cluster together to resist domination and to legitimize such ideological claims. Laying claims of identity loss and domination gives this group the moral back up it requires to ideologically oppose and rationalize such basis while shading xenophobic insights. Such claims have profound implications on the resentment demonstrated through protests by the Anglophone minority that have recently resulted in uprisings and armed confrontation by individuals demanding for the restoration of the statehood of the former British Southern Cameroons. Far from just being a socio-political conflict, the ongoing conflict in Cameroon is also a conflict about identity.

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BODY TATTOO AND SOCIO-COMMUNICATIVE VALUE: THE NIGERIA PERCEPTION. A STUDY OF OGALLALA STUDIO OF ARTS AND TATTOOING



Nicholas C. Akas and Stella Nwofor-Molokwu

Abstract

Body designs have been an integral part of African Culture. In the olden days, people made use of makeup such as; Ufe, Uli, and Nwakasi, to design the body, but aside the purpose is meant for it also nourishes the skin medically. The current trend of tattooing is becoming too alarming, where its designs always come in various forms, styles, and shapes without knowing the intended message its sets to pass across and why it must be drawn in various sensitive parts of the body. The aim of this research is to interpret the communicative values of tattoos drawn in various sensitive parts of the body here in Nigeria. Objectively, this paper would (a) emphasis why Nigerian Youths are beginning to value tattoos more than the westerns, (b) it would expose what motivates any tattoo is drawn and the reason(s) for such and it would interpret why Nigerian Youths select specific parts of the body where it would be drawn. For effective research on this paper, content analysis and interviews would be used as the methodology for effective interpretation. From the findings to an extent Nigerian Youths see the tattoo as a tool to differentiate societal status amongst themselves which is not meant to be and must be redressed. In conclusion, tattoos are aesthetically nice on the body, but it must always be done communicatively and not on the exposed parts of the body.

Introduction

Body design has been an old traditional act in Africa especially Nigeria. They at times come as tribal marks, not for beautification but have sociological implications when interpreted. Some of the traditional tribal marks can be inform of lines, tiny opening, tiny ropes tied somewhere and so on. Daramola and Jeje as cited by Taije Aluko said that, "Those tribal marks are not just put in any part of the body, but in the following places; forehead, chest, stomach, hack in some cases on the legs and hand, in other to explain some cultural undertones". (3)

The use of tribal marks then and now especially in some ethnic groups in Nigeria is to represent situations, market days or events that attracted such marks. Those marks to the best of the researcher knowledge are not done with designs such; human face, colorful flowers or inscriptions, rather the lines are well placed as it is in some Northern/Western parts of Nigeria to depict something meaningful and not for beautification. In order, to showcase the sacredness of body design then, it is not done by just anybody or in any studio (as it is in tattoo) rather some selected person(s) or families have been destined to do it. This is so because, it is a belief in Africa or Igbo cosmology that some trades are not taught by humans' rather ancestral spirits based on historical backups surrounding the family or the person to be taught respectively. Akas Nicholas stated that, "body design art in Igbo tradition is usually done by a particular set of person or family, in order to continuously uphold the cosmological legacy which if uttered will affect hereditary lineage, thereby shifting the mantle of authority to another family" (6)

The above quote shows how special body design was in the olden days against westernized style called tattoos. The invention of tattoos in Africa is an adapted act from the westerners, who always modified their bodies at times with or without reason(s). Some of the individuals who tattooed their bodies in the western world are celebrities, soldiers and individuals (either to remember special events like; when they were heartbroken, their birthdates, inspirational quotes, flowers or animals they have and cherish so much). All these about body modification as states are purely westernized against what some core body designs are meant for in Africa. Tattoo designs have taken a larger percentage in the life styles of individuals, youths and celebrities in Nigeria, just wanting to imitate their western counterparts or being identified as a star. So, tattoos in Nigeria now becomes a yardstick to measure social status where people wearing it are seen as fashion, rich people, classy, stars or Wanabes. Akas, Henry Anayo (tattooist interviewed) said, "The Nigeria Ideology of tattooing at times is baseless because some do it because of peer pressure or want to be noticed which makes it totally abnormal. But when they are born again as they would always claim, they will start looking for how to remove it".

So this research sets out to interpret some selected tattoos wore by individuals in Nigeria towards understanding its socio-communicative essence wherever they exist.

Cultural Perception on Tattoos

Culture is one major thing that determines people's way of life and ideology. The essence of culture is to give one sense of belonging or identification, which can come in any form either through dressing, feeding, dance, music or approved tribal marks. When all these are sighted anywhere, it automatically presents where one is coming. Each culture in Nigeria has what they are known for or identified without any doubt or seeking extra interpretation. But tattoos have been strongly frowned at culturally in Nigeria because people wearing it are seen as irresponsible, thieves, bad boy or girl and lack strong paternal training. Stemate D observed that;

Tattooing is not an African thing, rather it is purely westernized, where the western children to an extent have the freedom to do or tattoo anything on his/her bodies. But in Nigeria, to be able to precise anything you must inform your parents to avoid being the black ship of the family or wrongly misinterprets (6).

Furthermore, it is frowned culturally, because of its new style of body modification, where they are drawn in very selective and sensitive parts of the body like; the breast and private parts. These are parts of the body that culturally and morally wise, are not meant to be exposed anyhow (all in the name of fashion) nor being touched by anybody (like the tattooist). But, the act of tattooing has really devalued the sacredness of some human body parts and exposed some youths both male and female to diseases like; HIV, Hepatitis B or C and while some are even raped in the process. Some of these tattoos drawn in selective areas of the body has forced a lot of individuals, celebrities, and youths to keep exposing it, which is totally against core Africa tradition where a woman or man, is only allowed to expose his/her body only in three clarified occasions such as;

- (1) When he/she wants to bath.
- (2) When he/she wants to have sexual intercourse with the husband or wife

- (3) When he/she wants to sleep

But with the advent of tattooing in Nigeria, it flaws the cultural essence stated rules on exposing the body into the following;

- (1) Tattoos drew at sensitive parts of the body make it sexually attractive.
- (2) Exposed tattoos make one more outstanding and recognized in several gatherings.
- (3) The inability to expose tattoos presents the person as having low self-esteem.
- (4) When exposed and from the style drawn, it automatically shows how much the person involved spent while acquiring such. So, it is against these bases that wearing of tattoos to an extent is not been acceptable culturally in Nigeria.

Socio-Communicative Essence of Tattoos on the Nigerian's body

Robert Leach opined that "No artistic work of art drawn is meaningless or uncommunicative; all that is needed is to understand the artist ideology while drawing and the value of art as requested by the individual". (123). Some newly tattooed bodies among Nigerians either celebrities, individuals or youths are not totally abstract, rather they follow the bandwagon of westernized ideology in drawing communicative tattoos. The communicative essence of tattoos can be appreciated based on the parts of the body where they are drawn or the reason(s) surrounding each drawing. Akas Henry Anayo (a tattooist interviewed) said that "in my years of experience as a drawn fine artist and tattooist, people no longer follow the old ideology of Uli body design; rather the westernized format where some notable activities trigger each drawn tattoos is the in thing now". To an extent from the interviews and content analysis method used, the researcher can say that cultural hybridity is really affecting the socio-communicative essence of current tattoos drawn in Nigeria. Some of the socio-communicative symbols drawn as explained by Henry Anayo Akas: (a tattooist and whose studio is under study in this paper)

- (1) Lion/Tiger: This is normally drawn by security officers and weight lifters to present themselves as strong people that must be feared by others.
- (2) Eagle: This is another iconic animal that people rarely draw here in Nigeria, just because of some reasons best known to them. But the tattooist (understudy) said 'any woman seen with this rare symbol is feared so much and seen as a strong person who cannot be intimidated'.
- (3) Flowers: This at times has no much communicative value, rather some individuals wear it in Nigeria to represent their role models especially celebrities who wear the same.
- (4) Inscription: Like the westerners, some Nigerians use this to portray special moments in their lives. Those inscriptions can be bible quotation, can be named of their spouse, and can also be events in their lives or tragic moments (Eg a woman of fifty-sixty years old that wrote on the left -hand side of her breast the names of her six sons that died on the same day in a motor accident)
- (5) The Face of human beings: Some draw the faces of their celebrities they love so much which can either be musicians, footballers, or actors to show how much they adore the celebrity as a diehard fan.

So from the aforementioned and some pictorials that would be analyzed later in this research paper, shows that some tattoos styles are adopted from the westerners and are very communicative when semiotically interpreted beyond aesthetics.

Types of Tattooed people

As tattoos drawn varies from individuals wearing it, that is exactly how we have different types of people seeking for tattoos on their body. So many scholars have tired giving various interpretations on people seeking for tattoos, but the most suitable for this research paper is Sanders and Vail categories as cited by Garica Merritt Gabriel, where tattooed people are classified as:

Collectors Seeker: This type of individuals always seek out for specific artists and visualized a particular style before committing a significant amount of time while searching for that special studio and special tattooist. They always conceive their existence on their stylized tattoos

Tattooed people: This set of individuals felt that their tattoos were an integral part of who they are and not afraid to be known via their tattoos.

People with tattoos: This is another set of individuals do not primarily conceive of themselves as tattooed people and might feel more apprehensive on being known with their tattoos.

From these various types of people logically interpreted in this research paper, will assist in classifying each person wearing tattoos in Nigeria to know where they belong and how they feel wearing it.

Why Some Nigerians Remove Tattoos?

According to Akas, Henry Anayo (interviewed) said “There are several factors that make some people want to remove expensive tattoos on their body. When such desire starts becoming worrisome in them, it can force some people especially the ladies to do anything or use anything for it to be removed”. He further stated base on his 13years experience in tattooing the following are the major reasons;

Parental Authority/Fear: Some parents who are not in support of it, when they see it on children or wards, they either beat the person or threaten to stop paying his/her school fees. When such threats become intense, the individual involved will start seeking for removal.

Job Security: Some might have drawn tattoos as students in the university due to peer pressure on fashion. But once maturity and responsibility sets in, especially if the person has been jobless and what is required of him/her to get a job is to remove a tattoo; immediately he/she will do so. The same is applicable to those working already and want to retain their jobs.

Family Name: Some people with a myopic mindset always see and believe that drawing tattoos are meant for irresponsible beings and need not be associated with. So, when such pressure is much on a person with a tattoo not wanting to be tagged a disgrace to the family name. The next option is to request the removal

Religion: When some said they are born again, so to prove it is by removal of their tattoos.

Brain Washing: This occurs mostly when some are brainwashed with having iconic tattoos are demonic and will hinder their progress in life. In order to avoid such from happening today as prophesied by their prophet or Iman, they will request for removal immediately.

Self- Accord: This last set of individuals, whenever he/she feels fed up with a particular tattoo, and then the next action is to seek for removal.

He further added that perfect removal of tattoos must be done with a machine called Laze. With Laze Machine, though the removal process might take three or four months as the case may be, it must be achieved. See pictures of the following;



Plate 1:Laze Instrument used in removing tattoos

Tattoo Instrument



Plate 2:Already removed tattoo





Plate 3: Still in second month of removal process.

A Brief History on the Tattooist

Mr. Akas, Henry Anayo is a well-known tattooist at Onitsha, Anambra State. He was a graduate of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State Nigeria. His area of specialization is Sculpture and he has over twenty sculptural works to his credit.

Furthermore, the act of tattooing was a passion he developed back then as an undergraduate, where he tattooed students just to sustain himself then in the university. But after graduation in 2015, the desire to be a tattooist and aside his core area of specialization was very high. So he went on three years' incentive apprenticeship under a Chinese man. According to him, "I taught as a Fine art graduate; the act of tattooing would be very easy for me, but it is a different ball game. I was told by my Chinese master to debunk everything I have learned in the university and learn the new art". I will say it really helped me because is now my only source of feeding. People work into his shop in thousands on a daily basis to be tattooed which always varies in various ways. It is important to state also that am not in any way related to the interviewee, it concedes we bear same name.

Analysis on Tattoos Drawn in Ogallala Studios of Arts and Tattooing

This section is going to interpret some of the symbolic tattoos drawn in the studio and socio-communicative implications attached to them base on Nigeria's perception.

The interpretation would be based on interviews with the tattooist, Henry Anayo Akas. Those tattoos are as follow;

1. Eagle/Flower

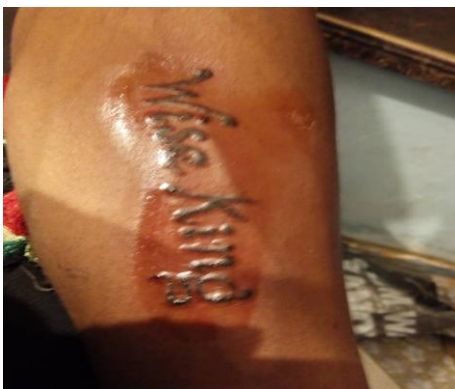
Plate 4



This iconic sign is very symbolic to the bearer. According to the tattooist (interviewed) said “she requested for this type of tattoo on her breast because of some painful experiences. She was heartbroken, raped and has being used as a sex object a lot by men because of fake love promise they always claim to have towards her. So, she decided to draw this as a way of scaring some men away with the assumed motion that she might belong somewhere, while the Rose flower symbol simply reminds her that love should be given only to true men who can sacrifices for their loved ones.

(2)Wise king

Plate 5



This tattoo reminds the individual what he experienced in the hands of his Uncle, who refused to train him in school. He tired pleading with the uncle several to train him in school but he rather advised him to go and learn a trade, the reason being that education is not meant for everybody. So one faithful night as reported by the tattooist base on what he was told by the individual, as he saw late father in a dream who told him not to depend

on anybody rather he should struggle for himself. The late father told him “you are a king so be wise”. So the dream he had inspired the tattoo on his body.

(3) Strokes

Plate 6



The drawing is very abstract in nature and the location to be the back is questionable where anybody can wonder what inspired such drawings. But according to the tattooist, the strokes tattoos remind the wearer how many obstacles a man will meet in life before he achieves success.



**4) The Rose flower on the Lap
Plate 7**

From the tattooist, it serves as a seductive tool for the wearer. She said her lap is her sexual weak point, so any man that symbolically adores the flower on her lap can have her as much as he wants in bed. So, it takes a highly romantic mind to lure and turn her on through this tattoo.

(5) The Clef
Plate 8



Aside from this tattoo being a musical icon, its location is more communicative. This is another sexually sensitive area in some women. So, according to the tattooist, the wearer said it is only a man that understands the power of music that can be her boyfriend. The man must be a lover of music, not just any music but the ones with a romantic undertone.

(6) Silent
Plate 9



The tattooist said the wearer used this always reminds him to talk less in gathering and listen more. He said (the wearer) why he chooses the silent icon is because he has always been accused of one bad thing or other that has landed him in the police station several and cost him a lot of money for bail. So he decided to be more careful by talking less.

(7) Inscription
Plate 10



The tattooist said the wearer and his family have been victimized by one wicked uncle several over plots of land. They tried to fight him, but could not because he is rich and well connected. So the only solution they resolved to be prayers. According to the wearer, God Almighty fought their battle for them miraculously and the uncle dead. So, that was what gave rise to this tattoo. From the analysis, the researcher can take a stand by saying that some of the tattoos drawn in Nigeria by Nigerians as adopted from the westerners have their own indigenized socio-communicative undertone.

Conclusion

The desire to draw a tattoo is an adopted act that cannot be stopped in Nigeria as it is now. The researcher might be considered judgmental if he recommends ways for the act of tattooing to be stopped among Nigerians. However, the major thing this paper seeks to suggest is, if tattoos will be drawn at all on anybody, let it be interpretive, communicative and not exposed as seen in some of the pictorial analysis, because such is not our come tradition.

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Research Questions Asked To the Tattooist AKAS, Henry Anayo

Interviewer: What is your name?

Tattooist: My name is Akas, Henry Anayo

Interviewer: Are you a Student or Graduate

Tattooist: I am a graduate of Fine and Applied Arts from Nnamdi Azikiwe University 2015 set.

Interviewer: Why do people draw tattoo?

Tattooist: To the best of my knowledge it either is for fashion or represents the situation of things as it is in a foreign country.

Interviewer: What inspires the type of tattoos drawn?

Tattooist: What mostly inspires the type of tattoo drawn is based on the person's likes, professions or how he wants people to see him.

Interviewer: Are there communicative essence attached to the tattoos you have drawn so far.

Tattooist: Yes, there is communicative essence attached to tattoos in drawn by Nigerians. People who love tattoos always use it to portray actions, situation, or day to day events. They believe having this will give them an everlasting memory.

Interviewer: Is there any special attachment to the parts of the body where tattoos are drawn.

Tattooist: I will answer this by saying Yes or No. Yes, because choosing special parts of their body where tattoos can be drawn showcase how special such a particular tattoo is to the wearer, for instance a woman drawing her boyfriend's face on her chest, while is No because to some people it means nothing.

Interviewer: The type of tattoo instrument used in drawing tattoos

Tattooist: The instrument used for tattooing is called tattoo Gun, while the ink used in drawing is called tattoo ink and the tattoo ink is purely harmless.

Interviewer: How do you know the styles to draw on your customers?

Tattooist: I have a catalog of symbols normally requested by individual, so all I do is to present it to them and allow them to make their choice, whichever they select then I draw.

Interviewer: Are there difficulties drawing tattoo?

Tattooist: The simple answer to this is training and one must have the passion to draw before he/she starts drawing tattoos.

Interviewer: What age bracket wants a tattoo more?

Tattooist: Does who want it more is people between the ages of 18 – 34 years.

Interviewer: Do you get arouse while trying to draw on the sensitive parts of a woman.

Tattooist: (Smiles) it wasn't easy for me at the early stage, but as I go deeper into the trade it wasn't feeling anything again.

Interviewer: is there any difference between olden days make up and the modern tattooing.

Tattooist: There is a big difference especially in the area of style of drawing and instruments used. What is used then when there was no technology is totally different now.

LEXICAL EXPERIMENTATION IN MODERN NIGERIAN POETRY: A STUDY OF JOE USHIE'S *A REIGN OF LOCUSTS*



Edwin O. Ifeanyi

Abstract

The attempt by the recent African poets to demystify poetry in English and present it in a more audience-reader friendly mode has led to a lot of experimentation with language, form and technique in their works. Niyi Osundare is credited with spearheading the move towards what Osakwe (28) describes as an 'alter-native' poetic tradition with his poem 'Poetry is'. Ever since, the quest for the new African poets has been for the most effective way of communicating African experience and poetic vision using the English Language. Joe Ushie emerged on the Nigerian poetic scene fully aware of this urgent need. Thus, he has consistently written a highly experimental poetry especially as it affects his linguistic choices. This essay examined the lexical patterns in his *A Reign of Locusts*. Effort was made to identify and describe the lexical choices of stylistic importance in the text. The investigation revealed that Ushie exploited for lexical experimentation the linguistic resources offered by the English Language's morphology and phonology for stylistic and/or communicative effect. He also manipulated orthographic and graphological patterns for special effect. The study therefore projected Joe Ushie as a remarkably conscious artist whose poetry deserves special critical attention for his lexical craft and/or 'wordmanship'.

Introduction

One of the hallmarks of Joe Ushie's poetry is the depth of his experimentation with lexical forms. He has consistently betrayed his love for words in most of his works, and his poise to twist and turn the words at his disposal to suit his poetic and communicative purposes. Nevertheless, only a few critical works have been devoted to the study of his lexical experimentation or innovations, and none of these has been applied to his yet last collection of poetry, *A Reign of Locusts*. The task in this essay, therefore, is to explore the extent to which Joe Ushie experimented with lexical forms in *A Reign of Locusts* and the impact such experimentation or innovations have on his poetry.

The study adopts the linguistic-stylistic approach for analysis, and leans on the theoretical framework of functionalism. Functionalism designates an approach to the study of language that sees functionality of language and its elements as the key to the understanding of linguistic processes and structures. Functional theories of language propose that since language is fundamentally a tool, it is reasonable to assume that its structures are best analysed and understood with reference to the functions they perform. The founding of the linguistic theory of functionalism is credited to Andre Martinet during the 1950s (Akwanya 49). According to Wikipedia, Andre Martinet was a French linguist, influential due to his work on structural linguistics. The Prague School of linguistics was one of Martinet's main influences, and he is known for pioneering a

functionalist approach to syntax. This research effort is predicated on the following questions:

- i. What constitute lexical experimentation in Joe Ushie's poetry?
- ii. To what extent does Joe Ushie experiment with lexical items in *A Reign of Locusts*?
- iii. What stylistic or communicative effect has Ushie's lexical experimentation on his poetry?

The Concept of Lexical Experimentation

Lexical experimentation consists in inventions or coinages, innovations and foregrounding involving lexical patterns in a text. Smith (in his online book, *The Writing Experiments: Strategies for Innovative Creative Writing*) identifies lexical experimentation as involving the use of unusual words and making them a central part of the poem, hyphenating words to recombine them, and making up words. Ushie himself, in his doctoral thesis, "Many Voices, Many Visions..." uses 'creative lexical experimentations' to describe borrowings from Nigeria's socio-cultural and political environment and the derivation of verbs from acronyms and nouns. To this description he adds lexico-semantic subversions, which involve 'the use of words in certain contexts such that their meanings in those contexts become the opposite of, or ridicule, their assumed contextual meanings' (225). Dare (2003) prefers the term 'morphological experimentation' to lexical experimentation. Thus, lexical experimentation arises from the exercise of poetic/creative license, which allows poets to ignore rules and conventions generally observed by users of a language, and to thus go beyond the limits of the language, or exceed its normal resources in order to explore and communicate new areas of experience.

Lexical Choices in a *Reign of Locust*

Most of the innovative lexical patterns in this collection are products of experimentation with morphological processes such as affixation (comprising the use of prefix and suffix), compounding, functional conversion and blending/pun. A few of the lexical patterns are products of the 'logodaedalian technique,' which Ekpenyong describes as 'the inventive artifice in words' (67). The technique involves the use of words or their letters to visually create a picture of what they describe. Henceforth, in this section, lexical patterns of stylistic significance are identified and classified according to the morphological processes or techniques that produced them. In doing that the grammatical categories to which they belong as evident from their various contexts are indicated to clarify their linguistic values. Thereafter, representative samples of the data collected are purposively selected and analysed to show their stylistic and/or communicative values. The researcher of course combines linguistic analysis with critical interpretation since according to Adagbonyin (65), "both are complementary ways of looking at a text..." to achieve the goals of objectivity and insight.

Classification of Data

Affixation

Tables A and B below illustrate, respectively, the utilization of prefixes and suffixes for lexical experimentation in the text of study.

Table A

Prefix	Lexical item	Category	Pg. no.	Context
Un-	Ungoing	Adj.	14	...ngoing scar of slave trade
	Untired	„	20	...untired generals?
	Unruled	verb	83	Unruled like the despot, Death
Dis-	Dis-laddered	Adj.	17	...dis-laddered clamberers
Re-	Re-grain	Verb	62	When will you re-grain these bald lands?

