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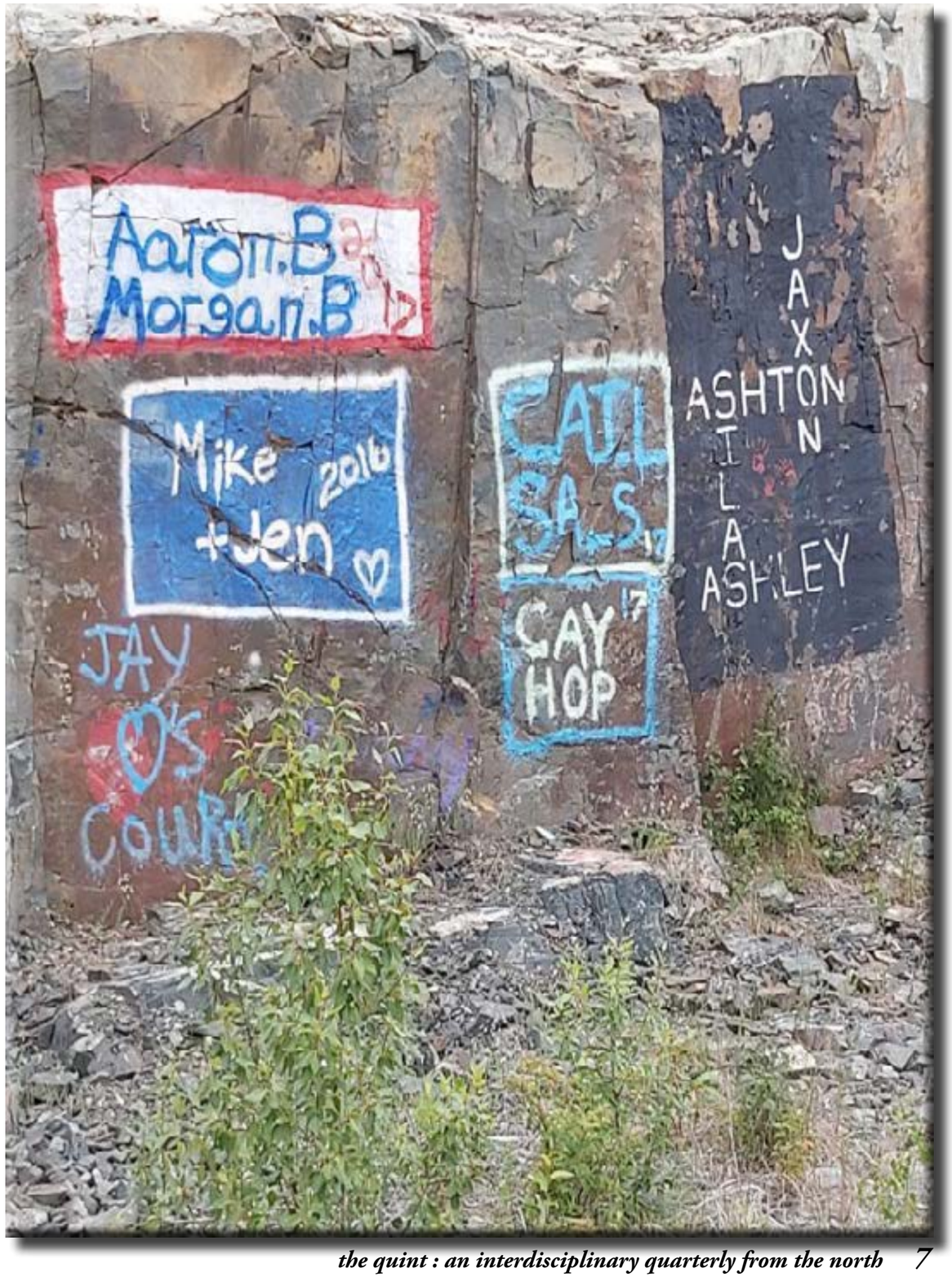
Precambrian #1



Stuart Matheson

EDITORIAL

It is June, and a chilly summer in the North has begun. The birds have returned, but they have not brought with them the warmth that Northerners crave after their long winter. Accordingly, this, *the quint's* fifty eighth issue, offers readers with travel fever opportunities to escape to exotic locales via authors from Nigeria, Tunisia, Saudia Arabia, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada.