Table B

Suffix	Lexical item	Category	Pg. no.	Context
-ed	Unusualled	Verb	15	Each unusualled with a gold-adorned stall?
	Readied	„	20	Readied by that genocidal mattoid
	reddened	„	26	When have the forests been reddened/With beastnic cleansing blood?
	Tyred	Adj.	30	tyred casket cascading on our roads
	opaqued	verb	30	...mobile (e)state/ Opaqued like any beautiful casket
	Winged	adj.	36	... winged cowry shell
	Enveloped	verb	84	We always enveloped you
-ing	Wintering	Adj.	15	A tropical downpour in wintering climes
	Cobwebbing	Verb	28	Cobwebbing the land's paths
	Solidarising	Adj.	72	The solidarising Isabella
	Melodying	Verb	92	...birds of the air melodying their freedom
-ful	Mightful	Adj.	61	...mightful scene
-less	Wordless	Noun	23	Spokesman for the wordless

Compounding

Most of the lexical patterns derived from experimentation with compounding in the text are noun + verb compositions. We also find noun + noun, and a few noun + adj, verb + adj and adj + verb compositions. This is illustrated on Table C:

Table C

Lexical item	Category	Pg. no	Context
Throne-glued	Adj. (N + V)	16	Liberia's throne-glued Doe
Locust-choked	„ „	18	...locust choked sky
Fear-ruled	„ „	22	... the lily-livered /Reeled fear-ruled lines...
Hunger-bleached	„ „	30	...our hunger-bleached/Sheets of skin...
Head-sheated	„ „	38	... my headsheated swords
Head-locked	„ „	„	...head-locked missiles
Ten-childrened	„ „	44	We are the ten-childrened poor
Grave-eyed	„ „	53	Grave-eyed hunter
West-inclined	„ „	56	A West-inclined beret of my sun
Chest-reaching	„ „	59	It's time for houses to wear/ Chest-reaching skirts of flood water
Iroko-muscled	„ „	91	That iroko-muscled truck pusher
Bond-age	Noun (N + N)	12	... bondsman/Celebrates his bond-age
Victim-age	„ „	25	In this victim-age
Tear-room	„ „	85	...our bed-room of roses/ Is now a tear-room of thorns.
Wet-eyed	Adverb (Adj + V)	12	And we'll go still/Wet-eyed, raiding the brigand's den
Sit-tight	Adj. (V + Adj)	14	Like a sit-tight African dictator
Selves-unwilled	Verb (N + V)	41	You and I/ selves-unwilled/ here
Home-hungry	Adj. (N +Adj.)	9	our home-hungry feet?

Blending/Pun

A sizeable number of experimental lexical patterns in the present text are derived from play on existing words through phonological or morphological adaptation and blending. Table D illustrates this feature.

Table D

Lexical item	Category	Pg. no.	Context
Hewman	Adj.	11	...crocodiles nurtured by hewman flesh
Softstitutes	Noun	„	...like vulture feasting/On own child's carrion, seeks softstitutes
Compagriots	Noun	11	Fear not, compagriots
(S)pent up	Adj	20	(S)pent up workers of our termitarium
rei(g)n	Noun	22	In the heydays of your rei(g)n
yester-death	„	„	...the dagger of our yester-death
hi-ways	„	23	...hawks pecking/At wayfarers at the hi-ways
Hewmanity	„	27	“Hewmanity! It's unbestial! It's human!”
Liprouisine	„	30	From inside your darkened liprouisine?
(e)state	„	„	...this mobile (e)state
Executhiefly	Adverb	„	You, shrouded executhiefly
Tyrelessly	„	31	...our skeletons/Tyrelessly watching you
P(l)ain	Adj	32	...that p(l)ain com/pound
Atmosfear	Noun	33	...this atmosfear of pain
Painometre	„	„	...the painometre of mango/leaves
Hypno-trapped	Verb	60	...blind mortal/hypno-trapped on fragile throne
Cosme-thick	Adj	„	...cosme-thick praise songs
(p)rude	„	89	That (p)rude tax collector knocking
Heartlids	Noun	32	...pain on heartlids
Murderdoms	„	91	African dictators' murderdoms

Functional Shift

Ushie sometimes makes his words assume grammatical functions that are not theirs originally when he feels such words will best serve his purpose. Thus, he seems to disagree that words should be restricted to particular grammatical categories when they can also function effectively in others. Table E illustrates this feature.

Table E

Lexical item	Category	Pg. no	Context
Winters	N to V	16	...our communal sweat winters/In private coded account
Tails	N to V	44	As evening breeze tails noon flame
Hungers	N to V	71	...a fast-ageing mother/ hungers for grandchildren
Mother	N to V	82	Swiftly may you return /To mother us, still

Logodaedalian' Technique

Table F features instances of the use of words and their letters to visually create a picture of what they describe.

Table F

Lexical item	Pg. no	Context
E a r t h w a r d s	61	Ripe, you bow e a r t h w a r d s
L i n k i n g	74	... umbilical cord l i n k i n g This heart of Africa to that web of islands-
L o w e r e d	83	First l o w e r e d To a wheelchair by some har-Binger of Death...

Data Analyses

Ushie's lexical experimentations are no doubt contrived to expand his expressive/descriptive power, achieve freshness of expression and economy of diction, and sometimes, to communicate his attitude to his subject matter.

One obvious feature of the data on tables A and B is over-generalization of the rules of affixation in English word formation. Words, which usually do not take affixes are made to do so, and are thus saddled with certain contextual functions. The reversative or privative prefix UN- for example, is added to the verb 'going' to derive the word 'ungoing' in table A, which suggests 'permanence' or 'ever-fresh' in the context '... **ungoing** scars of slave trade'. Here, the poet has succeeded in conveying his disapproving attitude to slave trade through lexical experimentation. The same idea of experimentation or trying out new things with existing items produces the words 'untired' and 'unruled', which in context suggest 'not tired' and 'not subject to laws or rules' respectively. The word 'dis-laddered' does not exist in English, but it is a potential English word coined by the poet for freshness and effective communication. Thus utilizing the meaning of the prefix DIS- as in words like disentangle, disengage, etc. the poet uses the fresh expression '**dis-laddered** clamberers' to capture the plight of the less-privileged masses who have been denied access to the ladder of ascendance to positions of comfort. The coinage 're-grain' simply means 'grain again or plant grain again' in the context used.

Experimentation with the -ED suffix or morpheme produces the lexical items 'unusualled', 'readied', 'opaqued', 'tyred' and 'winged', etc. in Table B. The first three words are originally adjectives, which the poet has converted to and loaded with verbal functions in context. Of course adjectives do not commonly take the -ED suffix in English morphology. The remaining two are noun roots converted to function as adjectives. Notice that the words retained their original meanings while performing different grammatical functions in context. Thus, the poet by experimenting with these lexical items achieved both freshness of expression and economy of words.

The -ING suffix traditionally used to form the present participle of regular verbs proved a very productive tool for lexical experimentation in the current text. The use of this suffix produces the words: 'wintering', 'cobwebbing', 'solidarising' and 'melodying' as listed in Table B. One common feature of these lexical items is that they are all formations from noun roots, which immediately suggests functional conversion from noun to other word classes. Thus, the noun 'winter' + -ING becomes the adjectival 'wintering', and in the context '**wintering** climes' suggests climes facing hardship and difficulty similar to the experience in Winter season. The word 'cobwebbing' is created from the noun 'cobweb' (a fine net of thread made by a spider to catch insects). Used in the context '...**cobwebbing** the land's paths' the word suggests blurred vision and retarded progress in the land as a result of unhealthy practices. The word 'solidarising' in the context appropriated describes a person who has the attributes that can bring about solidarity or unity, even in diversity, while 'melodying' is created from 'melody' which simply means a tune or a piece of music. Used in the context '...birds of the air **melodying** their freedom,' the poet at once, suggests that the sound made by the birds is melodious, and that the freedom which they enjoy is as sweet as a piece of music. The effect of this choice is that much is communicated in just a few words.

Finally on the use of suffixes, we have the formations ‘mightful’ and ‘wordless’. The suffix -FUL in English means “full of” or “having the qualities of” in words like powerful, sorrowful, etc. Thus, the formation ‘mightful’ simply means “full of might”. But the poet has chosen this word in the penultimate line of the poem “Tongues” for stylistic uniformity or consistency having used the word ‘might’ earlier in the second line of the same poem. In addition the formation brings some freshness to the expression ‘Turning into vacuum the **mightful** scene, /As if you were never here seen’ (61). And lastly, the experimental formation foregrounds the vanity of man’s unnecessary show of power, be it political or economic, etc. knowing that all becomes mere ‘vacuum’ when death comes knocking. The lexical item ‘wordless’ used as a noun in the context ‘spokesman for the **wordless**’ immediately suggests ‘people without words,’ i.e. The less-privileged masses, whose opinions are hardly considered,. Thus the poet has opted for this fresh expression, instead of the more familiar and of course clichéd expression, ‘voice of the voiceless’.

Compounding constitutes a major instrument of Joe Ushie’s lexical craft or experimentation as evident in the number of new words created by the process. Indeed, the poet exploits to the fullest the morphological process of compounding in his quest for vividness of description, lexical economy, freshness of expression and communicative efficacy. For analysis, the following representative items are selected: throne-glued, locust-choked, fear-ruled, hunger-bleached, head-sheated, west-inclined, iroko-muscled, victim-age and selves-unwilled. The first item, used in the context ‘Liberia’s **throne-glued** Doe’ is easy to understand when one considers the meaning of glue (i.e. a sticky substance), and merges it with the idea of a throne (in this case, a position of rulership or power). Thus, to be ‘throne-glued’ is to stick to a position of rulership like superglue, to hold tightly unto such a position refusing to let go even with public disapproval and/or after tenure expiration. The poet has created the word to effectively describe Samuel K. Doe, who forced himself into power as Liberia’s president through a violent coup d’état in 1980, a position he refused to vacate until September, 1990 when he was captured and overthrown. The term also smacks of the poet’s disapproval. The second item ‘locust-choked’ in the context ‘**locust-choked** sky’ describes an atmosphere of insecurity as a result of the destructive activities of the ‘locusts’ which in this case metaphorically refers to the corrupt politicians and people in positions of authority, who misuse the mandate of the people for selfish gains. The poet therefore admonished the disillusioned masses to turn to God for intervention:

Blister your knees
At your Faith’s prayer ground
Or they munch down our fences
These locusts (18)

The formation ‘fear-ruled’ used in the poem “Homage to the Dragon” qualified ‘lines’ in the context ‘Reeled **fear-ruled** lines’. The poem ironically is a bold and disapproving criticism of the negative and destructive activities of an elected Nigerian president who was campaigning for a re-election. The poet thus used the formation ‘fear-ruled’ to remind him that unlike the heyday of his dictatorial reign when people wrote or spoke in whispers in fear of his negative reaction, i.e. ‘reeled fear-ruled lines’, this time around, he would dare ‘the dragon’ with open criticism:

...Now that your hands grope again
For the dagger of our yester-death;
For the dagger of our second death;
Now I must scream,
Spokesman for the wordless (22/3)

The word 'hunger-bleached' in the context '... **hunger-bleached**/Sheets of skin' captures the level of hardship and starvation the masses are subjected to, in the same country where a few privilege individuals have more than they need. By this formation Ushie succeeds in comparing what the sun does to sheets of clothing to what hunger has done to the skin of the masses.

In the context 'O that my **head-sheathed** swords/were ever drawn/to slit and leave raw wounds', the poet presents the human head as a cover or sheath for 'swords' that can be drawn when necessary. Indeed, when the head thinks out ideas that can lead to destruction or a revolution, it has literally unsheathed its own sword. 'West-inclined' literally describes a direction towards the west point of the compass where the sun sets. Featured in the context 'And my head wears now/a **west-inclined** beret of my sun' (56), the poet describes someone in his/her old age or later part of life, a time when the head wears 'a west-inclined beret...' which metaphorically signifies grey hair. The compound, 'iroko-muscled' enables the poet to effectively and graphically describe the hugely muscled physique of a truck pusher, which appears much like the massive roots of an iroko tree, while the formation 'victim-age' is the poet's economic way of saying 'age of victimization'. It also highlights his disapproval of the evil practice which has become the order of the day in his society. Finally on compounding, we look at the rare formation 'selves-unwilled' which is a noun plus verb formation functioning as a verb in the context 'you and i/**selves-unwilled**/here'. What the poet did was to stylistically operate on the known compound 'self-willed' by adding the plural suffix -ES to 'self' and the reversative prefix UN- to 'willed' to derive the new compound. Thus, we may interpret the entire context to mean that none of us (i.e. you and i) decided or willed our existence 'here'. The freshness of the expression draws the reader's attention to it, and by extension his/her interest to the poet's message.

The use of **blending/pun** constitutes the climax of Ushie's lexical experimentation in the current text. Indeed, he exploits the sounds and structures of words to his advantage, often making new words and meaning out of existing ones. The first item on Table D 'hewman' for example is a play on the sound and structure of the English word 'human' in the following context: '... crocodiles nurtured by **hewman** flesh'. But, beyond mere morpho-phonological play on words, the coinage 'hewman' suggests that the human flesh are obtained by brutal means, perhaps killing or butchering of human beings whose hewed flesh are then used to nurture the crocodiles. The experimental word 'softstitutes' is obtained from a blend of the words 'soft' and 'substitutes'. Thus, instead of saying 'soft substitutes' the poet prefers the single coinage 'softstitutes' in the context. The new word 'compagriots' is coined from the word 'compatriots', which means 'fellow countrymen'. Thus, by mere exchange of the letters [t] and [g] the poet achieves a different word and meaning. The new word therefore means 'fellow writers or poets' since the word 'griot' describes a writer as suggested by the terms 'quills' and 'nibs' in the context of usage (see pg. 11).

The use of parenthesis around a letter of a word to achieve extra meaning and communication is a feature that Ushie experiments with profusely. The lexical item ‘(s)pent up’ for example, used in the context: ‘**(s)pent** up workers of our termitarium’ leaves the reader with two possible word options and meanings, both of which appropriately describe the workers in question. Thus, the poet is able to effectively communicate the plight of the workers, who are both ‘pent up’ (i.e. having bottled up feelings) and ‘spent up’ (exhausted or used up) using a single experimental word item. Similarly, the item ‘p (l) ain’ in the context ‘...that **p(l)ain** com/pound’ captures in one experimental formation the idea that the compound being described is a plain (or simple) one where people experience pain. Other instances as enlisted in Table D include: **rei(g)n**, **(e)state**, and **(p)rude**.

To conclude analysis on pun/blends, we examine the following lexical items: **executhiefly**, **tyrelessly**, **atmosfear**, **painometer** and **murderdoms**. The first two items appear in the last stanza of the poem “Mobile casket” as follows (emphasis mine):

We are both dead, o brother:
You, shrouded **executhiefly**
In your tired casket
Going...on this one road;
And we, or our skeletons
Tyrelessly watching you
As we go clothed in the elements

The above stanza presents a contrast between the living conditions of an African political office holder or government official represented by ‘you’ and the masses represented by ‘we’. While the government official moves about ‘shrouded **executhiefly**’ in a tinted vehicle (i.e. ‘tired casket’), the masses whom hard conditions have reduced to mere skeletons watch ‘**tyrelessly**’ (i.e. on bare feet) as they walk about ‘clothed in the elements’. The poet has created the word ‘**executhiefly**’ from the word ‘executively’ to criticize the government official who uses his/her position as a government executive to embezzle public funds at the expense of the suffering masses. Thus, instead of being carried like an executive, he is rather shrouded like a thief in executive position. The word ‘**tyrelessly**’ captures the plight of the masses, whose only means of transporting themselves are their ‘tyreless’ feet. The next item ‘**atmosfear**’ suggests an atmosphere of fear in the context ‘...this **atmosfear** of pain’. The presence of ‘pain’ in the context corroborates this interpretation. ‘Painometre’ is coined from the blend of the words ‘pain’ and ‘-metre’ (device for measuring the thing mentioned). Thus, as thermometer is an instrument for measuring the temperature of a person’s body, the new word ‘**painometre**’ serves as an instrument for measuring the amount of pain a person feels. Lastly, we have the item ‘**murderdom**’ which is a product of the blend of the words ‘murder’ and ‘kingdoms’. The experimental word used in the context ‘... African dictator’s **murderdoms**’ therefore describes a kingdom where murder has become a common place.

Another aspect of Ushie’s lexical experimentation is the assigning of new grammatical functions to words through the instrumentality of **functional shift**. As illustrated on Table E, all the identified cases of conversion are a shift from noun to verb category. By so doing the words are given extra force, and are thus able to effectively convey the desired effect. The word ‘winter’ for example is ordinarily a noun referring to

the coldest season of the year. But, used as a verb in the following context ‘...even now, we lean on foreign vaults/Where our communal sweat **winters**/In private coded accounts?’ the word assumes connotative significance. The poet is here interested in the idea of dryness which winter connotes rather than in the denotative meaning. The word ‘winters’ may therefore be replaced with ‘dries up’ or ‘disappears’ in the context. The same is the case with the word ‘tails’ in the line ‘As evening breeze **tails** noon flame’. The poet is simply interested in the idea of coming behind or after but chooses the word ‘tails’ to firm up his diction. ‘Hungers’ suggests strong desire for something in the context used, while ‘mother’ in its own context means ‘to serve as a mother’.

Finally, Table F illustrates Ushie’s manipulation of words and their letters to visually create a picture of what they describe, a feature described as the ‘logodaedalian technique’. By so doing he seems to agree with Niyi Osundare’s assertion in an interview with Adagbonyin, “the page for me is like the canvas for a painter, and I see it as a great opportunity that must not be wasted. I want to draw poetry on it in such a way as would make it mean more than the way it could have meant if they weren’t arranged the way they are” (113). Only three instances of this feature are identified in the text, and the words affected include: ‘earthwards’, ‘linking’ and ‘lowering’. These words, as shown on Table F, have been unconventional arranged vertically on the page to visually foreground their meanings. The word ‘earthwards’ suggests a downwards movement into the underground. The poet thus arranges the letters of the word vertically downwards to create a picture of the actual movement into the underground. This is also the case with ‘lowered’, which suggests a movement from a higher position downwards. In this particular instance, the movement is from the ability to stand and walk on both legs to a wheelchair. By this technique, the poet has in addition been able to draw the reader’s attention to the plight of the victim being allegized in the poem. The remaining lexical item, ‘linking’, although written vertically on the page like the other two, does not suggest a downward movement. Rather, the letters of the word have simply been arranged in such a way as to create a space or gap, and thus the need for linking as the word suggests. It also gives a picture of the ‘umbilical cord’ mentioned in the preceding line which, according to the poet, links ‘this heart of Africa to that web of islands’. The experimental lexical patterns on Table F obviously give pleasure to the eyes of the reader as well as engage his/her imagination.

Summary and Conclusion

This study has revealed the degree of linguistic adventure in the new Nigerian poetry. Indeed, the recent Nigeria poets take enormous liberty in experimenting with linguistic elements for stylistic and communicative purposes. Thus, Joe Ushie, in the text studied, exploited the linguistic resources offered by the English Language’s morphology, phonology and orthography for various stylistic and communicative exigencies. Accordingly, he was found to have used affixes in unusual contexts, forced roots/stems into uncommon compositions, redeployed words to grammatical categories other than theirs, and generally played on the spellings and pronunciations of words. He was also discovered to have consciously deployed visual patterns for special effect. These demonstrate the determination of the recent African poets to utilize every possible linguistic/stylistic means to make their poetry meaningful, pleasurable and relevant against the reader-unfriendly posture of the earlier poets.

The study thus revealed that lexical experimentations in the poetry studied were not mere pastimes or stylistic overture, but conscious attempt by the poet to achieve originality, freshness and variety, economy of diction, vocabulary expansion and effective communication, which are all features of great poetry. Of course Okechukwu Umeh has noted that “only a vital, fresh, surprising and enthralling language” (112) is good enough for poetry. Joe Ushie has attempted to create such a language through lexical experimentations.

It therefore projects Joe Ushie as a remarkably conscious artist, who understood and utilized in his poetry the creative possibilities of words and the communicative potentials of graphology through experimentation. Of course, “the remarkable writer is one who has been able to bend, if not break, the pre-set rules of language, the linguistic outlaw who has flouted its hallowed thou-shalt-nots” (Osundare, 17). The poetry of Joe Ushie (and indeed other members of his generation) deserves special critical attention for their novelty in the use of language and style.

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LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH TO URHOB ANTHROPONYMS



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Abstract

This paper is a sociolinguistic study of Urhobo anthroponyms. The specific objectives are to examine the structure of names and name typologies in Urhobo. This study is a qualitative research which adopts a descriptive research design, using a linguistic anthropological approach as a framework for analysis of data. The selected Urhobo names used for this research were obtained from some selected school registers in Urhobo speaking area of Delta state. The findings reveal that Urhobo names have a structure of compounding and certain segments are elided during the compounding process. The identified typologies of Urhobo names are festive/days of the work, theophoric names and metaphoric names. The paper finds out that Urhobo anthroponyms are indexes that reveal the sociocultural realities that exist among Urhobo people. The study also discovers that names are not mere tags among the Urhobo but they are replete with Urhobo philosophy and belief system. The paper recommends further research works on Urhobo anthroponyms from different perspectives.

Introduction

Everything in the world virtually has a name. Name is used in identity construction. Through one's name, the circumstances surrounding one's name and one's social affiliation can be discerned. The study of names generally is known as onomastics. The study of personal names is known as anthroponymy whereas the study of place names, on the other hand, is known as toponymy. In this study, the major interest is on anthroponymy. According to Algeo, anthroponymy deals with the study of proper names including their forms and use.

The study of personal names is multidisciplinary in the sense that it can be approached from a philosophical, anthropological or linguistic perspective. Personal names, notes Agyekum, can best be discussed by an amalgamation of both philosophical and anthropological notions. From a philosophical perspective, Rey notes that a name refers to a different element of human experience, that is, to an individual or a collective entity, which it designates or denotes. This implies that names are therefore purely referential. In the philosophical approach to anthroponymy, philosophers and linguists who adopt a philosophical orientation have attempted to characterise names logically in the absence of social contexts. The major tenet of the philosophical school of thought is that names are only regarded as arbitrary labels that refer to certain signified entities, therefore the signifier and the signified may not share certain intrinsic qualities. As observed by Rymes, this notion is true when one considers situations where people who bear the same name behave differently. He goes further to claim that the characterisation of names is constant with Saussure's characterisation of linguistic signs as arbitrarily connected to their referent. In essence, the view of the philosophical approach to anthroponymy is that people's names do not depend on social context. This view is in

line with the asocial orientation of Chomsky, which claims that there is no relationship between language and society. In essence, there is no relationship between naming and the social contexts.

On the other hand, anthropological and linguistic anthropological perspectives have it that names are related to social contexts. The act of naming individuals based on social contexts characterises many African societies such as Akan (Obeng; Agyekum), Ewe (Abdul), Igbo (Mbiti; Ubahakwe; Iwundu; Onukawa), and Yoruba (Akinaso; Ajiboye; Abiodun; Ikotun; Akinola). A remarkable similarity among these researches is that names have cultural and social contexts that identify the bearer. Therefore, personal names, to a great extent emphasise social relationships. This is so because names are given based on sex, market day, hierarchy in birth, circumstances surrounding the birth, the person's structure, power, status, among others. In this regard, Komolafe (47) observes:

Names provide copious information about their owners, their position in the family; the circumstances surrounding their birth, parental/family situation, family hopes desires, expectations and aspirations; financial situation; links with departed family members and ancestors, ancestral history and origin and a way of keeping records.

This then implies that there is more to names. The specific objectives are to examine the structure of names and name typologies in Urhobo. This study is a qualitative research which adopts a descriptive research design, using a linguistic anthropological approach as a framework for analysis of data. The selected Urhobo names used for this research were obtained from some selected school registers in Urhobo speaking area of Delta state.

Literature review

Name and naming

Name, as a phenomenon that is studied, is a multidisciplinary field that has occupied the attention of philosophers of language, anthropologists, linguists and people from all works of life. In its simplest definition, names are words that refer to a person or an entity in the world. Komolafe contends that names provide copious information about their owners, their position in the family; the circumstances surrounding their birth, parental/family situation, family hopes desires, expectations and aspirations; financial situation; links with departed family members and ancestors, ancestral history and origin and a way of keeping records. This way of conceptualising names indicates that Komolafe aligns himself with the thought that names are not mere tags; rather they are socio-culturally conditioned. Similarly, Nwobia notes that in Afikpo (a town in Ebonyi state), personal names are influenced mainly by birthday, physical appearances, circumstances, theophoric and fauna. But she decries that these adoring naming systems are now eroding away, being threatened by the influence of education, religion, globalisation, urbanisation and westernisation.

In literature, the study of names in general is known as onomastics. For Bussmann, onomastics is the scientific investigation of the origin (development, age, and etymology), the meaning, and the geographic distribution of names. He further remarks that onomastic sub-disciplines include anthroponymy (the study of personal names), hydronymy (the study of names of bodies of water), and toponymy (the study of geographic place-names), among others. As it concerns this research work, the interest is

on anthroponymy, which is the study of personal names. Abdul opines that personal names are names which identify an individual in the society in which he lives and they reflect the values of the people and the society as a whole. Names given to children signal the general perception of the people and their worldview. In other words, personal names serve as means of communication because different naming systems and forms of address select different things about the self for communication and for emphasis. Corroborating the above assertion, Nwala remarks that given names or first names as popularly called are tags carried by individuals, which serve as mark of identity. He further purports that in cross-culture generally, given names are what the parents (biological or adopted) call their children which such children carry all through their life time. Suffice it to note that in some cultures, like the Western world, given names are mere accidental tags which are associated to nothing, but in Nigeria, (especially, among Yoruba people) given names have socio-cultural implications. Such implications define the experiences of the carrier's parents before and even during the birth of the carrier. The name of a person is always an indelible ink, which eternally reminds the name givers of their experiences in life.

Addressing people by their names, notes Chauke, reminds them and the people around them of events surrounding the construction of the name and the social hierarchies and characteristics of these names. Some people are able to enact their embodied understanding through personal names. According to Firth (60), "everyman carries his culture and much of his social reality about with him wherever he goes". These realities are sometimes identified through the person's personal name and his language. Akinnaso is of the view that personal names are usually constructed historically, maintained socially and they are based on the shared assumptions and expectations of members of the society. The act of giving someone a name is known as naming. In traditional Urhobo society, naming is a great event that is held few days after the child is born. Naming can be considered as a universal cultural practice. Every society in the world give names as tags to its people, but how the names are given, the practices and rituals involved and the interpretations attached to the names differ from society to society and from one culture to another (Chauke). Names have a specific meaning to every nation since names convey the history and culture of that particular nation while also evoking memories of love or bitterness within members of that nation. The above concurs with Meiring's assertion that names reflect the way in which people think and see the world around them. To the traditional African people, naming practices are very important since names are often given to mark the testimony of what a society holds dear in a given community. In other words, names bear testimony to the history and culture of a particular nation or people and they are given through the process of naming (Chauke).

Linguistic anthropology and its relation to naming

Linguistic anthropology is based on the theory that there is a strong interface between a people's language and their cultural practices. It mirrors on how language is used as cultural resources and practices, and how language is viewed as a powerful tool used to view and understand the worldview and philosophy of a particular society. In other words, one can therefore use language as a microscopic lens to view and understand the social practices and day-to-day activities of a society. Foley (3) on the role of linguistic anthropology states:

Anthropological linguistics is that sub-field of linguistics which is concerned with the place of language in its wider social and cultural context, its role in forging and sustaining cultural practices and social structures. It views language through the prism of the core anthropological concept, culture, and as such seeks to uncover the meaning behind the use, misuse or non-use of language, its different forms, registers and styles. It is an interpretive discipline peeling away at language to find cultural understandings.

This implies that the central focus of linguistic anthropology is the study of the relationship that exists between language and culture. For Duranti (2), "Linguistic anthropology is the study of language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice." The language of the people is inextricably interwoven with their culture and thought. In linguistic anthropology, language is considered as a social tool. Language has the power to evoke realities beyond the literal linguistic content of what is been talked about. It is a set of symbolic resources that enter the constitution of social fabric and the individual representation of actual or possible worlds (cf. Duranti). It is a cultural practice and verbal activities that link and fit verbal activities to the real world. Duranti (14-21) discussed three interconnected analytical notions that help to understand the function of language in culture. These are (i) performance, (ii) indexicality and (iii) participation. Of these three the most important one to the discussion of Urhobo naming system is indexicality. Silverstein upholds that indexes are signs that have some kind of existential relation with what they refer to spatial, temporal, social or personal. In indexicality, language is used as a tool through which socio-cultural world is constantly described, evaluated and reproduced. If words are indexically related to some objects and reality of the world it implies that words carry with them a power that transcends beyond mere identification and tagging of people, objects and properties (Duranti).

Empirical studies

Oladejo investigates some salient issues in Yoruba personal names. The paper intends to bring out some facts that are prominent and easily noticeable in the Yoruba personal names. The paper looks at some discrepancies which include the choice of naming day, healthy rivalries among the names traditional worshippers are giving to their children, names peculiar to males and females and unisex names, names that show whether somebody is from a wealthy or royal family, observation on Yoruba personal names to be all vowel-initial and frequent use of 'Oriki abiso' as opposed to former occasional use. The paper also discovers ambiguity nature of some names, names peculiar to some areas or sub-tribes of Yoruba, the chieftaincy titles that have become personal names, the multisyllabic nature of all names in Yoruba, the extinct names, the compound names, personal names that have become the names of areas in each town or city and numerous personal names giving to a child on the naming day. This paper is similar to the current study as both look at personal names but in different languages. Onukawa studies the chi concept in Igbo gender naming. The paper examines the gender naming in Igbo personal names that contain a key religious concept 'chi'. The paper reveals that a substantial number of Igbo females bear names associated with the chi, the Igbo personal life force while equally associated with chi's compound form 'chukwu'. The paper proves that most Igbo names are gender-specific. Onukawa's study is similar to the current study as both look at naming. The difference lies in the language

understudy. Onukawa's study focused on Igbo gender naming while the current study looks at naming in the Urhobo language.

Ekpo examines the structure in Ibibio names. The paper investigates the manner in which personal names, particularly those associated with traditional beliefs and practices are viewed among the Ibibio of south-eastern Nigeria. The paper discovers that most names Ibibio people possess today belong to the one of the seven types: lineage names, place-names, events-names, nick-names and day-names. The findings also reveal that names in Ibibio include the time the child was born: morning, evening or on a rainy day, day of the week, market day etc. the study believes that some names have some influences on the characters of their bearers. Ekpo's study is similar to the current study as both look at personal names but in different languages. Ikotun examines new trends in Yoruba personal names among Yoruba Christians. Data used for analysis were drawn from Yoruba personal names, the list of names of the candidates of the Joint Admission Matriculation Board (JAMB) of Nigeria, the list of staff of three Nigerian universities, some attendance registers of pupils in nursery, primary and secondary schools as well as participant's observation. The paper shows that the European or established churches and the newly founded autochthonous Nigerian churches have different influences on Yoruba naming system and tradition-based Yoruba personal or first names. The paper discovers a complete cultural shift from the use of tradition-based Yoruba personal names as first names to the use of biblical or Christian names that the dimension is as a result of the influence of western culture or civilization and the newly founded churches in Nigeria. The paper further shows that the activities that are shrouded in fanaticism, flavours, modernization and especially names that endear the Nigerian believers to one another are meant to prove that the newly founded autochthonous Nigerian churches understand the bible teachings better than the European churches and that names modification or name change is inevitable when there is acculturation. Ikotun's study is similar to the current study as both look at personal names but in different languages.

Anyachonkeya examines naming in Igbo language to ascertain a range of implications it entails. The study assumes a position that the Igbo do not give names to their children anyhow, that Igbo names have social, linguistic, historical, religious and philosophic colouring. The paper argues that names of children of the Igbo born are a projection of not only the whims of the parents but also a window through which they mirror lives and concatenations. Findings reveal that Igbo names constitute an aphorism unto themselves as well as an exemplum of their worldview. The study further reveals the sociological and ideological culture surrounding people's names, vis-à-vis their folkways, fears and aspirations, joys and hates, ideals and values as well as their cultural and spiritual values in which they hold so dear. The study observes that every generation sets its own value. This study looks at the Omuma in Oru East local government area of Imo state. Anyachonkeya's study is similar to the current study as both look at naming structure but differ in the language of focus. Anyachonkeya's study focused on the Igbo language while the current study looks at anthroponyms in Urhobo, using a linguistic-anthropological approach. Akinola examines communicative role of Yoruba names. The study intends to investigate the concept of name, meaning of selected names and the communicative role of names among Yoruba. The paper reveals that to Yorubas, contrary to the general views is that a name given to a child usually has a great influence on the

future of the bearer. The Yoruba believe that there is strong connection between a name and the significant values and virtues associated with it. The paper concludes by encouraging youth to inculcate the habit of bearing their indigenous names and shun the habit of anglicisation or customization of their names in the names of globalization and modernization. Akinola's study is similar to the current study as both look at personal names but in different languages.

Eleojo explores the socio-cultural import of Igala names. The study investigates the traditional appellations by which members of the major ethnic group of Kogi state, the Igala of central Nigeria are known. The findings show that there is more to their names than mere identifying marks, labels or tags. The paper finds out that Igala names are given basically in accordance with spiritual and historic-social circumstances of birth, emotions of parents etc. the paper discovers that naming ceremonies form an integral part of formal means of initiating a child into the membership of a community. Eleojo's study is similar to the current study as both look at names but in different perspectives. The difference also lies in the language under study. Onumajuru investigates the semantic and pragmatic contents of personal names and naming in the Igbo language and culture. The objectives of the study are to examine the structure of Igbo names and analyse their semantic and pragmatic contents. The paper discovers that selected personal names were grouped structurally according to their forms in lexical (or monomorphemic) names, noun-verb phrasal-complement/sentential names and interrogation/injunction names. The findings show that Igbo names structurally fall into three broad categories: lexical, phrasal and sentential. For Ndigbo, a name is not just a tag of identity or personal label but a story and an expression of the expression of the events and circumstances surrounding the birth of the child as well as the parents' life experiences and worldview. Onumajuru's study is similar to the current study as both look at naming but in different languages. Onumajuru's study was done descriptively but the current study looks at the linguistic anthropological approach to personal names in Urhobo.

Summary of the literature review

This section reviewed works of scholars that are relevant to this work. The reviews show that a lot have been done on naming in other languages; much attention has not been given to personal names in Urhobo to the best of the researchers' knowledge. This is the gap this work tends to fill. This study examines Urhobo anthroponyms using the linguistic-athropological approach for analysis of data. This work follows the qualitative paradigm and adopts a descriptive research design survey for analysis.

Data presentation and analysis

In this section of this research work, the Urhobo anthroponyms which form the data for this study will be presented and analysed in line with the objectives of the study.

Structures of Urhobo anthroponyms

As observed from the data gathered, Urhobo personal names take different structures. These structures are examined hereunder.

Simple names

Simple names are those names that convey one meaning. In other words, they contain only one morpheme. This structure of anthroponyms as they manifest Urhobo can be exemplified as thus:

Name	Gloss
a. Òkẹ̀	Gift
b. Éjiró	Praise
c. Òmìèmìẹ̀	Sweetness
d. Òjì	Thief
e. Òdè	Big
f. Àkpò	Life
g. Òkóró	Male
h. Òkòkó	Female
i. Èbrùphiyò	Blessing
j. Ésèròphe	Grace
k. Yẹrùvwù	Prayer
l. Òvìeréyà	Queen
m. Érhùvwùn	Beauty
n. Élòhọ	Blessing

Examples (1a-1n) are Urhobo anthroponyms which have the simple name structure because they communicate one meaning or sense as can be seen in the gloss.

Compound names

Compound anthroponyms in Urhobo are those personal names that have two free morphemes. In other words, they contain only one morpheme. This structure of anthroponyms as they manifest Urhobo can be illustrated as thus:

Names	Gloss
2 a. Ésè + mé = ^É Èsèmé gift mine	my gift
b. Ọnà + ọmẹ = ọnọmẹ this own	My own
c. Ọmọtẹ + èkó = ọmọtèkó girl lagos	Lagos girl
d. Umu + koko = umukoko	Young woman
e. Úrùemù + èsìrì = Úrùemùèsìrì character deed	Good deeds
f. Èrhì + ọghènẹ = Èrhìọghènẹ spirit god	Spirit of God
g. Èmù + ókẹ = Èmùvókẹ thing time	Everything has time
h. Éjiró + ọghènẹ = Éjirọghènẹ praise god	Praise God
i. Àkpèvwẹ + ọghènẹ = Àkpèvwẹọghènẹ praise god	Praise God

2a-2i is examples of Urhobo anthroponyms that are made up of two free morphemes.

Desententialised Names

Desententialised names are names formed through the process of desententialisation. Desententialisation is a process whereby a sentence is reduced to a noun. The anthroponyms below have the structure of desententialised nominals.

Name	Gloss
3 a. Óghèné + fè + jirò = Óghènéfèjirò god want praise	God is worthy of praise.
b. `Etá + àkpò + bù + nọ = `Etákpòbùnọ much. words life plenty much	Words of the world is
c. Òhwó + ígho = Òhwónígho money. person money	Human is better than
d. Ùghwù + bè + ètínẹ = Ùghwùbètínẹ death tire here	Let death ends here.
e. Óghèné + rù + ró = Óghèné rùró god do it	God did it.
f. Ónò + rì + ódẹ = Ónòrìódẹ who see tomorrow	Who knows tomorrow?
g. Èta + bù + nọ = Ètábúnọ	Words are much.
h. Óghèné + gà + rèn = Óghènégàrèn God strong	God is great.
i. Ejòkpa + ọghenẹ = Ejòkparọghenẹ trust god	Let us trust God.
j. Èrhì + mẹ + yómà = Èrhímẹyómà spirit mine good	My God is good.
k. Óghèné + ohwó = Óghènéòhwó god person	God gives/provides.
l. Óghèné + òyòrè = Óghènéòyòrè god answer	God answers prayers.
m. Ónò + mí + nẹ = Ónòmínẹ god me look	Whom do I look up to?
n. Óghèné + ọchùkò = Óghènéọchùkò god helper	God is my helper.
o. òjà + nọ + màrè = òjànọmàrè suffer old	I have met the challenge.
p. óyòvwi + ké + émọ = óyòvwikémọ blessed. good give children	May your children be
q. èfè + mí + nẹ = èfèmínẹ you will be. wealth me look	Let us see how wealthy
r. èdàfè + tá + nùrè = èdàfètánùrè wealth talk finish	The wealth has spoken.

Example 3a-3r is some instances of desententialised names in Urhobo. From the above examples, it could be seen that these names are full sentences and they convey complete meaning. But since they have been nominalised, they are written as one word.

Typology of Urhobo anthroponyms

In line with the tenets of linguistic anthropology, Urhobo anthroponyms are not mere tags given to people. The personal name an Urhobo native bears reveals the sociocultural beliefs of Urhobo people. As such, Urhobo anthroponyms serve as indexes (as postulated by linguistic anthropologists) which point towards the events or situations

that surrounds one's birth. These indexes help in classifying Urhobo anthroponyms into typologies as examined in this section of the research work.

Festival/ days of the week

One of the indexes of Urhobo anthroponyms is that it reveals the day of the week or the festive season a person is born. This implies that at the mention of name, an Urhobo native need not be told that the bearer was born a particular day or during a particular festive season. Some examples of the personal names that fall under this category include:

	Name	Gloss
a.	Èdórè	Feast day
4 b.	Èdígbè	Igbe day
c.	Èdewò	Market day
d.	Èdíjaná	Sunday
e.	Èdéki	Market day
f.	Èsimísi	Christmas
g.	Èdíróo	Work day

The anthroponyms in 4a-4g indexicalise the day or period the bearers of such names were born. 4a shows that someone bearing “Èdórè” was born on a particular time of the year. The same phenomenon is applicable to other names in example 4.

Theophoric names

Another way to classify Urhobo anthroponyms is to look out for names that are centered on God or has God in them. This category of names is known within the ambit of onomastics as theophoric names. As it relates to linguistic anthropology, these theophoric names serve as indexes that give insights to people the situation of things before the bearer was conceived or when the bearer was still in the womb.

	Names	Gloss
5 •	Óghèné + rù + èmù = Óghèné rù èmù god do thing	God makes all things possible
•	Óghèné + vwó + èdè = Óghènévwédè god own day	God owns the day
•	Óghèné + vwó + gágán = Óghènévwógágán god own strong	God provides all my strength
•	Óghèné + rù + nò = Óghèné rù nò god do much	God has done so much
•	Óghèné + nyérhò + vwó = Óghènényérhòvwó god hear own	God answers prayers
•	Óghèné + mí + nè = Óghèné mí nè god me look	I look up to God
•	Óghèné + nyòrè = Óghènényòrè god hear	God answers prayers
•	Óghèné + mè = Óghèné mè god mine	My God
•	Óghèné + òchùkò = Óghèné òchùkò god helper	God is my helper
•	Óghèné + òvò = Óghèné òvò god one	Only God

- **Óghèné + brù + mè** = **Óghènébrùmè** **God decided in my favour**
 god cut mine
- **Óghèné + chò + vwè** = **Óghènéchòvwè** **God aided me**
 god help me

The Urhobo anthroponyms in 5a-5l support the position of linguistic anthropologists that names are not mere tags rather they capture the social realities of Urhobo people who give the above-listed names to their children. In 5a, the name may have been given due to the parent's inability to give birth for a long time. When they finally gave birth, they used the name, "Óghènébrùmè", to remind themselves and people that nothing is impossible for God. This same scenario could be applicable to the situation of things in the name in 5b. As such, the names above are not randomly given but given on purpose. On the other hand, another index in the names in 5a-5l is that Urhobo believe in a Supernatural Being who they rely on in times of difficulties and showcase the kind of reverence they have for Him through the names they bear.

Metaphoric names

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 6 a. Òsìò | Rain |
| a. Úlòhò | Iroko tree |
| b. Úrhíe | River |
| c. Emeni | Small elephant |
| d. Èmérhò | Small catfish |
| e. Òkpógòrò | A big toad |

The names above are animal related on the one hand and aqua-botanical related on the other hand. The meaning attached to these names is not literal but metaphoric. The metaphoric meaning of "Òsìò" could be a life of no struggles. The metaphoric meaning of "Úlòhò" can be a life filled with outstanding achievements. "Úrhíe" connotes freshness whereas "Emeni" connotes robust lifestyle. "Èmérhò" connotes fertility whereas a "Òkpógòrò" metaphorically means a person that can withstand any condition just like a toad can live in water and on land. These names stimulate people to inquire on the social index which these names point to.

Conclusion

This paper concludes that Urhobo anthroponyms are not mere tags given to people rather these names are replete with the philosophy and sociocultural realities of Urhobo people. In essence, Urhobo people do not give names because of the feeling that everybody must have a name. Personal names for Urhobo people are indexes through one communicates his or her feelings to God, the things expected from the bearer and giving a clue of the circumstances that surround the bearer's birth.

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EDUCATIONAL THEATRE MANAGEMENT: A PANACEA TO BUSINESS EXPOSURE



Hannah Modupe Akpodiete

Abstract

Management as a daily activity is as old as mankind; it is an organized way through which man achieves positive goals. Every business has a managerial department that enhances the efficiency of the Organisational goals. Thus Educational Management is a management practice that is carried out in an academic environment, while Educational Theatre Management is a management practice within an academic institution that deals with arts as an artistic creation and the business of administering and transforming artistic creation into a sustainable venture. The focus of this paper is on the early exposure of students to educational theatrical management principles and practices in order to introduce them to practical theatre and reduce the phobia of not breaking-even in theatre business in Nigeria. This anchors on the fact that educational management is the art of running a theatre business/company within the academic system. In as much as the aim of every business venture is to break even and make profit, educational theatre is not an exception. Thus, the paper traces the origin of management from the 19th century when controlling and coordinating large number of staff became a problem to the existing companies available then. To achieve this, Organisational Learning Systems Theory will be adopted; a postmodern management theory that emphasised learning and change. The paper concludes that practical theatre businesses/ companies are left in the hands of amateurs, the early exposure of students to the nitty-gritty and practical experience of business management will instill boldness, help to establish and run effectively a theatre industry that is sustainable.

Introduction

The Business Dictionary defines management as a factor of production, which consists of interlocking functions of creating corporate policy and organising, planning, controlling and directing an organisation's resources in order to achieve the objectives of the company policy (2019). It is a universally acclaimed concept for a group of activities in an organization, which borders on various levels of decision making. Management can be science as well as an art because its fundamentals are universal and cut across all professions.

Management is the wheel that drives an organisation, company and business to its desired goal which is to break even. Prior to the 19th Century, organisations were disorder in their management processes because the major focus was on manufacturing alone. The process of transferring the manufactured goods to the consumers was not given priority, which led to a lot of waste and chaotic situation (Joe Taylor Jr, 2019). Going by the Business history, Taylor was the first business leader to introduce the three core principles of management and leadership that are still in use till today. He revolutionized the management aspect of his company by introducing the standardized

processes and measurement of performance principles, which are scientific techniques of measuring individual performance. According to the 5000BC Sumerians records the Egyptian pyramids, the great China wall, the Colosseum in Rome and the Taj Mahal in India were all evidences of the ancient management skills (Dawas Sharma, 2013)

The formal study of management started in the 19th century as an advocacy by Frederick. W. Taylor (1856-1915). He advocated that it was the duty of management to design jobs, provide incentives to enhance workers' abilities to achieve higher productivity at work place. This scientific approach to management brought economic liberation and transformation from “*entrepreneurial capitalism to managerial capitalism*”. It brought about rapid industrial growth, established generally accepted method of performance of employee and developed payment system that provided a reward for workers' performance. Based on Fayol's approach Engineers and managers of French miners came to the conclusion that management was an activity common to all human undertakings – home, business, government, school and that all these undertakings needed five basic administrative functions to be effective Diwas Shama Man; Mohan Mishra, (2013).

History of Theatre

Theatre can be defined as a collaborative act that involves life performance which uses actors and actresses or inanimate objects to convey artistic expression before a live audience in a specific place. At inception, the theatre as an art form was drawn from the performance of the ritualistic festival of Dionysus in Greece. But according to the Wikipedia Encyclopedia (2013) the study of theatre as an academic discipline can be traced to the Plato's idea of a broad education system for the Greek citizenry between (427-348BC). Hence, the establishment of the first Academy in Athens was regarded as the first institute of Higher Learning in the western world.