Felix A. Akinsipe's "ÌRÈMỌ̀JÉ PERFORMANCE IN ÒGBÓMỌ̀SỌ́ LAND" begins our June offerings. Akinsipe documents Ìrèmọ̀jé, the ritual farewell to the hunter, among Ògbọ́mọ̀ṣọ́ communities of South Western Nigeria. Deeply embedded in the traditions of Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land, Ìrèmọ̀jé is a vital component of Yoruba culture. Next, Saviour Nathan A. Agoro and Gift Benue Zibima investigate Elechi Amadi's comic vision. In *Pepper Soup* (1977), *Dancer of Johannesburg* (1978) and *The Woman of Calabar* (2002), Amadi combines language that is predominantly pidgin with themes of love and happy endings that benefit all the characters.Then, Osakpolor Emwinromwankhoe and Daniel Ekhareafo's "The Rhetoric of National Unity: The Unity of the Elite and the Dilemma of the Poor " discusses the rhetoric of national unity by examining two classes that make up the Nigerian society – the elite and the poor. Drawing on literature modeling, this paper finds the social elite are united in their state capture and their continued marginalization of the poor. Following, in "Evaluating the Potential of the Azhili Eggon Cultural Festival as a Platform for Identity Projection and Cultural Integration," Emmanuel Tsadu Gana and Alheri Enna Patrick consider the efficacy the Azhili Eggon cultural festival in Nasarawa State as a tool for cultural integration and a marker of cultural identity

Then, Olfa Gandouz's "Staging Cultural Transformations in Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*" investigates the relationship between tradition and transformation in Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* (1939) with special focus on Theodore Hickey who visits Harry Hope's Saloon and parodies Christ while playing the role of a preacher endowed with the mission of saving saloon dwellers from their delusions. Following, Justine Shu-Ting Kao's "Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*: Jane's Escape from Entrapment and Quest for Life and Love" finds that Jane's story reads like that of a forsaken child with post-traumatic stress and traces the trajectory of Jane's trauma via the situations of entrapment in which she finds herself. Next, Farhat Ben Amor's "The Vanishing Line: separating 'discipline' from 'anti-discipline' in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*" demonstrates how Golding's novel blurs the boundary between 'discipline' and 'anti-discipline' until the line separating these notions becomes hardly detectable. Amor demonstrates how the English schoolboys parody the 'discipline' they were taught at school, while the Derridean notion of 'contamination,' corrodes their differences. Completing the offerings of this issue's articles, Jammy Seigha Guanah's "Trends of Citation and Referencing in Communication Research Journals in Nigeria: A Citation Analysis" uses a citation analysis approach design to investigate how referencing was carried out in the articles published in the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* (JCMR), and *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* (TNJC).

Film reviews are also housed in this issue. Michelle Lai's film review, "The Power of a Baby Face" revisits Alfred E. Green's Baby Face and finds the film not only subverts gender and class stereotypes but also shows that America has complicated dynamics that may only tolerate women in power temporarily. According to Lai, *Baby Face* is a stark reminder of the challenges women face when rising to the top. Steff Mendolia's "Antonioni's *Il Deserto Rosso* Is Relevant to Love in Our Times" argues that this 1964

film directed by Michelangelo Antonioni captures a human-all-too-human struggle to contend with yearning for love during times of tremendous scarcity. In "Imagining Reality: A Review of Paolo Sorrentino's *The Hand of God* (2021)," Tristan Venturi points out that *The Hand of God* is an important departure from Sorrentino's cinema being (predominantly) one for men, because this film confers much of its mystical aura to its female characters.