Theatre Management in Nigeria

In Nigeria Theatre Arts as an academic discipline started from the University of Ibadan, School of Drama in October, 1963 with the admission of students for Diploma course. There was a six month collaborative work between Kola Ogunmola Travelling Theatre known as (Artist in –Residence) and the School of Drama; which served as internship training for the Ogunmola Travelling Theatre. This synergy resulted into the documentation of Kola Ogunmola's works and the birth of series of productions in 1962. The School learnt some basic styles from the troupe while the troupe also assimilated new ideas and methods of running a private troupe. The pioneer staffs were about 10 with Geoffery Axworthy as the Director of School and Martin Banham as Deputy Director. Since the establishment till date more than 80% of Universities in Nigeria offer Theatre Art as a course of study under various names such as- Media Arts, Dramatic arts, Performing Arts, Creative Arts, Theatre and Film studies, etc. A change of nomenclature took place in 1970 from the School of Drama to Theatre Arts department with Prof. Wole Soyinka as the Head of Department. Despite the fact that Theatre Arts as a department started in 1970, Theatre management as a discipline did not commence until 1974 when it was first introduced into the course curriculum (Remi, A Adedokun 1992). Wikipedia defined Theatre as a “collaborative form of fine art that uses live performers, typically,

actors and actresses to present the experience of a real or imagined event before a live audience in a specific place, often a stage” (2019),

Arising from this definition, the audience is as important and vital as the performance because without the audience the production is incomplete. The audience is the consumer of a theatrical performance without which a production cannot be appreciated. The arm of the theatre that deals directly with the audience is the publicity and advertisement which is an offshoot of management.

Potentials of Nigeria Theatre Business Industry

Nigeria is endowed with diverse cultural endowments, creative skills, traditional festivals and heritages that can serve as raw materials for theatre practitioners. Despite these natural resources that can be processed into finished goods by theatre practitioners to earn a living; 80% of theatre arts graduates find it difficult to attain a living from the knowledge they tenaciously acquired for 4years, making them job seekers instead of being job provider. The aims of acquiring educational knowledge are to boost economic emancipation and elevate the social status of the acquirer. If after many years of graduation as a theatre artist one cannot make ends meet, it can be said that there is a missing link in the process of acquiring the knowledge. Theatre arts are unique profession that does not hinge or totally depend on academic theories and impacted knowledge in the classroom. It allows for the exploration of culture, creativity in the traditional space married with personal creative skill in a collaborative venture that can alleviate poverty and enhance the social status of practitioners. The percentage of unemployed youth in Nigeria is alarming, and it has become obvious that the Government cannot absorb all thus the call to look inward. The most valuable, affordable and commonly accessible resources for this purpose is creativity, culture and heritage. If these creative endowments and skills are harnessed and managed properly and effectively, they have the abilities to generate income and provide jobs for our teaming graduates. For practitioners to earn a living, theatre must be labeled with the nomenclature “a Business” it must not be called a business alone, it must be treated as such.

Theatre as a Business Venture

Stephenson sees business as the regular production or purchase and sales of goods undertaken with the objectives of earning profit and acquiring wealth through the satisfaction of human want (2008). Also Dicksee defines business as human activities directed towards producing or acquiring wealth through buying and selling of goods (1980). Going by these definitions, business entails incessant production and distribution of goods and services with the sole aim of making profit by abiding by some basic market principles/ethics. The national and International market is cumbered with a lot of technological and innovative changes, which has created positive space for creative innovation. The era of theatrical knowledge has given way for creative thinking, creative skills, creative innovations, imaginative arts and inventive abilities; which is the hub of the 21st century business drive.

The universally acceptance of creativities as a salable product in the business market is a plus for the theatre that must be exploited to the fullness. Thus, the creative market is highly competitive and proficiency, to blend and make a mark, creative organizational structure, individual creativity and creative management methods must be adopted to develop business that will have competitive stamina in the global creative

market. Therefore, theatre as a business venture must keep pace with the creative world to make profit and keep the business alive. Doing these management must adapt to changing circumstances, create new method by branding the existing values and methods to create an added values that will attract patronage. Theatre performance as a salable commodity is fluidity, abstract and imaginary not substantive, tangible, concrete and perceptible. Hence dialogue is very paramount to the sales of the product. The dialogue between managers, directors, technical managers and costumers must be fluent, candid and realistically based to permit creative interpretation of script and enable each department to contribute their quota to the achievement of a total theatre.

Managing a theatre as a business enterprise is the sole job of the theatre managers; it presupposes that managers have been thought on the skills of operating theatre as a business outfit. To achieve these managers must be seen and treated as assets in a business venture, because the success of the organization lies on the capability of the manager. They serve as a jimmy in the business outfit, so recruiting a strong, viable and creatively skilled manager is the first step to being successful in business. Wills Tower Watson stressed that strong manager performance in recognizing employee performance increases engagement by almost 60 percent, increase engagement leads to improved customer service, while better customer service gives birth to more loyal customers. Quoting Peter Drucker Tower mentioned that the productivity of work is not the responsibility of the workers but of the manager. It is obvious that managers experiences implausible situations in the process of managing a business, achieving result and attaining leadership expectations. Managers scramble between competing goals, formulating new ideas and taking decisions; which often lead to working extra hours and critical thinking to achieve resounding success. Hence they must be exposed to thorough training and best business practices achieve best result.

Features of Business Ethics

The ethics are the sole of the business, the solid foundation upon which business is built without which the objectives of the business cannot be achieved. With a good understanding of business ethics practitioners will conserve competitive advantage over other forms of businesses. Thus, enhances the building of some level of trust between consumers and producers guaranteeing consumers protection and equal treatment. Some of such features include:

- It deals with the exchange of goods and services between one or more persons.
- It also involved different types of transactions that will culminate into achieving the major objectives.
- The foremost objective desire of a businessman is to make profit.
- The business man must display good business qualities, skills, experience and expertise in the running of the business.
- A business man must be prepared to take risk and ventures into some uncertain ventures.
- In every business, there must be a buyer and a seller without which the process will be incomplete and the objectives cannot be achieved.
- There must be a marketing and distribution channel, through which the product will get to the consumer.
- The end product must promote human satisfaction, without which the production chain will be broken.

A business man must be conscious and anxious of feedback from consumers and as well as give back to the society, environment and community in which the business is situated as well as render some basic social responsibilities that will affect the people positively. Theatre performance as a business venture must possess these features, also managers must be knowledgeable about business fundamentals, and Jayson Demers claimed that it is difficult and almost impossible to build a successful business by oneself alone without having mentors, partners, vendors and peers alongside.

Importance of Education in Business

Business leads to self-employment, reduces the level of unemployment and increases the GDP (gross domestic product) of a nation. Education is about learning and equipping the learner with the basics of business that will make them perform well. It exposes the recipients to business management ideals, financial management practices, marketing skills, modern advertisement method and practices and sharpens their intellectual skills. Education can be formal or informal. Formal education is training within the academic institutions while apprenticeship is an informal education that takes place outside an academic institution. Notwithstanding, both are geared towards impacting and equipping recipients with knowledge of becoming a successful business persons. Formal and informal education helps students to develop business culture and attitude that will sustain their business carrier in life and lunch them into the world business class. Tim Scott in the UK Family business Alliance stressed that,

Successful individuals in the business environment usually have a mix of education and experience relating to business concepts and principles. Business education involves teaching students the fundamentals, theories and processes of business. Today, students own their skills through practical experiences, which is a part of business education. 2014

Formal or informal education helps the recipients to gain wider business concept that can in future enhance productivity. These early preparedness create competitive business advantages and brings out the intuitive creative and innovative traits in the acquirer. This shows why apprenticeship is a major criterion for starting a business in the Eastern Nigeria. 80% of business men and women from the Eastern State of Nigeria have gone through one form of apprentice or the other, serving under a master for years depending on the agreement signed at inception thereby becoming a literate person in the chosen business carrier. Literate business persons have an edge over illiterate business persons because of the acquired education or skill (formal or informal) that will bring into limelight the intrinsic innovative ideals that can produce new method of doing business. Hence, customers and workers relationship is easier, management is less cumbersome and risk taking is not dreadful because of the early exposure to business education.

Attributes of a Successful Business

There are many determinant factors that delineate successful business from mediocre.

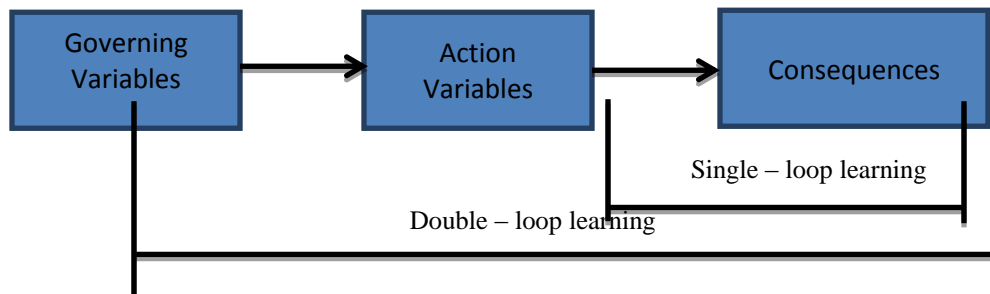
- Firstly the ability to take advantage of an opportunity / a minutest idea, transforming a small idea into a legendary business is achieved by a well knowledgeable, informed and erudite business minded person without a struggle.

- Also having a clear and distinct vision of what the business ought to be is a hallmark of a successful businessman. This is done by creating a mental picture of the kind of business and the type of customers you intend to serve.
 - There must be a written down detailed business plans- Thus showing plans of how to make the business successful is an off shot of a clear vision of the business by the visionary. It encourages a review plan and on the spot assessment of the workability of the operational plans, financial plans, marketing plans and recruitment assumptions. Business plans helps to identify necessary adjustment, alteration recruitment modifications of all the assumptions on the written plans.
 - Formulating plans for short and long time goals- successful business have measurable terms goals which helps to specify what the company need to achieve quarterly, weekly and monthly. This enables the business manager to drive the business according to plans; thereby achieving large percentages of the annual goals. Setting a goal is a process that is not based solely on revenue generation but focuses on issues of service rendering, business growth, feedback from customers and other factors that can enhance business growth.
 - Creating a picture of a continuous skill development-As part of running a successful business there must be a plan for a continuous skill development. Maintaining success is not a once for all affairs but the ability to expand knowledge and introduce new skills and develop the old once in other to provide investment, quality assurance and gain customers confidence. In achieving these, quality time and resources must be committed to training and retraining of staffs to ensure quality and efficient delivery of service. Enlightenment and education of staffs on the vision of the business is a skill that must be communicated to the generalities of the staff to put all on the same business page.
- State of Theatre Management in Nigeria Universities
- Exposure is an act of being open to new ideas, principles, methods and means of doing things in a new dimension different from already known one. Thus business exposure can have social and generational influence on the attitude and behaviour of the business manager. The level of exposure will directly or indirectly affect the business, depth of understanding of the business perception and the propensity to take a risk and act on issues on the spur. Though the intention of starting a business is central to establishing a business venture, but the pre exposure of the business manager to the nitty-gritties of business will enhance his pre business plans, broadened his business vision and the formulation of specific goals different from the existing once. New method of doing business evolves on a daily basis; hence theatre managers must be up dated in modern business practices.
 - The purpose of students specialising in Theatre Management is to learn how to be professional theatre managers. High percentages of them desired to manage a theatre company as a business venture of their own but such a dream has been a mirage. This was due to some reasons that will be discussed in this paper. About 80% of the theatre management courses in Nigeria Universities are introduced at 200 level second semester as introduction to management. At 300 levels, they are introduced as elective. This type of curriculum does not thoroughly expose the students to theatre management studies before they are allowed to specialise. In most cases, the serious minded students have concluded on their area of specialisation before they got to 300 levels. This structure of learning coupled with the fact that 300/400 levels are not enough to study and learn about management as an area of specialization, have contributed too few students specializing in theatre management.
 - In addition, students are not exposed to practicals in management like other courses. This also limited the students from practicalising the theory taught in class, which has

made them myopic and frightened in practicalising their managerial skills after graduation. The name 'Theatre managers' are nomenclature/terminology for management lecturers without adequate productions to manage. The result is that many of the students endlessly seek for jobs instead of venturing into managing a business outfit or collaboratively establishing theatre organization.

Methodology

Organisational learning is a process of creating, retaining, and transferring knowledge within and outside an organization. An organization improves over the years as it gains experiences, from this experience knowledge is created. Such knowledge is broad and can cover any issue that can positively improve the organization. According to Chris Argyris and Donald Schon (1996) organisational learning (OL) is an offshoot of organisational inquiry. This implies that if the projected result is different from the actual result the individual /group will engage the inquiry method of learning; which entails formal interaction with other organisational members. In this case the projected result is that 80% of management students desired to be business manager while in the actual result only very few achieve this; hence the engagement of the enquiring method. Thus, learning as a direct product of formal interaction is not based on any written rules, laws and procedures, but based on understanding of the espoused theory and the theory-in-use. The three learning process that must take place in an organisation to enhance success in business is:-



The single loop learning implies that when no sales or when sales is at its lower ebb the marketing manager employs the inquiry method to take a drastic decision or actions to restore and get the company back.

In the double loop learning, the manager must take decisions that will prevent the occurrence of future problems which can involve a change of marketing strategies, repackaging of product, value addition and rebranding.

Deuteron-learning-*“learning how to learn”* it entails learning outside the enclaves of the classroom. Studying about the nitty-gritty of the organisation and practicing it, understanding the basic mental model for effective management of an organisation. Thus improves organizational effectiveness by identifying the problem and propounding solution.

This theory is essential to the growth of a business because it encourages an organizational self-improvement by utilizing the experience gained over the years; transfer the knowledge within the organization to strengthen the organization as a whole. Organisational learning encourages learning culture which takes place as workers interact

within the organisation. Thus, it enhances workers and management abilities to adapt to quick market changing conditions. Also to thoroughly research on issues in order to discover the negative and positive part, learn from the failures and avoid such in subsequent time; utilize the positive lessons for the benefit of the business. Thus creating an environment for a free flow of information from top to bottom is a flexible way of doing business that allows for an injection of new ideas, methods, new experiences that will advance the business forward. It inspires the creation of a broad base knowledge that will improve the way the business is ran. Learning is achieved from four perspectives – the individual capacity, group level, organization basis and inter- organizational level. All these work together underpinning the information acquired to increase the efficiency of the business. According to the Toyota Way by Jeffery Liker (2004) the company employs this theory by looking at every problem as an opportunity to identify root causes and develop countermeasures. It is done by employing the five whys:

There is a puddle of oil on the floor - clear up the puddle.

Why is there a puddle of oil on the floor? Because the machine is leaking oil- fix the machine.

Why is the machine leaking oil? Because the gasket has deteriorated- replace the gasket.

Why has the gasket deteriorated? Because we bought inferior gasket- order different gaskets next time.

Why did we buy those gaskets? Because we got a good price on them – change the purchasing guidelines.

Why did we choose gaskets based on price rather than quality? Because we evaluate purchasing agents based on short term cost savings –change our evaluation criteria.

By these the entire organization learned from the negative experiences and change policies and procedures of doing business for the benefit of the company. Therefore adopting this theory is very vital because the business world is changing in quick succession while the invention and advancement of new technological means of doing business is emerging on daily basis. So to stay relevant in business and appeal to customers change is inevitable. It is not enough to be successful in business but to sustain the success is of most important. To achieve this there must be continuous learning, change as determine by the business environment and customers' needs will maintain long time success and enhance growth and expansion. Going by the proponents of this theory Chris Argyris and Donald Schon the expected management graduates are expected to be effective and efficient managers which is different from the real result hence the employment of the inquiry method of learning in discovering the problems and propounding a solution. Hence 50 students from 10 universities were interrogated and their course allocation forms from 2010 to 2019 were observed.

Results

The study categorically asserted that management as a course of study in the Theatre Arts Department in Nigerian Universities are seen and treated as supplementary courses. In this era of advocacy for youth empowerment, entrepreneur skills and encouragement of small-to-medium enterprises as a means of reducing unemployment, Theatre has the capacities to create jobs, employ and occupy our teeming youth creatively

as income generating ventures and improve their social status. For this to happen, management courses must be given the center stage in the department.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusively the paper suggests that management courses should be introduced from first semester 100 level alongside with practical. Courses should be designed to be broad knowledge based emphasis on the theatre as a business; and its connectivity to other subjects. Hence the development of the student's communication skills, business decision making abilities, practical skills and risk management practices must be taught consciously. Students programmes can be elaborated to accommodate case projects regular presentation and industrial visit and interactive sessions with experts in the field of the industry. Students of theatre management should be made to take compulsory elective courses in business education, accounting and marketing department to heighten their business intention. These early exposure can arouse business managers anticipatory instinct and build their potentials in identifying business risk before it becomes obvious. The training programme should also incorporate 4 weeks internship training for management students at 200 and 300 levels after second semesters (SIWES- students industrial work scheme). During these periods, students should be attached to private Theatre companies where they will have the opportunity to practice what they have learnt and learn what cannot be taught in class thereby making them conversant with the nifty gritty of the profession. At 400 levels they should consolidate by managing productions in the department by marrying the practical and the theory together. To stimulate high performance special emphasis must be placed on the training of students (managers) and evaluating their managerial capacities. Thus, management is all about leadership and leadership involves innate abilities and extrinsic values properly harmonized to create a work environment that will produce quality products or services. This will instill boldness, courage and assurance that they have been properly groomed to create employment not to seek employment. Theatre management should be considered as a means of acquiring entrepreneurship skills. There is the need to infuse a comprehensive theatre management curriculum into the theatre programme in higher institutions in Nigeria.

Formal training of students through various academic programmes in theories and practical's will increase their performance and self-fulfillment at work place. The length and depth of early training can determine the quality of the person; which can be vital to the long time success and profitability of the company. According to Solomon employees today must have access to continual training of all types just to keep up. If you don't actively stride against the momentum of skills deficiency, you lose ground. If your workers stand still your firm loses the competency Solomon Charlene Marmer (1999). So exposing prospective theatre managers to formal training in a theatre company offers them several advantages, It increases the students interest in management, gives assurance of sound human resources for the growth and expansion of the theatre business.

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ORAL MEMORIES AND PRESERVATION OF THE IZON CULTURE: A SURVEY OF *OBOBO BI*, NECROMANCY



Tarikiye E. Angaye and Odingowei M. Kwokwo

Abstract

Oral poetry in Izon tradition is diverse but one that is often neglected in scholarly discourse is the elegiac poetry of the *Obobo bi* or necromancy which involves songs, dances, rituals, recitations, incantations and performances. This paper seeks to investigate the elegiac poetry of *Obobo bi* or necromancy with the aim of projecting into scholarly attention and reveal the alienation, liminality and the hidden literary aesthetics of the *Obobo bi* tradition. African traditional literature is fraught with songs, dances, riddles, jokes, proverbs as well as chants, incantations, invocation, rituals and musical performances. Some of these features are found in earlier poet, Christopher Okigbo's *Labyrinths* (1985) and comparatively recent poet, Christian Otobotekere's *A Sailor's Son: in the wake of dance and games* (2015). The *Obobo bi* is the process of investigating the dead, which literarily means necromancy via a ladder. The study will focus on the performance style and creativity involved in this traditional belief system, which demonstrates the power of the spoken word as a sub-genre of African poetry. The study hinges on the theoretical framework within the concept of liminality and cultural theory, which are deeply-rooted in the spatiotemporal philosophy of African literature. Data for the study was collected from live performances and interview in the Kolokuma communities of Bayelsa State as well as from the researchers' introspection. This study is relevant for scholarship and society because the tradition which is fast fading due to influence of Christianity is now being projected to the consciousness of the world as a form of oral literature.

Keywords: Orality, Incantations, Necromancy, Creativity, Liminality and Alienation.

Introduction

The unique orality and creativity involved in the performance of the spoken word defines the African culture. Finnegan argues that although oral literature is not as popular as the written literature 'it seems to convey on the one hand the idea of mystery, on the other that of crude and artistically underdeveloped formulations' (1). In a similar manner, Gunner (2007) posits that orality, manifested as types of formed speech communication, in some circumstances coexisting with music in the form of song, or with instruments and dance generated in an almost unimaginable range of genres that enable and empowered social, political and spiritual existence (67). Before the advent of the written form, African traditional culture was in the oral medium, which means that the African continent is largely dominated with orality. Ngugi (2005) argues that the written word imitates the spoken. In the words of Akporobaro (2012) the fundamental feature of oral literature creation is orality'. (4) It echoes the fact that African oral performance raises the profile of poetry and triggers, as well as excites the audience in a special way. In other words, Africa is an oral continent, within the global cosmos environment. Therefore,

earlier writers like Christopher Okigbo use orality in what Udoeyop refers to as 'expressing their worldview, the mythology of their consciousness' such as, closeness to nature, prophesying of the socio-political situation of Africa and the portrayal of ancestral worship.

Similarly, Otobotekere (2008), a Poet-King, who is a traditional ruler and a poet, accentuates the intricate nexus binding man and nature in poetry that is laden with orality and the realization of nature, man and spirituality. In the same vein, Ojaide (2016) explains that, "African poets who incorporate African Oral traditions into their works have an African cultural identity....their poetry absorb performance techniques, especially of repetition, humor, sarcasm, irony and often the poems are dramatically moving". (430) The oral traditional African literary form has managed to endure to modern era, which Udoeyop (1973) ascribes to the fact that oral poetry represents the consciousness of the people and a reflection of their religion, myths and legends (4). This present work takes a descriptive perspective of the '*Obobo bi*' or necromancy poetic performance which is accompanied with incarnations, invocations, chants, dances and songs which are the quintessential qualities of oral poetry.

Thesis Statement

Obobo bi is one of the several oral performances that define African oral literature. It is a kind of elegiac poetry of the Izons, which is symbolic and its performance is during burial ceremonies because of the belief of the people that the living should investigate the activities of the dead person, when he was alive as the prelude to the burial ceremony. This unique African orality and performance as part of the diverse Izon elegiac poetry has been largely neglected in scholarly discourse. This customary performance is fast fading as a result of the influence of Christianity in African societies, which underscores the motivation behind this present study's force to preserve this literary artifact via a conscious renaissance of the '*Obobo bi*' or necromancy.

Statement of Objectives

The objectives of the study are to: revive the fading oral literacy traditions of the Izons; critically describe and analyze the elegiac qualities of the chants, incantations, invocations and songs involved in the *Obobo bi* ritual performance; identify and highlight the literary and poetic features of the '*Obobo bi*'; and focus on the orality, performance and creativity of the oral poetry. A general aim of the study is to characterize the universality of orature across cultures in Africa.

Theoretical Framework

The evolution in African literature is what Irele (2013) describes as "a state of disjunction between an old order of being and a new mode of existence" (78). This study will utilize the concept of liminality to investigate the philosophical thoughts in the transitional phases of the Izon *Obobo bi* tradition. The term liminality derives its origin from Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner, who are socioanthropologists. The term describes the middle passage and the rite of passage in what Wood describes as "increasing hybridity and liminality of cultural experience" (44). In the words of Woods "liminality derives from the Latin word 'limen' meaning 'threshold'" (45). Furthermore, Woods explains that liminality refers to "a third space or in-between space which emerges from a blend of two diverse cultures or traditions" (45). The middle passage is

the spiritual realm between the dead and the living, while the rite of passage indicates transition from the living, dead and the unborn revealing the tripartite worlds. The truism of liminality is that there is a relationship between the worlds of the living, the dead and the unborn, which emphasizes the setting, theme, and characterization of the literature.

It shows the temporospatial connection of between humans and the spiritual realm, which symbolizes the identity of African oral tradition. The mundane or terrestrial world and the realm of the dead as well as the world of the unborn expose the gulf of transition of human to other elemental forces. The Izon *Obobo bi* tradition is undeniably liminal as it confirms the descriptive and transition from the different worlds. The liminal theory is useful for the study because of the deep African traditional belief on the concept of the tripod, which signifies the tripartite relationship of humans and non-human element in the cosmic worlds. The African oral literature expresses the belief system and philosophical perspective of a given environment by the people.

The cultural theory is relevant to the study due to its depiction of the unique aspects of the traditional activities, which symbolizes the values and belief system of society. Abalogu *et al* (1981) states that Nigeria is among the race in the world whose customs suffer extinction because of “some inexplicable cultural weakness” (313). The Eagleton (2010) argues that “among the more glamorous commodities which postmodern have on offer is cultural theory itself” (206). He explained further that the main reason for cultural theory is “to take apart the received wisdom of the traditional humanities” (207). The traditional belief system is unique to the particular people. It is mostly the values and morals transmitted from generations to reflect the essence of the people. Woods (1999) asserts that “debates about cultural theory have been extensive and varied since the late 1960s, often involving serious argument and vitriolic passion” (18). The intercultural association of global civilization is what Eagleton describes as the “multiculturalism or “problematizing of culture” (204). The relationship between oral poetry and cultural theory is what McClintock (2004) put as the “progress through the ascending door, from primitive pre-history, bereft of language and light, through the epic stages of colonialism, post-colonialism and enlightened hybridity” (1186). The combination of the theory of liminality fits the cultural concept of the study because of the bond between the worlds of the symbolic interaction between the supernatural and the mundane in the African traditional ideology.

Methodology

The *Obobo bi* is a performance narrative laden with dialogue and poetry. It shows the tripartite relationship between the worlds of the living and the dead as well as the worlds of the living and the unborn and the worlds of the dead and the unborn. In the course fieldwork of the research, data was collected in Igbedi and Olobiri communities in the Kolokuma/Opokuma Local Government Area of Bayelsa State to watch live performances. The *Obobo bi* performance watched at Igbedi, though rare because of the neglect of the tradition, but it refreshes the researcher’s memory to recall the significant literary features. In the same vein, the interviews from family members of Necromancers such as Mr. Bilawari Ajoko of the Olobiri community serves as the foundation for the commencement of the researchers’ data collection of *Obobo bi* ritual. The sample of the questionnaire is provided below as appendix, which shows the relevance of the literary elements in the Izon culture. In fact, it is worth stating that during the interactive section

with the interviewee at the field, there are intermittent interjections of the English language in-between the Izon language. The work interprets the interview in English language for better grasp of the crux of the study.

The researchers also made use of personal reflections, introspection and childhood experiences of live performances. The researcher adopts the memory recall process because of the intrinsic, personal involvement, participation and interest in the Izon oral traditions. The work utilizes the researchers' in-depth knowledge of the language and conventions of Izon oral tradition to structurally reflect and unveil the performative and creativity in the *Obobo bi* ritual. In all, the question and answer period is more interactive because the respondent sometimes ask the interviewer questions for clarification of issues to ensure the free flow of the discussion.

The Concept of *Obobo bi*

African oral literature is deeply-rooted and closely associated with the belief of the supernatural forces. Chinweizu *et al.* (2016) states that, "religion is one of the most outstanding foundations of the African oral poetry. Oral poetry in the words of Ezeigbo "demonstrates the versatility, simplicity and timelessness" of the African society". (293). The *Obobo bi* reflects the traditional belief system, in which the socio-religious affairs are revealed. The *Obobo bi* tradition is an age-old one among the Izon people of the Niger Delta. It is an act of necromancy in which a soothsayer establishes a line of communication between the dead and the living. This *Obobo bi* is specifically directed at the dead who is requested to confess, through the *Obobo* (ladder) medium to the living if or not he/she was a witch or wizard while he/she was alive. The confession also included the atrocities or wicked deeds the person committed before his/her death. This is a kind of judgment for 'sinners' in Izon tradition and culture because a confessed witch or wizard is buried in the evil forest.

It is traditionally acclaimed that certain factors are responsible for the crimes revealed in the *Obobo bi* ritual. The evil practice of witchcraft, which is the use of supernatural powers to influence occurrence is deeply rooted in the psyche of the people. The dominate theme of the Izon oral tradition is the over-coming of evil. Somehow, the practice of polygamy has also contributed to the dominant themes in the African oral literature, which include envy/jealousy and witchcraft from the co-wives. Akporobaro (2012) explains that 'in much of the legends, ballads, and tales of the rural African world there is always an overwhelming consciousness of cruelty, jealousy, witchcraft and hatred as the characteristics traits of man everywhere' (426). Most prominent amongst these themes is the practice of witchcraft, which denotes the use of supernatural powers to influence others. Mbele states that "the relationship between human beings, within societies and between societies found expression in poetry" (10). The widely held view is that poetry expresses the feelings and aspirations of the people because it functions as a reflection of the experiences of society.

This can be further explained by recalling Kezilahabi's statement in broad terms, African poetry portray "our 'quiddity' (our whatness) and shows us to the rest of the world so that the world may see what we are" (19). Ngugi explains that:

There is a gradual accumulation of values which in time become almost self-evident truths governing their conception of what is right and wrong, good and bad, beautiful and ugly, courageous and cowardly, generous and mean in their

internal and external relation. Over a time this becomes a history. Culture embodies those moral, ethical and aesthetic values, the set of spiritual eyeglasses, through which they come to view themselves and their place in the universe. Culture therefore is a product of the history which it in turn reflects. (1134)

Here, Ngugi provides the reasons for the African belief system that witches' powers are evil and are capable of killing, maiming and even outright destruction of people in a more secretive manner. Therefore, while alive, some persons who are accused and discovered to practice wizardry are exposed and relevant punishment meted to the persons. But some people are so reticent that in the real life they pretend to be very good and are exposed at death. To some extent, this seems to be a global phenomenon in the study of oral literature but time and space hinders further discussion on this. The point is that oral genres provide the means of formalizing and reviving new experiences, an explicit example is the elegiac poetry of *Obobo bi* of the Izon tradition of the Niger Delta. Finnegan (1970) describe elegiac poetry as the songs, chants and recitations, which are performed at funeral and burial ceremonies (146). She further states that elegiac poetry is not accorded its proper recognition in Africa. (151). Chinaka argues that elegiac poetry is the medium of expression of "grief and regret over the death of a loved one" (74). It is an indication that elegiac poetry invokes a solemn mood in what Duruaku *et al* express as "mixture of sorrow and hope" (178), in which the loss of someone, either loved or otherwise arouses emotional ambience.

In the present dispensation, the African oral poetry is undergoing fast extinction and requires urgent attention and revival. The imposition of the dominate religions of Christianity and Islam on African culture, which has affected the growth and development of indigenous culture. The neglect of oral traditions results in the distancing of the people from their culture. The African culture is rather alien to the present generation because of the lack of proper application of the culture. For instance, when a member of a family dies, the affected relatives will plan burial to conform to their religious (Christian) affiliations. It implies that the religious denomination of the deceased perform the burial rites rather than the nucleus familial.

The Nexus between the World of the Living and the Dead

The Izon *Obobo bi* as an act of necromancy is a kind of oral literature involving the dead, which relates to the raising and reanimation of the spirit of the dead. In the words of Okoh (2010), "performances by poets and griots are not necessarily or exclusively for entertainment, but a way of exposing and exploiting the *Africanness* of such materials being performed" (323). The *Obobo bi* performance derives from the deep religious beliefs of the Izon people which establish a spiritual relationship between the world of the living and the world of the dead. And it is graphically presented as the instrument, which one climbs to meet the Maker (God) for the final judgment. In other words, the *Obobo bi* is the Izon traditional autopsy or postmortem, which investigates the immediate and remote cause of death as well as the sanctity of the deceased. This is one of the outstanding African customs devoid of gender discrimination, since the focus and intention of the necromancer lies purely on the investigation of the deceased activities while alive.

Due to the fact that it is an elegiac poetry with an exclusive orality, demands a special performance bravura and originality in the verbal expression of songs, dances, chants and recitations. In the words of Finnegan (1970):

Oral poetry is by definition dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion – there is no other way in which it can be realized as a literary product ... The significance of performance in oral literature goes beyond a mere matter of definition: for the nature of the performance itself can make an important contribution to the impact of the particular literary form being exhibited. (2-3)

This is not to say that the written form of literature is incapable of creating impact, because both forms are performance based. In fact, Egya posits that “the intersection of oral poetry and written poetry in Africa is partly characterized by the dominance of nature-based aesthetics” (31). The point is that the performance of the oral literature is different because of the symbolic motions involved and the aura of emotional involvement in what Ofuani and Okey describe as “the structure of the bond between the living and the dead” (185).

This symbolic attachment of emotions characterize the African oral literature for instance to focus on issues of life after death. Ofuani and Okey stress that “it is rare in black Africa for the dead not to be honoured in one form or the other” (187). They explain that “in several societies, this honour to the dead is perhaps the aspect of a particular culture to which African feels most attached. It represents a heritage to which the dead (emphasis mine) clings despite everything” (187), which parallels the words of Okuyade that the act “does not only exhibit or celebrate his/her culture, but also offers him/her the space to express human frustration, aspirations and other experiences” (1). The *Obobo bi* ritual is the process of investigating the justification for the tribute to the dead, considering the fact that the practices of witches using supernatural powers to influence others are typical of the belief system. As mentioned earlier, the African traditional belief system recognizes the existence of supernatural powers, which may be in form of witchcraft. Witches are said to be discreet that some of them hide under alien religions to perpetrate malevolent deeds, which necessitate the interrogation of the traditional burial rites using the *Obobo bi* rite.

In the *Obobo bi* oral elegiac poetry, the necromancer artistically chants, sings and dances to particular rhythmic tone in the investigation of the spiritual purity by reciting and invoking the spirit of the dead person. This special performance provides to members of the audience a ritualistic experience that bridges the past and present and shapes their contemporary lives. It is the belief of the Izon’s that before and after death, human beings should be subjected to partial judgment in fulfillment of earthly obligation.

Data Analysis

The *Obobo bi* form of oral poetry is a medium of artistic expression, geared towards elevating the human soul and most importantly, it communicates morals to the society. In the words of Ojaide:

Third Generation of Modern African poets went back to their indigenous African oral literature to borrow techniques for their writings, focusing on meaning in their poems since they wanted to change their society ... these poets have gone back to fuse tradition and modernity [... they took form and

techniques from the oral tradition and fused them into what their preceding modern poets had done. (432)

This is a reminder, of the local parlance and like the advertisement for exclusive breastfeeding for a nursing mother: 'Cow milk is for Baby Cow, Goat Milk is for Baby Goat,' which implies that African oral literature should be rooted in Africa and the African Voice can only emanate from Africa. The *Obobo bi* ritual attracts a unique oral performance, which the creativity in the spoken word echoes the typical African setting. In the Izon cosmology, there is the belief in life after death and that the soul of dead should naturally ascend to God, as stated earlier. When someone dies, members of the deceased family will request for the immediate visit of the *Obobobiwei*, literally signifies a sorcerer, who serves as the traditional custodian of the oral elegiac poetry of the *Obobo bi*.

Therefore, the necromancer performs the investigation of the purity of the dead and proclaims the verdict accordingly. The *Obobobiwei* or necromancer, upon sighting the clientele performs some form of ablution with accompaniment of songs:

Tubaki bo ni I-gbeleyema
Who is coming to touch me
Merein meren, kirii merein toin
Turn and turn, turn and stop
Tuba ki bo ni I-gbeleyema
Who is coming to touch me
Merein meren kirii, merein toin
Turn and turn, turn and stop

The meaning of the song is symbolic as it transmits and demonstrates to the visitors that their mission has been reverberated and revealed in the *Obobobiwei's* vision. The visitors are ushered into the apartment with a warm welcome, while he hums the songs as they lay their request and the purification with a gourd of wine ready for libation. He nods in dexterity and rushes into the inner apartment for his special '*Abuluku*' costumes.

The *Abuluku* is a skirt costumes, which is unique to the *Obobobiwei* in performing this oral custom. The *Obobobiwei's* '*Abuluku*' is designed in traditional colors unique to the ideals of the people. Finnegan (1970) argues that the "dirge can be conveyed not only by a verbal evocation of mood but also by the dress, accoutrements, or observed bearing of the performer. This visual aspect is sometimes taken even further than the gesture and dramatic bodily movement". (5) The costumes and songs are complimentary in the oral performance of the *Obobo bi*. For instance, the particular colour of dressing of the *Obobobiwei* serves as pointer to the fate of the deceased, which is an exclusive prerogative of the traditionalists to decipher. Within this premise, the traditionalists are those members within the geo-political and social community of the *Obobobiwei*, who are familiar with intricacies involved in the time-honored rituals. Accordingly, the Izon tradition has three basic colours namely the: 'Inu' (blue) 'Obosi' (red), and Olo (white). These colours are unique and symbolic of the Izon traditional belief. The 'Inu' (blue) is the color that depicts the heavenly bodies, the sky, which is the abode of the Creator. The 'Obosi' (red) represents the human blood, the very existence of man. The 'Olo' is the white color and it symbolizes peace. The white is the neutral among the three colors, which compliments and can be combined the other two

colors and can be utilized interchangeably. The white blends with the red as well as the blue. In fact, in the color spectrum, the white is the origin of all colours. The white represents the daytime, when man executes the daily activities. According to the Izon traditional belief, the black color signifies night, a time when the Heavens spread her blanket after intoxicating all the good humans into a deep state of torpor and sleep, except the evil minded that keeps vigil to commit atrocities to mankind.

The *Obobo bi*, like the Akan dirge, Yoruba dirges and even the self-praise songs of South Africa, *Izibongo*, there are also self-praises that are done with the talking drum, which also show that oral literature involves the audience participation. As a professional, the orality and the performance style of the *Obobobiwei* involves the audience in the creativity of the spoken word. This unique sub-genre of the African poetry requires the good qualities of a performer with a vivid retentive memory, ingenuity, and who possesses the ability to improvise and must be socially conscious to capture and sustain the attention of the audience and the tempo of the performance. The *Obobobiwei*, arrives at the arena of the burial ceremony and takes hold of the *Obobo* (ladder) high on his shoulder in company of three other men, performs the oral rendition of the elegy in form of chanting with the introduction from the drums, which can be used interchangeably. Intermittently, some of these songs are sometimes rendered in form of chants, recitations and evocations, which are praises in the performance:

Iri kpo, iri korogha
Even when it dries, it does not dry off completely

Edudu me dudu
Praises

Parara parara
Praises

Opu du
A big heritage

Bouteinowei, bou tu gbagha
The hunter does not reveal the secrets of the forest

Eriye kpo, erigha gba,
What he sees, he pretends not to have seen

In a euphoric state the audience is pensive about the verdict of the *Obobobiwei* on the one hand and fate of the dead man and his family members on the other hand. Then the climax, the *Obobobiwei* chants:

Dụwẹi bona Obobo ghọ gbanai
The dead person, come and climb the ladder
I dụ mọ Iyengi mọI tịn nia ifie
Your father and mother calls four times

Dụwẹi bona Obobo ghọ gbanai
The dead person, come and climb the ladder
I dụ mọ Iyengi mọ I tịn nia ifie
Your father and mother calls four times

Dụwẹi bona Obobo ghọ gbanai
The dead person, come and climb the ladder
I dụ mọ Iyengi mọ I tịn nia ifie

Your father and mother calls four times

Duwei bona Obobo ghọ gbanai

The dead person, come and climb the ladder

I dau mọ Iyengi mọ I tịn nia ifie

Your father and mother calls four times

Sọqbọ, bona Obobo ghọ gbanai

Sọqbọ come and climb the ladder

Sọqbọ, bona Obobo ghọ gbanai

Sọqbọ come and climb the ladder

Sọqbọ, bona Obobo ghọ gbanai

Sọqbọ come and climb the ladder

Sọqbọ, bona Obobo ghọ gbanai

Sọqbọ come and climb the ladder

In the first four stanzas of the poem or song, the *Obobobiwei* or *necromancer* actually refers to the present condition of the dead person, which stands for ‘Duwei’. But in the last four stanzas, the *Obobobiwei* emphatically mentions the name of the person and ‘Sọqbọ’ which signifies just any name in the real performance. In live performance, the necromancer calls the name of the dead person who is being investigated.

In the midst of songs, chants and invocations, the *Obobobiwei* moves forwards and backwards, in an energetic display in what Ngumoha describes as “spontaneous continuous exercise” (35). This performance is not just a demonstration of the creativity and perfection in the memorization of the chants, songs and dances; it also signifies the *Obobobiwei*’s full control of the dead persons’ spirit. Then he chants further:

I-ye ebinimi aba, ebi anga duo sọ

If you are upright, prove it and follow the path of righteousness

Ima seinimi aba, sei anga duo sọ

And if you are evil, follow the evil path

I-ye ebinimi aba, ebi anga duo sọ

If you are upright, prove it and follow the path of righteousness

Ima seinimi aba, sei anga duo sọ

And if you are evil, follow the evil path

I-ye ebinimi aba, ebi anga duo sọ

If you are upright, prove it and follow the path of righteousness

Ima seinimi aba, sei anga duo sọ

And if you are evil, follow the evil path

I-ye ebinimi aba, ebi anga duo sọ

If you are upright, prove it and follow the path of righteousness

Ima seinimi aba, sei anga duo sọ

And if you are evil, follow the evil path

At this point, with the invocation of these mystical doggerels, the spirit of the dead is presumed to be on the ladder ready to respond to the *Obobobiwei*’s inquest. The *Obobobiwei* repeats the chant three times for a male spirit and four times for a female spirit. These numbers are significant in Izon tradition as they are usually observed in many other activities regarding male and female personalities. But in this particular

chant, the necromancer faces the direction of the *Obobo* towards where the corpse is lying-in-state. Thereafter, the *Obobobiwei* sings:

Yanrin-o beiyo bi yanrin
Let the arena quake
Yanrin-o beiyo bi yanrin
Let the arena quake
Toli toli toli
Leakages upon leakages
Yanrin-o beiyo bi yanrin
Let the arena quake
Yanrin-o beiyo bi yanrin
Let the arena quake
Toli toli toli
Leakages upon leakages
Yanrin-o beiyo bi yanrin
Let the arena quake

Like a volcanic eruption, the earth must quake and open up spiritual holes, which are invisible to the ordinary person, for the interaction proper to take place between the spirit of the dead person and the *Obobobiwei*. Characteristics of elegiac poetry, the repetition of these familiar formulaic words is strictly for emphasis and to attract spiritual power and inspiration to be charged into the terrestrial world in what Igue and Ogbeide describe as the “spirito-cultural relationship with divine powers” (206). It is the uncommon connection with the mundane and the extraterrestrial worlds.

In a twist of fate, while continuously moving forwards and backwards in a trance, the *Obobobiwei* in what Izevbaye describes as a “a cadenced cry” (3) turns the direction of the *Obobo* anti-clockwise. This indicates that the dead person is innocent of witchcraft. But if the *Obobobiwei* turns the *Obobo* clockwise, it implies that the dead person is guilty of bewitchment. The Izon geographical sphere does not align with the regular meridian. This is another significant indicator of the African oral tradition, which regulates the earth in a unique and typical traditional method and an exclusive preserve of the people. It is a significant and relevant aspect calling for scholars’ attention because the tradition is fast fading now,

After the verdict of the *Obobobiwei*, the burial ceremony proper commences with the audience in particular, the family members of the deceased person jubilating with songs, dances and recitations:

Wo bara ogono
Our hands are up
“We are victorious”
Wo bara ogono
Our hands are up
“We are victorious.”

And chants like:

Wo wari uge
Our family is victorious

Wo weniyo asin korogha
Blood doesn't follow our path
"No blood guilt in our life"

Wo weniyo bou bou
Our movements are smooth

This is the point of jubilation, when the verdict is favorable, but if otherwise, the dead man receives abuse as the immediate family members bury their heads in shame. With these, the *Obobobiowei*'s performance has fulfilled the most fundamental and essential aspect of the elegiac poetry of the Izo speaking people of the Niger Delta.

Conclusion

This study highlights the relationship between oral and the written literature, while examining the Izo oral tradition of *Obobo bi* or necromancy. The study revolves around the Izo *Obobo bi* oral performance, which is traditional literature that is fast fading because of the pervasive influence of Christianity. The study reveals that African oral literature is deeply embedded in culture and tradition and it shows the aesthetics in literary creativity. The paper highlights some of the parameters of oral literature such as oratory, songs, chants, incantation and invocations as well as the use of repetition and metaphors. The study explains the *Obobo bi* as the Izo traditional form of investigation, aim at ascertaining the level of evil or good deeds of the dead, while alive. The tradition demands that the living should investigate the truth before the commencement of the burial rites.

From this study, it is obvious that African oral poetry teaches morals and uplifts the human soul. The discussion hinges on the aspects of human relation with nature, the framing of sacred time and space that is life and death, and the respect for culture and traditions. The study also examined the aesthetic of performance, the body of the performer, relationship between audience, unique costumes, colours and time in relation to the Izo oral literature. The essence and significance of the elegiac poetry of *Obobo bi* is to bridge the link between the living and the dead. Spiritually, it connotes the relationship and belief in life after death. In sociological terms it's an indication of exploring the two extremes of existence (life after death). In the performance process of this unique elegiac poetry, there was the introduction of the magical connection, the suspense of the audience during the *Obobobiowei* interaction with the dead, which conscientiously and significantly acquaints the past and present of the African belief system. This paper has highlighted the fact that oral poetry is *sine qua non* in the authorial prediction of the study of Modern African Poetry. The paper has provided pointers for further researchers to reconnoiter into the rich spoken heritage of the African continent.

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GENDERED APOTHEOSIS AND CONSERVATIVE VALUES IN NIGERIAN DRAMA: A STUDY OF TITUBI IN *MOROUNTODUN*



Cindy Anene Ezeugwu

Abstract

The main thrust of this study is to examine the image of the renegade and its value in Nigerian dramatic literature. An often time, the word renegade is used to connote negative terminology in Nigeria drama. They are most times cast in the mould of outlaws, rebels, defector, and outsider among others. Very scant attention has been paid to the phenomenon of renegade and where such exist, they are captured negatively. In the light of the above, the study leaning on content analysis, set out to examine the concept of positive renegade in Nigerian dramatic literature using Femi Osofisan's play *Morountodun*. The study concludes that renegade goes beyond the derogatory context that many playwright capture them as, to include the positive one often identified as an individual or group of persons who abandons their kind, class and cause to join forces with another camp. The study finds the character of Titubi representative enough to be classified as a positive renegade. Thus, waging war with an establishment which hitherto she was a poster girl, Titubi evolves completely in the play and presents us with interesting conclusion on the fate of one who chooses the path of honour over that of opprobrium.

Keywords: Gendered, Apotheosis, Conservative Values, *Morountodun*, Drama.

Introduction

As an authoritative exponent of African mythology, Femi Osofisan posits that “myth and history with their imperfection of the past should be made subservient to the contemporary demands of social transformation to help improve the quality of life of mankind” (23). Osofisan through the character of Titubi, examines the role of a spirited upper class lady who has all it takes in terms of being comfortable to remain with the people of her class, but who sacrifices her, status, class, comfort and even her mother and aligns herself with the peasants who she initially set out to destroy. She defies the wishes of her mother a wealthy business woman and the Superintendent who represents the government and joins forces with the oppressed with a view to find a lasting solution to their plight.

Many people often view the word ‘renegade’ from the negative perspective such as a traitor, outlaw, rebel, outsider, defector or an individual who deserts his cause, abandon his belief, defies convention among others. The researcher attempts a suggestion that there are people who set out to champion positive cause, bring about positive change, and who help to speak out against social injustice even when it will affect his or her

status, such people can be considered as positive renegades. It is in this light, that we can situate Titubi and what she embodies. Titubi's action as a positive renegade can be likened to that of the legendary Joan of Arc who sacrificed her life and beliefs and assumed the role of a man to enable her enter the military and save her dear father. Joan of Arc was eventually tried for purported insubordination and heterodoxy and burnt to death. Florence Nightingale can also be referred to as a positive renegade who is known to have deserted what was traditionally expected of her by her wealthy parents who vehemently opposed her becoming a nurse. Nightingale disregarded their wish and became known as a war hero nurse. The same with mother Teresa whose passion for humanitarian work, drove her to many poverty ravaged countries and communities including an Indian city of Kolkata in 1928 to help liberate the poor and the sick. At the end of her stay in Kolkata she declined to be part of a lavish dinner party organised in her honour. She cancelled the dinner and the money meant for it sent to the poor people of Kolkata. In Emeka Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures*, two politicians Mr Parkers and Mr Otobo eminently fits the picture of positive renegades, they refuse to join their members to loot government treasury rather they aligned with the poverty stricken masses against the wish of other members of parliament. In the bid to vent their anger against the renegade duo of Parker and Otobo, Cindy Anene Ezeugwu states that "in the bid to stop the patriots from exposing the rape of the future of the citizenry, Otobo and Parkers are framed up and arrested on dubious charges of breaching a parliamentary law which they claim amounts to felony" (163-171).

In *Morountodun*, Moremi metamorphoses into Titubi who graciously renounces her magnificent heritage and join forces with the oppressed farmers and the down trodden masses. Buttressing this transition by Titubi, Osofisan in an interview explain that he "uses old themes that are socially relevant and imposes on them his own sense of aesthetics and significance" (120).

Synopsis of *Morountodun*

The play *Morountodun* is situated within the context of the history and myth of Moremi a heroine of Ile Ife extraction who helped to liberate her people from incessant invasion of the Igbo marauders in Ile Ife Kingdom. She is said to have infiltrated the camps of the attackers by allowing them capture her in one of their raids with a view to help her uncover the tricks and magic of the invaders. The Moremi myth is superimposed on the Nigerian Agbekoya uprising of 1969 of the old Oyo region, a scenario in which farmers revolted against exploitation and oppression by the ruling class, a fight to dethrone capitalism, oppression and deprivation. Osofisan recreated this myth into the play *Morountodun* represented by the likes of Titubi, Alhaja kabirat, Superintendent in one camp and Marshal, Bogunde among others in the opposing camp. As the play progresses, Titubi plans to learn the secrets of the peasants and to expose their leader represented by Marshal, but after encountering the sufferings, starvations, humiliations and oppression that the peasants go through on daily basis, Titubi has a change of heart and sympathy towards the farmers, turns to appositve renegade. Thus, she forms a bond

of love and solidarity with them which leads to her committing a 'class suicide' through decamping from her class.

Titubi in the Context of a Positive Renegade

As lexzy ochibejivwie avers, "*Morountodu* focuses on the die-hard bravery exhibited by Titubi ...a self-conscious woman who against the pleadings of her mother, puts her life at risk in order to track down those responsible for the civil unrest against the state" (523). He added that "Osofisan in *Morountodun* uses the character of Titubi... to establish the failings of a state ... he uses the same focalizer (Titubi) to establish the freewill of an individual and her desire for change" (523). Titubi who willingly infiltrates the camp of the farmers comes back at the end, a changed person with a different and more favourable disposition towards the farmers with a proper view of what they encounter almost on daily basis. The story of what she observed while in the camp is captured thus:

TITUBI: That was when I began to ask questions. I saw myself growing up, knowing nosuch sufferings as these. With always so much to eat, even servants feed their dogs...yet here farmers cannot eat their own products for they need the money from the market. They tend yams but dare not taste. They raise chicken but must be content with wind in their stomach. And then when they return weary from the market, the tax man is waiting with his bill...it could not be just...in our house mama we wake up to the chorus of jingling coins and we sleep, coiled springs, soft foam and felt receive our body gently. But I have lived in the forest among simple folks, sharing their pains and anguish... (66).

From her experience and interaction with the farmers, and having witnessed what they go through to eke out a living, Titubi evinces the fact that the peasants are often subjected to much psychological violence and emotional trauma, such that they "feed less than a dog"(66) in their own country. Having abandoned her kind, to pitch her tent with the peasants, Titubi metamorphose into a positive renegade in the study. By waging a war with an establishment which hitherto she was a poster girl, she evolves completely in the play and presents us with interesting conclusion on the fate of one who chooses the path of honour over that of affluence. At the beginning of the play, she employs the same psychological tool and emotional violence which the establishment later use against her when she join forces with the oppressed masses.

Trying to unravel our positive renegade here may appear a little hazy, for instance, The armed robbers in Osofisan's *Once Upon Four Robbers* although hitherto, are law abiding citizens driven to crime by the corrupt establishment may take the badge, and the question of their recourse to crime however begs for answer. Placed on a critical scale of one is to ten, they may perhaps pass the half mark of five, but certainly not reach the dizzy height of punitiveness attained by Titubi who jumped from the side of the establishment to join the side of the masses. The robbers' stature however is however further diminished by their greed and recourse to stealing from the masses rather than confronting the government and its corrupt officials who the ones are impoverishing them.

The farmers plan a counter attack on the upper class and the government but at the end, they are defeated because they have no superior weapons. Though they claim to be victims of the system, their resort to violence shows that they are not heroes or positive individuals, unlike Titubi who in an attempt to surreptitiously undermine the farmers' solidarity and bring them down with state sponsored violence, ultimately ends up helping to further the cause of the farmers. This propels the researcher to classify her and her alter ego (the initial Titubi) as positive renegades.

In the play *Morountodun*, Osofisan makes socio-political statements and identifies two broad classes in the Nigerian polity the 'establishment and the masses', the oppressor and the oppressed, the upper class and the peasants. In the beginning of the play, the Director's prologue help to explain the class conflict and give a historical background of the issues and confrontations in the play. The down trodden masses are captured as being perpetually under the clutches of the blood sucking establishments who have all the forces of coercion under their control. The playwright through the Director, conscientizes the oppressed populace by urging them to collectively rise and negotiate their emancipation and if necessary fight for it. This call for action is captured thus;

DIRECTOR:...Two, three, four ...seven months and the war was still hot and bitter, farmers dying policemen falling, soldiers going and not returning...if we could not speak about the war in the East because of stiff decrees, would we also be silent about the one in the west and suppose another one starts in the North. Well we decided not to be silent. We decided to go and rouse people up by doing a play on the subject... (6).

The Director in the play explains that "the essence of the play is to sensitize the people and not to be viewed as "part of the problem"(6). The vistas of emotional and psychological violence in the play are highlighted right from the first scene when Titubi still with the establishment, attempts to intimidate and blackmail the Director of the play:

TITUBI: Shut your mouth! Who are you?

DIRECTOR: Please, madam...i... I am the director of this play, and...

TITUBI: Oh it's you we've been looking for...Beat him...gently. Don't make the useless man into a hero. Where are your actors? (8).

Edde Iji observes that "Osofisan like Bertolt Brecht regards theatre as a weapon for political agitation" (3). It is in line with the above quote by Iji, that the Director and his crew in the play set out to address the problem confronting the peasants, before Titubi with the help of the Superintendent confronts them and forced them not to go on with the planned performance. At the initial stage, Titubi does not see anything wrong with being rich neither does she believe like other oppressors that they are part of the problems dehumanizing the farmers. In her conversation with the Superintendent she queries the ideology:

TITUBI: So in what way are we responsible for the farmer's uprising Ehn? What does our

being rich have to do with it? Or is it only when we wear rags that we
qualify to
breathe the air...yeeesss! I have money and I can enslave you with it...
(9).

By reminding Titubi's mother that the revolution going on in the city is the monster that the upper class people created, the Superintendent also highlights the possibility of the people who are being dehumanized and oppressed coming back to fight the oppressors:

SUPERINTENDENT: ...after all, these rebels are of your own creation, you
who are used
to feeding on the others (24).

The upper class here daily dreads the moment that farmers may attempt to attack them thus. They engage the apparatus of the establishment (police) to keep the flow of oppression unbroken by all means.

The forgoing buttresses the point that the agitation of the down trodden masses is as a result of the exploitation by the upper class that milk them on daily basis from what they suffer to acquire. The main casualties of this state of affairs have been the human dignity and the pride of the oppressed citizens. This has often found expression psychologically and emotionally in the lives of the peasants which often propel them to always revolt and fight for their rights. The playwright's ideological stand on the underprivileged humanity captures the essence of the play *Morountodun*. Niyi Osundare confirms this when he noted that, "Osofisan's plays deals with ideological perspectives and fervently believes that paradise is possible here on earth for the oppressed and that Africans can in fact defeat diseases, violence, squalor, ignorance and despair provided there is good government"(226). Osundare added that "the government in Nigeria since after independence has acted as traitors to our people" (226). Osundare's view is daily seen from the way and manner that those who are elected to rule; often turn their back against the electorate as soon as they are voted in. In the words of John Obasikene, "Osofisan's depiction of the Moremi myth ...is ideologically significant, it supports the Marxist view that man and not some gods is the architect of his own destiny" (242). Like the tenants in Rotimi's *If, a Tragedy of the Ruled*, the farmers in *Morountodun* are also subjected to all manner of violence by the upper class through enriching themselves and their cronies from the sweat of the farmers thereby leaving the farmers without anything to show for their hard labour. This assertion is laid bare from the talk between Superintendent and Alhaja:

SUPERINTENDENT: They claim that you and your politicians have been
taking off the profit of their farms to feed your cities
to feed your own throat and buy more jewels and
frillery. And so at last they are coming for reckoning
(24).

This manner of oppression propels Baba in *Morountodun* to insist that the government and the upper class are out to annihilate them:

BABA: We said we couldn't pay the tax, that harvest was very poor, that we could hardly feed our children, and what happened? The government said all right, we will change the tax collectors (52).

At the end of the play, the peasants are perhaps left with only one option which is to confront the establishment. Thus, Marshal, the Commander in Chief of the army of the farmers and his team suffer defeat at the hands of the well-equipped government forces as they did not make it back to the city after their final confrontation. Here Osofisan seem to suggest that dialogue is the most potent weapon that can be used to defeat all kinds of violence, oppression and tyranny.

To restore primordial sanity, the researcher is of the view that there has to be a radical change in the society, this call for a change agrees with the adage that says, "The weaverbird must sing the song of social revolution". In an interview with Olu Obafemi, Osofisan points out that "If in a certain situation, one would rather choose crime than starvation ...at least somebody has to live, you have to keep the family and for all that, some people are condemned to be shot at the Bar Beach" (254). By the same token as we find in *Morountodun*, the playwright appears to advice that creative thinking is needed to counter all shades of tyranny and oppression whether perpetrated by deviants or government establishments. He points out the inefficiency of the primitive measure of intimidation and oppression often applied by the establishment in combating the activities of oppressed, just like the Superintendent attempted to manhandle the Director and his cast when they are about staging a drama that will address the plights of the peasants. Osofisan equally thinks that the "government should rather understudy the disparity in the social make up so as to discover the actual causes of these social problems and this way, a lasting solution will naturally emerge" (43). Esiaba Irobi explains that:

The government is able to provide favourable condition that will be beneficial to its citizens, but they rather choose to frustrate its citizens to the point of pushing them to emotional and psychological violence by not providing them with basic amenities despite being blessed with rich mineral and material resources (34).

In the programme note of Osofisan's play, *Once upon Four Robbers*, he contends against the futility of government ill treatment of the down trodden masses:

With our decrees and edicts, we have not succeeded in taming this singular aspect of the violence of the age. And the problem has grown intractably, worsening with each passing day. I believe it is time we take a second look. The legalized slaughtering of the erring members of our society for whatever offence will certainly not bring the restoration of our society to its primordial sanity... (Programme note).

He goes on to explain that some of the factors that give rise to mass protests, rebellion and agitation by the poor masses can be summarized as follows, "... take a look at the Squalid spending habits of our egregious contractors, land speculators, middle men of all sorts importers, exporters etc. or take a look at our sprawling slums and ghettos, our congested hospitals..." (i). He further affirms that mass revolution on the scale we are

witnessing it presently are the product of unjust society”(i). We can perhaps explain the action of the peasants ably led by Marshal, Titubi the positive renegade, Alhaja Kudirat an economic minded business woman who represents the exploitative class and the government law enforcement agents of ‘self before others’ as “a speck of ‘manifest content’ and ‘latent dream’ element” (99), as advanced by Sigmund Freud.

Positive renegade in the context of the study can stand for the ideal personality or what is socially acceptable. It is positive and progressive in its appearance and almost akin to Plato’s conception of the ideal. This ideal which the word represents to Freud is in constant conflict with the conflicting personalities which are often classified as dreams. The conflict arises in an attempt to strike a balance between these two extremes the ‘have and the have not’, the rich and the poor. In the beginning of the play, the Superintendent, Titubi and the peasants all lay claim to positive and ideal motive. Positive in the sense that each is driven by the need to preserve social class. The Superintendent and Titubi through physical violence, suppression and economic exploitation, and the peasants and their leaders, through revolts, agitations and protests.

There is evidence of rebelliousness among the peasants who rather than accept the fact that dropping of their weapons and seeking the part to peace as suggested by Titubi is the best and easiest way for reconciliation, they allow their leader Marshal to mislead them into waging a gun battle with the law enforcement agency despite being aware that their weapons cannot match the superior ones by the police.

Conclusion

In *Morountodun*, Osofisan delicately and consciously connects the audience to history by using familiar mythical artefacts in the ancient Ile Ife heroine Moremi and the Agbekoya uprising in Oyo which has come to represent the symbol of revolution and the will of the people to enforce good and egalitarian governance. As earlier stated, the thrust of this study was to examine the concept of renegade, its value in dramatic literature and to ascertain if there are elements of positivism associated with the attributes of a renegade. From the study, Titubi the heroine of the play, starts like Moremi but through the process of reorientation and indoctrination, she undergoes a radical change to renounce what Moremi stood for which was a struggle in favour of her own class. This much is confirmed by Titubi in *Morountodun*,

TITUBI: ...I knew I had to kill the ghost of Moremi in my belly I am not Moremi. Moremi served the state ...the state was the spirit of the ruling class... (26).

Having abandoned her kind, Titubi is the positive renegade in the study. By waging war with an establishment which hitherto she was a poster girl, she evolves completely in the play and presents us with interesting conclusion on the fate of one who chooses the path of honour over that of opprobrium.

Osofisan ends *Morountodun* with a dramatic statement, while urging the emotionally and psychologically traumatized masses to arise and change their miserable condition of living; he is of the opinion that the option of arms struggle has some innate limitations especially when the oppressor is more organized and better equipped. In this

case, the futility of arms struggle becomes more patent in the sceptre of gory massacre, diseases and disillusionment. In this kind of situation, the playwright recommends a change of tactics via the negotiating table. The Director in the play aptly captures it this way:

DIRECTOR: well the old man was right; Marshal and his men did not come back. It was you will admit, a suicidal mission...In the end peace came back but after each side has burnt itself out... (79).

Instead of choosing the part of negotiation for peace as Titubi champions, Marshal and his men opts for war which consumes them. The researcher is of the opinion that many of what we have in dramatic literature are individuals or group of individuals who decamps from their class or social strata only when they are no longer benefitting or gaining anything from the group or camp. The second kind, are those who move to other camps or associations especially when the camps they belong to seems to be losing its popularity or means of sustainability. Such kind of individuals abounds in the likes of politicians, local associations, religious bodies, traditional leaders, representatives of groups, among others. The researcher contends that such kind of people can be likened to defectors, carpet crossers, traitors and negative renegades and can not in any way represent what is good for the society. All they care for is what will benefit them and their immediate families. The researcher suggests that a positive renegade should be able to make some sacrifices, and should be seen as one who will be willing to always champion the cause and the goodwill of the oppressed.

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MMETUTA NSUMEDE N'IWU NSUPE N'EBE MMETA NKE OMA UMU AKWUKWO SEKONDIRI NO



Chinenye A. Ezema and Sopuruchi C. Aboh

Umi

Nchocha lebara anya na mmetuta nsumede n'iwu nsupe n'ebe mmeta nke oma umu akwukwo sekondiri no. Ka onye si matadebe asu asusu na-egosiputa onwe ya mgbe a na-eede ya ede. Amaghi asu asusu nke oma na-akpata amaghi ede ma o bu asupe ya. O buonodu a kpaliri nchocha a iji choputa ka mmetuta nsumede n'iwu nsupe n'ebe mmeta nke oma umu akwukwo sekondiri no. Otu ajuju nchocha - kedụ ka amaghi iwu nsupe si emetuta adimire nsumede n'ule asusu Igbo n'ulo akwukwo sekondiri di na Zonu Mmuta Nsuka -ka e weputara maka nke a. Udi nchocha a bu ndimemecha. Ngwa nchocha e ji mee nchocha a bu njumaza - Mmeta Nke Oma N'Iwu Nsupu Igbo (MNONINI), edemede na ajujuonu. Ndiokachamara no na ngalaba Edukeshon na Lingwistiks (Sayensi Asusu) na Asusu Ala Naijiria na Mahadum Naijiria, Nsuka tulere ya. Data e nwetara bu nke e ji miin na standad divieshon wee nyocha ma tulekwa. Nchoputa gosiri na amaghi asupe mkpuruokwu Igbo sitere n'amaghi asu asusu Igbo. O buru na ha mara asu asusu Igbo nke oma, nsupe mkpuruokwu Igbo agaghi na-ahia ha ahụ n'ihia na asusu Igbo so n'asusu nsupe mkpuruokwu ya di mfe. Site na nchoputa e nwetara, a choputara na umu akwukwo sekondiri anaghi emeta nke oma n'ule asusu Igbo n'ihia na ha amaghi asu asusu Igbo wee na-egosikwazi ya oge ha na-eede asusu Igbo ede. A tunyere otutaro nke gunyere ka a na-enye nwa akwukwo bu la mere nke oma n'ule asusu Igbo n'ulo akwukwo sekondiri ihe onyinye di iche iche di ka igu akwukwo n'efu na Mahadum, ebe o ga-agu maka asusu Igbo. A ga-eme nke a site n'ihazi ide edemede n'asusu Igbo na Steeti niile di n'ala Igbo. Mbuli elu di etu a ga-enye aka mee ka umu akwukwo nwe mmasi na nsumede asusu Igbo.

Okpurukpu Okwu: Nsumede, Nka Osusu, Nka Odide, Iwu Nsupu.

Mkpelite

Asusu bu iji mkpuruokwu nwere nghota wee su o asusu, dee edemede ma o bu guo agumagu. Asusu ga-adiriri n'udi ndiozo ga-agu ma ghota ya. Obodo ma o bu mba o bu la nwere asusu nke ya. Ya bu, asusu bu otu njirimara obodo ma o bu mba. O bu nke a kpata na asusu bu la nwere ala ebe a na-asu ya na ndi mmadu na-asu ya. E nwere nka asusu ano n'omumu asusu n'agbanyeghi asusu bu. Ha bu: nka onunu, nka osusu, nka ogugu na nka odide. Onunu bu otu nka n'ime nka asusu e nwere ma burukwa nke mbu. O di mkpa ma na-emepe uzomumu etu o siri gbaso imu asusu. Nka ato ndi nke ozo - osusu, ogugu na odide na-agbado ukwu na ya. Ha enweghi ike ime ihe o bu la ma e wepu ya.

Nka osusu na-esochi nka onunu n'usoro e si amu asusu. Ozugbo nwata gafechara nka onunu, o na-abanye na nka osusu bu ebe oga-esonye na ndi na-asu asusu ahụ iji gosiputa echiche obi na mmetuta ya n'udi ndi nwe asusu ahụ ga-aghota ya. Inwe ike kparita nkata di ezigbo mkpa n'ihia na mmekorita mmadu na ibe ya na ihe omume na-adị

ire site mgbe onye ahụ na-ekwuputa ya n'ọnụ. Na nkwardo nke a, Ụmọ na Ezema gosiri “nka ọnụnụ bụmata olu kwesiri a ga-eji sọ asusu” (6). Ha gakwara n'ihu kowaa na ọ dị mkpa ka anyị mata na nka ọsusu bara ọtụtụ uru n'ala Igbo nakwa ụwa niile. Ohiri-Aniche kowakwara “nka ọsusu ka mmadụ inwe ike iji asusu di mma wee kowaputa uche ya n'uzo ndi na-ege ya nti ga-aghota ihe ọ na-ekwu, ma nwekwa mmasi n'ige ya nti” (76). N'uzo nkowa nke ya, Anozie kowaputara na, na ndu nwatakiriọ bula, (okwu ọnu) ọsusu na-ebu ụzọ tupu ọ mubazie maka usoro odide ihe. N'otutu obodo, asusu na-abu n'udi (okwu ọnu) ọsusu ganye na otutu afọ agafee. Ohiri-Aniche kwadoro okwu a Anozie kwuru n'ihu na o kwuru na nka (okwukwu) ọsusu bara oke uru na ndu mmadu n'ihu na okwu ọnu bu ihe mmaduna ibe ya ji enwe mmekorita. N'iga n'ihu, ọ na-ekwu na ntolite echiche mmadu, nkowaputa uche onye ahụ, igosiputa mmetutaobi, mwulite akụ na ụba. Isiokwu wee buru na nka ọsusu bara uru ma dikwa mkpa n'ihe niile mmadu na-eme na ndu.

Nka nke anọ bu nka odide bu ikpezu na nka asusu. Nke a bu idetu mmetuta na echiche site n'iji usoro odide na mkpuru edemede asusu ahụ nabatara. Nka odide bu ihe a ga-akuziri nwata tupu ọ mara ya. Ọ dighi ka nkaonunu na ọsusu bu ndi nke na-abara onye n'amughị ha amu. Naani nka odide tinyere nka ogugu bu ihe a na-akuziri mmadu akuzi. Anozie kowara nka odide ka naanizu e si edeko ihe gbasara asusu n'udi eserese nke a na-eziputa n'uzo di iche iche. Ebe Ohiri-Aniche kowara si,

Ide ihe bu otu uzo mmadu ji akowaputa uche ya; o nwere ike buru ideturu onwe ya okwu ncheta ufodu (di ka na dayari, akwukwo rekodu), ma ọ bu idegara mmaduozo okwu ozi (di ka leta, nootu), ide edemede a roro arọ (di ka kompozishon), ide edemede ekereuche (di ka uri, abu, akuko) (171).

O kwesiri ka a kuziere nwata ezigbo usoro ma ọ bu ndoko a nabatara nye odide asusu. Nke a bu ka ha nwee ike belata otutu ndejo a na-ahukari na nsupe, ntupo na ndoko asusu ha. Ọ ga-emekwa ka ha mara ndiche di n'ederede e detara nke oma na nke e detaghi. Na mmadu mara asusu Igbo aputaghi na ọ mara ede ya. Nwata ọ bula kwesiri ka ọ muta otu e si asu asusu tupu etu e si ede ya bu asusu ede. Isu na ide asusu di nnoo nnukwu mkpa. Ka Anozie siri kwuo, “tupu nwata a muruohuru amuta usoro odide ihe, ọ na-ebu uzo na-asu asusu ahụ n'onu” (15). Di ka o si gbasara nchocha a, a ga-agbado ukwu na nka asusu abuo. Nka ndi ahụ bu nka ọsusu na nka odide. Ọ bu na nka ndi a e jikoroonu (osusu na odide) ka e si nweta okpurukpu okwu a bu 'nsumede'. N'edemede umu akwukwo, bu ebe ha na-egosi nka ha nwere na nsumede Igbo, ọ na-abu ihe igba anya mmiri na nwa afọ Igbo, a muru n'ala Igbo ma birikwa n'ala Igbo enweghi ike ikowa onwe ya nke oma n'asusu Igbo site n'ihe ọ na-edede. Di ka Ernest-Samuel si choputa na otutu umu akwukwo na-amu asusu Igbo na agumagu naani ka ha nwee ike igafe n'ule, ọ bughị na ọ masiri ha. Ụmọ na Ezema na-ekwu na ọ bu n'odide asusu Igbo bu ebe omumu Igbo ka na-enwe nsogbu. Ha kowakwara na nke a di mkpa n'ebe nwa afọ Igbo bula no. N'ihu na nke a ga-enyere ha aka imata ka e si ede udi edemede di iche iche.

Ọ buru na nwa afọ Igbo mara asusu Igbo nke oma, ọ ga-ama dekwa ya nke oma. Mbah na Mbah n'ikwado ndeta asusu Igbo nke oma n'ebe nwa afọ Igbo nsi, “Asusu Igbo bu asusu a na-edede ka e si akpopta mkpuru okwu ya” (27). Anozie ekwuolari na mbu na asusu niile di n'awa malitere n'udi okwu ọnu. Ọ gakwara n'ihu kwuo si na ọsusu (okwukwu) ka odide n'ogo; onye chorom ihe gbasara usoro odide ihe ga-eburugodu uzo muo maka ọsusu. Chinagorom gbadokwara ukwu kwuo na asusuo bula di n'awa bu

nke a na-ebu ụzọ sọ asụ tupu e debe ya edebe. Nwadike doro aka na ntị si “ka a mata na e wepu asusu, o dighi ihe anyi puru ide maka na o bu ya bu isi sekpu ntị na mmekorita mmadu na ibe ya” (19)

Iwu nsupe so n’otu ogbatauhie nsụmede nwere n’asusu Igbo. Amaghi ede niile a na-ahu n’edemede umu akwukwo sitere n’amaghi asu asusu Igbo nke oma. Di ka Izuagie kwuru na Kanu, n’ime nari asusu abuo a na-asu na Naijiria taa nke asusu Igbo putara ihe na ya, asusu Awusa na Yoruba putakwaziri ihe. O kwuru na nsogbu asusu abughisi ya bu asusu; nke bu nsogbu bu ide asusu ahu ede. N’agbanyeghiotu asusu e nwere n’ala Naijiria naani ole na ole ka e dere ede. Iwu nsupe ndi a gunyere ka e si ede ‘na’, ‘ga’, ‘kwa’, nnochiaha, mbuuzo, okwu ndi a ga-edekoonu, ndi a ga-edesa edesa, akara edemede, itinye akara nta, were diri gawa. N’iji nye aka belata nsogbu a, Mbah kwuru na komputa ga-enye aka. O kwuru na oge ugbo a, a na-ejizi asusu ewube obi komputa nke na tupu komputa anabata asusuo bua were were, o ga-adiri n’usoro na-ebughi mgbagwoju anya o bua ma buru ihe e nwere ike itinye ma dorokwa n’otu aka ahu. Isi nkowa ya wee buru na e webata komputa n’omumu asusu Igbo, nke a ga-enye aka belata nhia ahu a na-enwe na nsụmede asusu Igbo.

N’ezie, o kwesikwara ka amata na asusu Igbo so n’asusu nsupe mkpurukwu ya na-adi mfe. A bia n’asusu Igbo, o bu etu e si akpo mkpurukwu bu ka e si ede ya (ya bu, nsupe). Ihe kpatara nke a bu na asusu Igbo bu asusuadaolu. Asusuadaolu putara na otu e si akpopta okwu bu otu e si asupe ya. O bu usoro di iche iche e si akpopta/ihazi mkpuredemede na mkpurukwu ka a na-akpo iwu nsupe.

Nsogbu Nchocha

Di ka o siri gbasaa omumu asusu Igbo n’ulo akwukwo sekondiri, ndi nchocha choputara na otutu amaghi ede niile a na-ahuta n’ederede umu akwukwo n’ule Igbo na-aputa ihe ma na-esite n’amaghi asu asusu ha. Ndehie na ndeju niile ha na-edede na-esitekwa etu ha si anuta ma na-asu asusu Igbo. Nchoputa onye isi WAEC n’asusu Igbo n’afọ 2009-2019 kwadokwara na umu akwukwo amaghi ede asusu Igbo di ka o kwesiri (WAEC Chief Examiners Report 2009-2019).

N’iga n’ihu, ndi nchocha choputakwara na ndi nne na nna (ma ndi guru akwukwo ma ndi agughi)anaghi asuruumuaka ha asusu Igbo n’ulo. N’ihi nke a, umu akwukwo anaghizi enwe mmasi n’omumu asusu Igbo n’ulo akwukwo sekondiri. Ha na-agu ma na-esonye oge a na-amu asusu Igbo naani ka ha nwe ike igafe n’ule. Nke a kpatara na e nwere mmetuta nsụmede n’iwu nsupe n’ebe mmata nke oma umu akwukwo sekondiri no.

Mbunuche Nchocha

Mbunuche nchocha bummetuta nsụmede n’iwu nsupe n’ebe mmata nke oma umu akwukwo sekondiri okachasi n’ulo akwukwo sekondiri ndi di na Zonu Mmuta Nsuka. Mbunuche nchocha a lebara anya kpom kwem na:

1. Inyocha ka amaghi iwu nsupe n’ulo akwukwo sekondiri di na Zonu Mmuta Nsuka si emetuta adimire nsụmede n’ule asusu Igbo.

Oke Nchocha

E nwere nka asusu anọ n’omumu asusu. Nka anọ ndi ahu bu: onunu, osusu, ogugu na odide. Mana nchocha a gbadoro ukwu na naani abuo n’ime ha. Abuo ndi ahu buosusu na odide. N’otu aka ahu, nchocha a bu maka ulo akwukwo sekondiri di na Zonu

Mmụta Nsuka. Okpuru ọchịchị ndị mebere ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondiri dị na Zonu Mmụta Nsuka bụ Nsuka, Igbo-Etiti na Ụzọ-Ụwani.

Ajuju Nchọcha

Ajuju nchọcha a ka e weputara maka nchọcha a.

1. Kedụ ka amaghị iwu nsupe si emetuta adimire nsụmede n'ule asụsụ Igbo n'ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondiri dị na Zonu Mmụta Nsuka?

Ntulegharị Agumagu

N'ebe a, e lebara anya na ntulegharị agumagu. E lebara anya kpom kwem na nka ọsụsụ na nka odide.

Nka Ọsụsụ

Nka ọsụsụ bụ nka nke abụọ na nka asụsụ e nwere. Ozigbo a mụrụ nwata, nka ọnụnụ bụ ihe izizi ọ na-enweta tupu ọ banye nka ọsụsụ. Nka ọsụsụ a ga-eme ka nwata nwee ike isonye ma ọ bụibanye na mmekọrịta asụsụ na-ewetara mmadụ na ibe ya. Ohiri-Aniche kowara nka ọsụsụ ka mmadụ inwe ike iji asụsụ dị mma wee kowaputa uche ya n'uzọ ndị na-ege ya ntị ga-aghota ihe ọ na-ekwu, ma nwekwa mmasị n'ige ya ntị. Obinigbo duruodu ma kwuo na nka ọsụsụ bụ ihe nnomi na onye ọ bụla choro na-asụsụ were were kwesiri ka o jiri utoasụsụ na mmeputa udaasụsụ na-aruru ka ndị nwe ya.

Na nkowa nke ya, Azikiwe kwukwara na nka ọsụsụ kwesiri ka a kpachapuru ya anya nke oma n'ihu mkpa ọ dị n'ebe mmadụ nọ. Ọ bụkwa ya bụ ezi ụzọ nziri ozi nke mmadụ. Ọ bụ n'uzọ nziri ozi a ka mmadụ nwere ike gosi echiche na mmetuta ya bụ nke dị mkpa na ndụ mmadụ dị n'ụwa.

Nka Odide

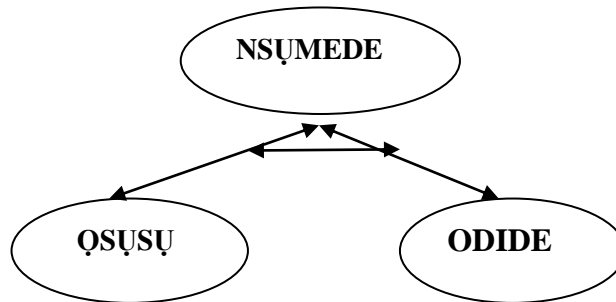
Nka odide bụ ikpeazu n'usoro omumu asụsụ nwata ma kachakwa dị elu. A ga-akuziriri nwata nke a tupu ọ mara ya karịa nka ọsụsụ. Nka odide bụ mmadụ inwe ike ide ihe n'ụdị eserese nke na-eziputa nghota n'uzọ dị iche iche. Odide buzo mmadụ nwere ike isi kowaputa onwe, mmetuta obi, ebumnuche na ọchịchọ ya. Azikiwe kowara odide dị ka nchikota nka ode niile iji mee ka ndiogu ghota ya osiso. Ọ bụ ya kacha wee taa akpu n'omumu asụsụ maka na ode agaghị anoguu nso ikowara ya ihe ufo du ka ọ doo ya anya. Mgbodilekwukwara na nka odide nochitere mmere nke oma niile a mara ma na-ewebata mgbe a na-eke asụsụ.

N'ihu mkpa odide dị n'ụlọ akwụkwọ dị iche iche okacha n'ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondiri, a na-akuziri umuaka ka e si ede edemede. Na nkwalite nkuzi na omumu edemede na klaas, Ohiri-Aniche kwuru na o nwere ihe ufo du onye nkuzi ga-eme, na onoduufoduoga-ahu na e nwere na klaas n'iji hu na nkuzi na omumu edemede gara nke oma na klaas.

Mmekorita di N'etiti Nka Ọsụsụ na Nka Odide

E nwere mmekorita di n'etiti nka ọsụsụ na nka odide. Nka ọsụsụ na nka odide bụ nka mmeputa n'ihu na nka ọsụsụ na-emeputa uda ebe nka odide na-emeputa akara edide. (Noushad-Husain). Nwata ọ bụla nwere ezigbo nka ọsụsụ n'asụsụ na-enwekwazi ezigbo nka odide n'asụsụ ahu. Nwa afo Igbo mara asụsụ Igbo nke oma, kwesiri imakwa ka e si ede asụsụ Igbo n'ihu na asụsụ Igbo bụ asusuudaolu. Mmekorita di n'etiti ọsụsụ na odide na-egosi na e nwee mperi nwata riri n'otu nka na ọ ga-emetuta nke ozo. Nwata riri mperi n'osusu asusu Igbo na-erikwazi mperi n'odide asusu Igbo. Ihe ga-enyere nwata ma ọ

bụumụ akwụkwọ aka idị ire na nsụmede asụsụ Igbo bụ ka ha mara nka ọsụsụ na nka odide asụsụ Igbo nke ọma.



F[igq 1: Eserese Nkawa Mmekar[ta d[N’etiti Nka Osusu na Nka Odide

Usoro Nchọcha

Ụdị nchọcha a bụ ndimemecha, Ndimemecha bụ ụdị nchọcha na-eleba anya na mmekọrịta dị n’etiti mgbamonwe. N’ụdị nchọcha a, onye na-eme nchọcha anaghị enwe ike n’ebe mgbamonwe ndị a dị. Nworgu kowara ndimemecha ka ụdị nchọcha yitere nchọcha keeksperiment n’ihi na ọ na-achọimata mmekọrịta e nwere na mkpatara-mputara mana ha dịkwazi ichi n’ihi na a bịa na ndimemecha, onye nchọcha enweghị ike ijikwata mgbamonwe ndị na-amasị ya ma nke a ga-eme na ọ gaghị ejinwu aka mee ha. Naanị ihe ndị nchọcha na-eme bụigba mbọ jikọta ndaputa dị adi ma ọ bụ hụ na mgbamonwe butere mkpatara.

Ndị e jiri mee nchọcha bụumụ akwụkwọ niile na-agụ akwụkwọ n’ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondirị dị na Zonu Mmụta Nsuka. Ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondirị goọmentị dị na Zonu Mmụta Nsuka dị iri ise na iteghete (59). Ụmụ akwụkwọ niile na-agụ sinio sekondirị nke abuo n’ụlọ akwụkwọsekondirị dị n’okpuru ọchịchị Nsuka dị puku atọ, nari asaa na iri atọ na isii (3736) n’onyogu, ndị na-agukwa sinio sekondirị nke abuo n’ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondirị dị n’okpuru ọchịchị Igbo-Etiti dị otu puku, nari anọ iri ise na asaa (1457) n’onyogu ebe ndị na-agukwazi sinio sekondirị abuo n’ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondirị dị n’okpuru ọchịchịUzo-Uwanị dị nari ise na iri asaa na asatọ (578).

Ụlọ akwụkwọ dị na Zonu Mmụta Nsuka dị iri ise na iteghete (59) ebe ụlọ akwụkwọ dị iri atọ (30) nke e ji usoro nhoro keudi wee weta ka e ji wee mee nchọcha. Nke a nyere aka ka e nwee ezigbo nnochite anya ụlọ akwụkwọ dị na Zonu a.Nke a bukwazi pesenti iri ise (50%) ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondirị goọmentị niile e nwere na Zonu Mmụta Nsuka. Ebe e si nweta ya bụ: ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondirị dị n’okpuru ọchịchị Nsuka dị iri na isii (16), ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondirị dị n’okpuru ọchịchị Igbo-Etiti dị asatọ (8) ebe ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondirị dị n’okpuru ọchịchịUzo-Uwanị dị isii (6). Ụmụ akwụkwọ e ji mee nchọcha n’okpuru ọchịchị Nsuka dị otu puku na nari ise (1500) si na puku atọ, nari asaa na iri atọ na isii (3736). Ụmụ akwụkwọ ndị e ji mee nchọcha n’okpuru ọchịchị Igbo-Etiti dị nari ise iri atọ na iteghete (539) si n’otu puku, nari anọ na iri ise na asaa (1457) ebe Ụmụ akwụkwọ ndị e ji mee nchọcha n’okpuru ọchịchịUzo-Uwanị dị nari abuo na iri anọ na iteghete (249) si na nari ise iri asaa na asatọ (578).

Ngwa nchọcha e ji weta aziza (ozi) bụ njumaza, edemede n’isiokwu ụfodu na ajujuonu. Njumaza ndị ahụ bụ nke ndị nchọcha ji aka ha meputa site n’ajuju nchọcha. Njumaza a bụ maka umu akwukwo - Mmeta Nke Oma N’Iwu Nsupu Igbo (MNONINI).

Nke a bu maka iza ajuju sitere na iwu nsupe nwere ajuju ise. Umụ akwukwọ dekwara edemede maka isiokwu atọ, nke a gosiri nka odide ha nwere n'asụsụ Igbo. Ha họtọ otu n'ime isiokwu ndi ahụ ma dee edemede na-akarighi mkpuruokwu nariato na iri ise (350). E ji akara inye maaki ndi WASSCE wee nyochaa ya. Nke a bu maaki iri abuo na ise (25). Umụ akwukwọ nwekwara ajujuonu ha zara iji gosi nka osusu ha n'asụsụ Igbo. Ajuuatọ (3) mebere ya. Ndi nchocha ji teepu rekoda wee mee nke a. E nyere ha nkeji abuo abuo maka iza ajujuo bula. E ji akara ngosi anọ wee zaa njumaza. Ha bu Ekwesiri m Ike (EI - akara anọ), Ekwere m (E - akara atọ), Ajuru m (A - akara abuo) na Ajusiri m Ike (AI - otu akara). Ngwa nchocha e ji mee nchocha bu nke ndiokacha na okammuta no na Ngalaba Edukeshon na ogbo ya nke Lingwustiks (Sayensi Asusu), Igbo na Asusu Ala Anyi tulere. Ha tulere ma gosikwa na asusu ndi e jiri dee ya kowara ya nke oma ma dookwa anya. Ha wepukwara nkowa ma nghota ndi na-edochaghi anya ma mekwa ya ka o di mma. N'ikpeazu, ha tinyekwara ma gbakwunyekwa echiche ha iji mee ngwa nchocha a ka o di mma ma zukwa oke. Atumatu ha niile bu nke e mezuru na ngwa nchocha ndi a. Ndinchocha na mmadu atọ ndi enyemaka mara asusu Igbo ma na-akuzikwa ya n'ulo akwukwọ sekondiri ndi ha zuru ma kuzie ihe ndi di mkpa a chorọ, kesara ma nakotakwa njumaza ndi a. Ha jere n'ulo akwukwọ sekondiri bu ndi a hoputara iji mee nchocha gaa kee ha njumaza ma natakwaa ha ozugbo ha zachara ajuju di na ha.

Ndi nchocha na ndi enyemaka ha nyekwara umu akwukwọ edemede ha dere na klaas. E mesia, ha lebara anya ma nyochakwa edemede ndi ahụ di ka usoro ndi WAEC ji enyocha edemede, tinyere igba umu akwukwọ ajujuonu.

Data e nwetara bu nke a e nyochara, tulee ma gosikwa na tebulu nke sitere n'ajuju nchocha. E ji miin (\bar{x}) na Standad Divieshon (SD) wee nyochaa aziza sitere na ajuju nchocha.

Tebulu 1: Osisa Miini na Standad Divieshon ka Amaghi Iwu Nsupu si Emetuta Adimire Nsumede N'ule Asusu Igbo N'ulo Akwukwọ Sekondiri di na Zonu Mmuta Nsuka (N = 2288)

N/I	Ajuju	\bar{X}	SD	Nkowa
A	Amara m asupe okwu Igbo	2.16	0.84	Ekwenyeghi
B	Ama m asupe mkpuruokwu ka m na - akpopta ya	1.84	0.71	Ekwenyeghi
Ch	Ama m ede 'na' n'uzo di iche iche	1.54	0.63	Ekwenyeghi
D	Ama m edesa mkpuruokwu kwesiri ndesa edesa	1.64	0.67	Ekwenyeghi
E	Ama m edeko mkpuruokwu ndi a na - edekonu	1.083	0.82	Ekwenyeghi
Nchikota		1.80	0.54	Ekwenyeghi

Tebulu a gosiri osisa miin na standad divieshon ka amaghi iwu nsupe si emetuta adimire nsumede n'ule asusu Igbo n'ulo akwukwọ sekondiri di na Zonu Mmuta Nsuka.

Site na tebulu, ndi zara ajuju ekwenyeghi n'ajuju niile a juru. Ajujua, b, ch, d, na e, ndi nwere akara miini 2.16, 1.84, 1.54, 1.64, na 1.83 n'otu n'otu ekwenyeghi n'ajujuo bula. Nchikota n'otu aka ahụ, ekwenyeghikwa site n'akara miini 1.80. Ihe nke a na-egosi bu na amaghi iwu nsupe na-emetuta adimire nsu mede n'ule asusu Igbo.

Ozo kwa, site n'edemede umu akwukwo dere n'isiokwu ndi a, "nri na-akacha amasi m na etu e si akwado ya", "otu njem nlere anya m mere" na "ochichiumu nwaanyi na nke ndiumu nwoke, kedu nke i kwenyere ka mma?", o gosiri na ha amaghi ka e si ede edemede n'Igbo. N'edemede ha, a hutara amaghi asupe mkpuruokwu Igbo na ide mkpuruokwu Bekee. Ndiozo gunyere amaghi ede 'na' n'uzo di iche iche, ndesa okwu kwesiri ndesa na ndeko okwu e kwesiri idekoonu. Edemede ha agaghi were were n'ogugu. Ha eziputaghi ezigbo nka n'osusu na n'odide asusu Igbo.

Nkata

Site na nchoputa nchocha a, ndi zara ajuju gosiri na ha amaghi asupe mkpuruokwu Igbo. Amaghi asupe mkpuruokwu Igbo sitere n'amaghi asu asusu Igbo. O buru na ha mara asu asusu Igbo nke oma, nsupe mkpuruokwu Igbo agaghi na-ahia ha ahụ n'ihia na asusu Igbo so n'asusu nsupe mkpuruokwu ya di mfe. O bu ka e si akpopta mkpuruokwu Igbo bu etu e si asupe ya maka na asusu Igbo bu asusudaolu (Ezema). Nchocha a dabara n'Udoye ebe o kwuru na o na-ahia umuakwukwo ahụ nke ukwu ide asusu Igbo okachasi itinye akara nta n'ebe o kwesiri.

Nchoputa nchocha a adabachaghi na nke Izuagie kwuru n'ime Kanu na nsogbu asusu abughiisu ya bu asusu; kama nke bu nsogbu bu ide ya ede. Mana di ka nchocha a siri choputa, o bughi naani n'ide asusu ede ka nsogbu di. Nnukwu nsogbu na nhia ahụ dikwu n'isu ya bu asusu. Nke a putara na onye o bula na-amaghi asu asusu agaghi ama ede ya. Etu ahụ kwa ka o di n'asusu Igbo; onye amaghi asu asusu Igbo, o nweghi ka o gae si mara ede ya ede n'ihia na e nwere mmekorita di n'osusu na odide asusu. Echiche a kwadoro ihe Anozie kwuru na a bia na ndu nwatakiri o bula, osusu na-ebu uzo tupuo mubazie maka usoro odide ihe. Nke a na-egosi na nwata o bula kwesiri ka o muta etu e si asu asusu tupu etu esi ede ya bu asusu ede.

Mputara na Ntunye Aro

Nchocha a choputara na umu akwukwo amaghi asupe mkpuruokwu Igbo. Isupe mkpuruokwu etu ha si akpopta ya anaghi ekwe ha. Idekwa 'na' n'uzo di iche iche bukwa nke ha amaghi. Idesa mkpuruokwu ndi kwesiri ka edesa na ndi kwesiri ka e dekoonu bu nke ha amaghi. Site na nchoputa nchocha a, ndi nchocha tunyere aro ndi a ka ndi nne na nna na-asurumuaka asusu Igbo n'ulo. O buru na ndi nne na nna ga-ebido ozugbo a muru nwa ohuru suwara ya asusu Igbo, nwata ahụ ga-ewere asusu Igbo di ka asusu olu nne ya. O ga na-asukwa ya na gburu gburu ya na n'uloakwukwo ya. O mee nke a, o ga-adi ire n'osusu na n'odide asusu Igbo. Ndi isi ulo akwukwo ga-akwusi imachibido umu akwukwo sekondiriisu Igbo n'ulo akwukwo. Ha ga-ahapuumu akwukwo ka ha na-akowa onwe ha n'asusu ka ha mma, okacha n'asusu Igbo. Ulo akwukwo sekondiri kwesiri inwe ubochi ole na ole ga-abu naaniisu asusu Igbo. N'ubochi ndi ahụ, ihe niile a na-eme n'ulo akwukwo bido n'ututu ruo na mgbasaa akwukwo ga-abu n'asusu Igbo. N'ubochi ndi a kwa, e kwesiri ka a daa onye o bula suru asusu Bekee nha ego ma o bu nye ya ntaramahuhu.

O kwesikwara ka a na-enye nwa akwukwo bula mere nke oma n'ule asusu Igbo ihe onyinye di iche iche di ka igu akwukwo n'efu na Mahadum, ebe o ga-agu maka asusu

Igbo. A ga-eme nke site n'ihazi edemede n'asụsụ Igbo na Steeti niile dị n'ala Igbo. Mbuli elu dị etu a ga-enyekwa aka na mmasịmụ akwụkwọ ga-enwe n'asụsụ Igbo. Ndị nkuzi ga-ebido n'oge ụmụaka nọ n'ụlọ akwụkwọta akara na praịmarị kuziwere ha iwu nsupe nke bụ ka e si asupe mkpụrụokwu Igbo. Mgbe ha ga-erute n'ụlọ akwụkwọ sekondiriisupe mkpụrụokwu Igbo agaghizi na-enye ha nsogbu.

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TOWARDS THE RESTRUCTURING OF AFRO-FEMINIST THOUGHT IN NIGERIAN DRAMA FOR NATIONAL IDENTITY



Mohammed-Kabir J. Imam and Ridwan Suleiman

Abstract

It has been observed by different studies that Euro-centric feminist thought, instead of ameliorating the challenges bedeviling Nigerian women, has compounded their problems. This is copiously seen from their interactions in social-political realm. The Nigerian women speak discordance voices, thus, they are their own problems. Hence, the need for the restructuring of Afro-feminism that is devoid of Euro-centric hegemony. To achieve this, the study adopts the content analysis of the qualitative research methodology. This is done through the analyses of some selected Nigerian playtexts. Such as Nwabueze's *The Dragon's Funeral* and Idegu's *Six and Half a Dozen*. How the women in the selected plays speak one voice, forget about their differences and face their challenges to succeed. The findings show that women will succeed in greater measure if they can adopt the unity explicated in the drama among themselves. The study recommends among others that playwrights, critics and theatre directors should look inwards to review such plays as the ones selected here to bring out ways women can succeed through speaking in unity. The paper therefore, concludes that if these numerous ways explored by women in these plays and others are embraced, Nigerian women would go higher than where the Euro-centric feminism has taken them.

Introduction

It is pertinent to start with Ezenwamadu's position that: "The belief that women secretly hate other women is one with a long history in humanity especially in the African context. Avarice suspicion and competition abound in the relationship among the female race". (1287) This is coming at a time, in this post-postmodern era when feminism as one of the feminist-liberation movement is being sung like a song in the mouth of the female race - both old and young. This avarice malice among the female folks may have come up as a result of Euro-centric feminism to liberate women folks, especially the African women, more importantly Nigerian women. Because of the Euro-centric nature of feminism available to Nigerian women, they may not have been able to solve their avalanche of problems. This may be obvious from the fact that what is left of feminism is the theory and, as praxis has withered away despite its beautiful conceptualization by Ezenwamadu thus:

Feminism... is a diverse collection of social theories, political movements and moral philosophies, largely motivated by or concerning the experiences of women, especially in terms of their social, political and economic situation. As a social movement, feminism largely focuses on limiting or eradicating gender inequality and promoting women's rights, interests, and issues in society. (1287)

As beautifully captured above, it has not been able to ameliorate the numerous problems bedeviling African women, especially Nigerian women. It is the quest to answer this question that led to the struggle by African-Nigerian feminist scholars and researchers to

seek the true feminist movements that can help the African woman to solve her numerous problems. Because instead of the Euro-centric feminism to help in solving her problems, it has helped in compounding her problems. Hence the need for feminist movements that may salvage the African woman from her numerous problems. In the words of Helen Chukwuma: "In the African context in general and Nigeria in particular, feminism is deemed necessary to redefine as a context in modern African literature, is a rejection of inferiority and a striving for recognition" (ix). This effort is geared towards giving the woman a sense of belonging, worthy, contributing and effectual woman being. Lamenting on the role she wants women to play in the society, Ama Ata Aidoo opines that, "we were not asking to be hailed as geniuses, it was simply that some African women have written books that have been as good as some of the books written by some of the African male writers, and sometimes better. We wanted to be noticed". (516)

That is the sense with the struggle of African/Nigerian feminist thought. They sort not to be equal with the male folk, but they want recognition as they make their contributions to the growth of African society. This may have been the reason why feminism seems to have failed in moving African woman, especially Nigerian woman to the next level. Because: "Our women under the disguise of feminism seem to have lost focus in the fight against gender inequality" (Mohammed-Kabir and Yunusa 207). In order to assert the position of women in Africa, especially Nigeria, different female authors have tried to place definition of what kind of feminist movement can help Africa/Nigerian woman. They proposed variant forms of feminist thoughts that they felt could help the African woman out of the challenges facing her. Seeing feminism as compounding more problems for African woman, Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie opines that: "The word "feminism" itself seems to be a kind red rag to the bull of African men... Be a stiwanist. I am a stiwanist". (549) Ezenwa-Ohaeto emphasizes Ogundipe-Leslie's stand in Stiwanism that it:

...focuses more on the structures that oppress women and the way women react to these institutionalized structures. Ogundipe-Leslie argues that the struggle for African women is a result of colonial and neo-colonial structure that often place African males at the apex of social stratification. Furthermore, the struggle African women faces are also impart to the way they have internalized the patriarchy and have come to endorse the system themselves. (10)

This is one of the variants of feminist movements that are not in consonant with the Euro-centric feminism. Buchi Emechata's argument is equally important to this study as she asserts that, "I chronicle the little happenings in the lives of the African women I know I did not know that by doing so I was going to be called a feminist. But if I am now a feminist, then I am an African feminist with a small 'f'". (553) One may be compelled to interpret her small 'f' to be the kind of feminism that put Africa's peculiarities in the front burner of the struggle. The kind of feminism that creates space for the recognition of African women in the scheme of things in order to allow African women operate within the boundaries of African numerous cultural leanings. Hence, the feminism with big 'F' is Euro-centric and has no plan for African woman and her cultural hegemony, therefore it should be discarded. This may have been the reason why the African women speak discordance voices, and have not developed despite their engagements with the Euro-centric feminism.

Theoretical Framework

African feminist, writer, and scholar Obioma Nnaemeka discusses and defines the term “Nego-feminism” in her article *Nego-Feminism: Theorizing, Practicing, and Pruning Africa’s Way*. She writes that: “Nego-feminism is the feminism of negotiation; second, nego-feminism stands for ‘no ego’ feminism and is structured by cultural imperatives and modulated by evershifting local and global exigencies” (358). Most African cultures have a culture of negotiation and compromise when it comes to reaching agreements. In Nego-feminism, negotiations play the role of giving and taking. For African feminism, in order to win challenges, feminists must negotiate and sometimes compromise enough in order to gain freedoms. Nnaemeka notes that: “nego feminism works by knowing when, where, and how to detonate and go around patriarchal land mines” (358). This means that nego-feminism knows how to utilize the culture of negotiation in order to deconstruct the patriarchy for the woman’s benefit. Hence, it may be by negotiations that African women can attain the heights they dream of.

Conceptualizing Afro-Feminism

African feminism is a type of feminism innovated by African women that specifically addresses the conditions and needs of continental African women (African women who reside on the African continent). Therefore: “African feminism includes many strains of its own, including Motherism, Femalism, Snail-sense Feminism, Womanism/women palavering, Nego-feminism, Stiwanism, and African Womanism” (Nkealah 61). Because Africa is not a monolith, these feminisms are not all reflective of the experiences African women have, because of the peculiarities of African societies. Some of the feminisms are more specific to certain groups of African women. This may have culminated into why we have variant of African feminisms. African feminism is sometimes aligned with, in dialogue, or in conflict with Black Feminism or African womanism. Because of African women on the continent and African women in the diaspora.

Concretely, some of the factors for Afro-feminism were strongly outlined by the following African feminist scholars and writers that African feminism became necessary in part due to white Western feminism’s exclusion of the experiences of the black woman and the continental African woman. White Euro-centric feminism do not take into account the particular issues black women face at the intersection of both their blackness and their womanhood. Currently, Euro-centric feminism often classifies African women as “women of color,” which groups and thereby represses the African woman’s historical trajectory and specific experience (Nkealah 30). Hazel Carby in “White Women Listen! Black Feminism and the Boundaries of Sisterhood” notes why Euro-centric feminism is considered the normative experience of all women. She writes that: “History has constructed our sexuality and our femininity as deviating from those qualities with which white women, as the prize of the Western world, have been endowed” (Carby 20). However, that is why: “white feminism cannot continue to erase Africa or African women from feminist theory or feminist advocacy, because as the Mother Continent of humanity, the narratives and experiences of Africa’s women will always be relevant” (Acholonu 34). To clarify more on what is referred to as Afro-feminism Ahikire posits that, “African feminism was not wholly a reaction to being excluded from white

feminists' vision of feminism, but also from their own ingenuity and desire to create a feminism that embraced their backgrounds and experiences. African feminism voices the realities of women in varying African countries". (25)

In furtherance to the above, Kolawole asserts that: "Women's needs, reality, oppression and empowerment are best addressed by having an inclusive and accommodating understanding of the generic and more general issues as well as the peculiarities and group attitude to self-definition as women" (61). Thus: Naomi Nkealah argues that African feminism: "strives to create a new, liberal, productive and self-reliant African woman within the heterogeneous cultures of Africa. Feminism in Africa, ultimately, aims at modifying cultures as it affects women in different societies". (20)

Afro-feminism therefore, is the kind of feminism that puts African woman in her consciousness. The kind of feminism that beliefs and recognises the peculiarities of African woman. The kind of feminism that will make African woman understands that moving together and speaking one thunderous voice is what will help her in defeating the challenges before her. The kind of feminism that will make African woman realise that if you must lick honey because of the bees you will have to make fire available. The kind feminism that leans on the principles of snail-sense kind of feminism. This would be seen subsequently from the playtexts selected for this study.

Synopsis of *The Dragon's Funeral*

Nwabueze's *The Dragon Funeral* is a literary medium switch of the historical account of Aba Women Riot of 1929 under the British Colonial rule to a stage craft. It reenacts the heroic exploits of the women of the then Eastern Region of Nigeria against the repulsive practices of the colonialists. Using the Brechtian style of historicification, through a story teller (Ekwedike), recounts how Mr. Weir (The District Officer) who is about embarking on leave to England keeps Captain Cook abreast on administrative issues bothering their province until the new District Officer (Captain Hills) resumes duty. They resolve that the payment of tax should be extended to women. The women rumoursly hear of this intention to impose tax on them, and under the stout and courageous Adaugo, she mobilizes and conscientises other women to confront their husbands, the chiefs and colonial masters. In the main, Emeruwa delegated by Chief Okeugo to take inventory of their possessions is humiliated by some women. As such, protest ensued, the women march to Chief Okeugo's palace to repeal this degenerative wave, he escapes to Mr. Weir's house. While at Weir's house, the protesters demand for the crown of Chief Okeugo and equally force the white man to reverse the taxation policy.

Synopsis of *Six and Half a Dozen*

Baba abandons his home because his wife gives birth to a baby girl, Ladi. For that reason he refuses to take care of his wife and the girl until his wife gives birth to a baby boy, Abu. The arrival of Abu sets the conflict of the play moving. Baba diverts all attention to Abu. He does not see Ladi as his daughter. At the age of school, he concentrates on Abu and leaves Ladi for Mama who in her doggedness sees to it that Ladi too goes to school and become somebody tomorrow. As the play progresses it is revealed that Abu is over pampered and goes wayward while Ladi on the other hand becomes successful by graduating with flying colours through the efforts of Mama. As the days go by, Ladi starts to work with scholarships awaiting her. This time Abu has gone into the

city to join hoodlums. Baba becomes sick and needs money for operation. Mama sends for Ladi who comes in and settle the outstanding hospital bill and paves way for the operation. This at the end gladdens Baba's heart and sees the truth that there should not be discrepancies between a male child and a female child. Ladi sends Abu back to school and the family reunites again.

Restructuring "Afro-Feminist" Thought in Modern Nigerian Drama

The socio-economic impacts of inequity and injustice towards African feminist movements serve as detrimental stressors that inhibit women's rights, which tamper with their overall political movement. This ultimately hampers women's ability to organize, mobilize and collectively advocate. Hence: "Another difficulty is how strong the patriarchy is in both urban and rural African communities" (Madunagu 71). This influences domestic politics within the household and ultimately in every community, which sways women to act against their own beliefs and against other women as well. Arguably, the position of Madunagu is contendable as most of the aforementioned challenges are a thing of the past before women in Africa and they are no longer invoked. However, the position of Adeoti and Ewweirohama is important as they argue that:

Yes, there has been a considerable enlightenment about gender inequality and women rights, especially by an avalanche of non governmental organizations. But the advocacy, in many instances, only improves the economic chances of conference-holding elites without any impact on the lives of the ordinary African women who inhabits the fringe of rural and urban existence. (13-14)

The beginning of the conflict is set straight in *The Dragon's Funeral* by Adaugo (the central character) haven heard of the impending unsavory treatment proposed by the colonialist to be meted on them (women), quickly summons a meeting of women. She unequivocally addresses her fellow women about the imminent doom in the play thus:

Women of my ancestral land, there is dust in the air. Evil men have enveloped our land. The name of that evil, that dust is government. We have heard different rumours about what government is doing and even what it intends to do... The serene atmosphere of this village will soon be disrupted by the strangers in our midst... Women of Ngwa land, shall we escape into the ant-hole because of government? (*The Dragon's*... 18)

This excerpt brings to the fore, the playwright's intent, calling on all women that forgetting their differences will make them to be proactive on issues affecting them and not to wait until they are neck deep into quagmires before trying to salvage the situation. Facing issues squarely will liberate the woman folk. They join forces together to fight the White man and his plans to impose tax on the women. The issue their husbands could not face head on. With this, women can build honour and respect for themselves and not just merely fighting for equality. The women succeeded in this light because they declared that they are not fighting their husbands. This is part of the teachings of Neco feminism. They dropped their ego and made their husbands believe that they are not out for them.

Furthermore, only on such platforms and under this kind of atmosphere, women will be free to allay their fear and voice out their ordeals. With this in place, Akuekefreely voicesher opinion that:

I have one question to which I want an answer before I make up my mind. You said that we shall fight everybody, including our husbands. Who shall save us if things become difficult for us...we should be foolish to undertake suicide in the name of determination. That means chewing the cord of foolishness. (20)

Akueke's worry is important to this study. She raises an alarm as to whether everybody implies fighting their husbands too. That is not the issue before the women in this playtext. She exposes that fighting their husbands inclusive may be catastrophic. Afro-feminism holds this position that, it is not fighting and competing with men as propagated by Euro-centric feminism that will work for African women, but identifying their roles through togetherness and negotiation. That is why the study adopts nego-feminism as theoretical leaning. "Nego-feminism is the feminism of negotiation" (Nnaemeka 357). Men in the play did not interfere in the action of the women in fighting against the white man because when every stakeholder is given a space in contributing to the discourse of issues concerning it, it breeds a whole lot of sense of belonging and solidarity. The women also succeeded because they dropped their ego, which are the tenets of nego feminism.

This also played out in Idegu's *Six and Half A Dozen*. Mama despite vehement attacks and negative reactions from Baba, dropped her ego insists on staying and training her daughter to the level that she became the bread winner of the family. This is what Nego-feminism is all about. Feminism of negotiation which craves for the existence of women in the society and doing away with their (women) 'ego'. Nnaemeka in Nego-feminism opines that: "African feminism works by knowing when, where, and how to detonate and go around patriarchal land mines" (358). Mama later got the love she deserved from Baba and regains her position in his heart. Her doggedness brings succor to not Mama alone, but to her daughter as a woman who took the role of a man in the family at large. Ladi's exchange with the Doctor at the hospital epitomizes a person that is successful and has taken the role of men:

Ladi: Doctor, how much is our bill?

Doctor: Bill? You? Look young girl we are not here for gossips or some pass-time women liberation stuff

Ladi: (Taken aback) I learnt there is some outstanding bill

Doctor: (Cutting in) Yes. Outstanding bill and you think you can settle it? (To Mama) I hope your son comes soon enough or else...

Ladi: Tell me the bill for God's sake that's why I rushed here. (52)

The Doctor underrates Ladi here because she is a girl. But Ladi surprises the Doctor as she calculates, counts the money and gives the Money to the Doctor:

Doctor: Well, N 55,000.00 outstanding for drugs and other services while he needs to pay another N90, 000.00 for an emergency surgery this evening

Ladi: (Calculating) That's N145, 000.00 (She pays him from the brown envelope in her bag...)

Doctor: (Bowing to Ladi) Thank you madam. In that case we can move into action straight away... (53)

Kudos to Mama who behaves like the typical African woman that refuses to leave her husband's house, remained there and sees to the upbringing of Ladi despite her father's

hatred because she is a girl (woman). We can see nego-feminism playing out in Mama. Mama drops her 'ego' as an African woman and faces the challenges before her and out of nothing, she is able to train Ladi to the university and Ladi became successful and victorious than Abu the beloved son to Baba (their father). African-feminism emphasizes that African women should emulate the characters of Mama in *Six and Half a Dozen* and Adaugo in *The Dragon's Funeral* to enable her succeed in Africa against the Euro-centric feminism which has somehow put the African woman in perpetual 'war' with African husbands and men.

Nwabueze like Idegu, is canvassing for the dire need on the women leaders whose plight is a bit alleviated above members of her association to be courageous enough to stick out their necks to mobilize, speak out and conscientise others without fear or favour from whatever quarter of society by forgetting their differences, dropping their ego and not being envious of their leader as the women in *The Dragon's...* This is apparent from Adaugo line in *The Dragon's Funeral* thus:

Adaugo: My sister, we shall not allow ourselves to be taxed. We shall resist any attempt to harass us. We shall put things in order. (19)

Ngbokwo: Mothers of our land, I salute you, we have listened to our leader... She has said it all. Everything she said entered my ears. But I have one thing to add to her words, which come out of her mouth like fire. We shall not only fight the government. We shall fight anyone that blocks our way... But we shall not surrender. (19-20)

But Adaugo refutes this position when she clarifies that:

Adaugo: Now, I want to make one thing clear to all of you. Once we start, there's no going back. Our aim is not to fight our husbands. Our aim is not to confront men unnecessarily, even if they are strangers. Our aim is not to show that we are indispensable to men. In executing our action, 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. As women we have to do what we feel is right, even if men try to stop us. (24)

When a level playing ground is provided for interaction, dialogue and participation, shades of opinions are thrown up, resolved and every participant becomes partner in progress and is engendered to fight for the common course regardless of the cost, the classes every woman belongs to. On our local parlance, it takes abouance of broomsticks to sweep clean. Nwabueze and Idegu are charting a new dimension to curbing this menace through a collaborative effort. The various women are being called upon to shelve their different tribal, ethnic, religious, economic and socio-political leaning and form a functional, formidable and pragmatic threshold through which to bring down the walls of patriarchy that has held them in perpetual captivity. Nwabueze craftily makes this point through Adaugo:

Gently my sisters, our strength lies in our determination to stay together, to fight together and to die together if the need arises. We shall be protecting our

ancestral land and our ancestor will not allow us to be vanquished. A woman does not stay at home while logs of wood meant for cooking soaks in the rain... We are simple people and we shall not allow anyone to perceive us simpleton... (21)

The playwrights are making a clarion call to Nigerian women to strengthen the cord of nature that binds them as one entity in the pursuit for equal treatment like their male folks. And not using the teachings of Euro-centric feminism to fight for their place in African society but adopt the natural instinct in them to bring the African man from the Olympia height to a manageable level where the African woman's voice could be heard as it is seen in *The Dragon's Funeral*. The women after succeeding in the abolishment of tax compelled the White man to put everything into agreement thus:

Adaugo: We are simple people but not simpletons. Our cause is not yet fulfilled. We know the difference between victory and success. Go back and tell the District Officer to declare in writing that women will never be taxed, that the counting of people and farm products should stop immediately. Tell him to write down that forced labour should stop, and that women should be consulted before any decision affecting them is concluded. Let him write them down so we can preserve it as it is an agreement between the government and us. (77)

"The modern African woman is strong, smart, and resilient and has woken up to the options she has. She is no longer satisfied with the options created for her, but seeks to create new options and choices for the generation of other African women that will come after her" (Orakwue 25). This can equally be seen in *Six and Half A Dozen*. Mama's resilience to Ladi to where she is:

Mama: Mama Musa, Ladi will surprise maigida. My daughter Ladi will grow up to shock her father. She will. (Resolutely) Yes she will be very successful. She will be great. She will be the pride of this family. I will do everything to make her succeed. Ladi will be successful. She will.

This at the end of the play we see Mama's prayers on Ladi coming true and answered. Ladi truly became successful and became the bread winner of the family. Ladi did not only surprised her father by paying off the hospital bills, but she equally sent Abu back to school and that is the height of surprises for her father as Mama really prayed above.

Conclusion

It is arguable that Africa is not a monolith and so some have critiqued any idea of "African feminism." That is unarguable, because: "there exist differences regionally, ethnically, politically, and in religion, which all work to impact how women conceptualize what feminism and freedom looks like for them" (Pereira 247). While African women from, for example, Nigeria, Egypt, Kenya, South Africa and Senegal will have some commonalities, there will be variations in the way they understand gender and gender struggles. Therefore, these varying cultures alter the way these African women experience the world. Thus, one cannot simply merge all women under an unrealistic expectation of sisterhood, but instead to recognise and respect the differences that exist as a result of these diversities and operate as one African woman that needs liberation. But it

is apparent that: “There is a commonality to the struggles women face across the world since the common factor is male privilege” (Ouguir and Sadiqi270).

The ‘male privilege’ is the commonality among African women that calls for the restructuring of Afro-feminism in order to ameliorate and salvage African women in a patriarchic African society. The characters of Mama and Adaugo and other women in Nwabueze’s *The Dragon’s Funeral* and Idegu’s *Six and Half A Dozen* may be emulated through the window of ‘nego-feminism’ which emphasises that: “African feminism works by knowing when, where, and how to detonate and go around patriarchal land mines” (358). To create all-encompassing positions for African woman through restructuring African-feminism which aim is to create an enabling environment for African woman to survive and exist in a patriarchic African society. Despite the differences among African women there is urgent need for a movement of African extraction like African-feminism that is conscious of the peculiarities of African woman and can help in the emancipation of African woman in a patriarchic African society.

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