No issue of *the quint* can be complete without its creative component. We are delighted to present three new, splendid poems by Jefferson Holdridge. Stuart Matheson's photographs of the PreCambian Shield record how intimate and often surprising graffiti has become on the Precambrian Shield in Northern Manitoba. As the North turns to open water and life at the lake, here is good reading and interesting viewing. Anticipating the crisp autumn days ahead, *the quint* will be back in September with more reading,

Sue Matheson

Editor

Precambrian #2

Stuart Matheson

ÌRÈMỌ̀JÉ PERFORMANCE IN ÒGBÓMỌ̀SỌ́ LAND

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Abstract

One of many traditional performances, *Ìrèmọ̀jé*, the hunters' sacred ceremony for a dead hunter, is still protected and performed today. This paper investigates and documents the peculiar practices of Ìrèmọ̀jé among Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ communities of South Western Nigeria, recording the uses of songs/chants, music, and musical accompaniments. Costumes, make-up, and props in Ìrèmọ̀jé performances are also recorded. Oral interviews and field work experiences were primarily and heavily relied upon, especially direct interviews with the hunters and participant observation at many of the hunters' ceremonies. This study finds hunters to be a vital constituency in Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land and concludes that the Ìrèmọ̀je will continue to be performed.

Key words: Ìrèmọ̀jé, Hunters, Performance, Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land.

Introduction

Ìrèmọ̀jé is the generic name for the hunters' performance at the funeral of the deceased which includes dances, chants, music, and other events. Ajuwon (1981) observes that "Ìrèmọ̀jé ni ó wà fún orò ìṣ̣ípa ọ̀ọ̀dẹ̀ tí ó bá kú" [ìrèmọ̀jé is the ritual for the farewell for the hunter that dies] (p. 8). Akinsipe (2020) remarks that "at inception, the hunters' performance was generally known and called *Ìrèmojé* before a distinction was made and *Ìjálá* was carved out as the name for the entertainment/social aspect of it while Ìrèmojé retained for the sacred part" (p. 168). Ìrèmọ̀jé is also known as *Ìpà Ọ̀dẹ̀* or *Ìpadẹ̀* (the fortification of a dead hunter for transition), and is interchangeably used for these terms across Yorùbá societies. Its practise takes place in the form of typical African total theatre performance.

Ògún, the Yorùbá god of iron, is believed to be the originator of *Ìrèmọ̀jé*. Ajuwon (1981) says that "Ògún ló ni orin Ìrèmọ̀jé" (p. 2): that is "Ògún is the owner of Ìrèmọ̀jé songs". He also affirms that

> Nígbà ayé Ògún, a máa dẹ̀ ìgbẹ́. Ògún lágbára, ó sì lóògùn bíi àrọ̀nì. Ọ̀dẹ̀ paraku ni. Fún ìdárayá àti ìgbádùn ara rẹ̀ tàbí ti àwọn ọmọ-léyìn rẹ̀, Ògún a máa sun Ìjálá, ṣ̣ùgbọ́n ní àkókò tí ǹǹkan burúkú bá ṣ̣ẹlẹ̀ gẹ́gẹ́ bíi òfò tàbí àdánù kan, Ògún ní àwọn orin arò tí máa ń kọ̀ láti fi kẹ́dùn ohun àjálù naa. (Ajuwon, 1981,p. 2)
>
> [During his lifetime, Ògún hunted for animals in the bush. Ògún was powerful, had charms to the fullest. He was a great hunter. For his personal pleasure and those of his followers, he chanted Ìjálá, but in the time of calamity, sorrow or lost, Ògún had some dirges that he sang to commensurate the calamity.]

Alagbe (2006) concurs with Ajuwon, when he says "Ìgbàkúùgbà ni Ògún tí ó dá

Ìrèmòjé tí ó di Ìjálá sílẹ̀ máa n koọ́ọ" (p. 108): that is [Ògún who originated ìrèmòjé which later became known as ìjálá chanted it at all times]. Ògún, was said to engage in singing/chanting and dancing to amuse himself especially after a hard day's job. He will stay among children and his devotees to sing and dance at his leisure. Alagbe (2006) emphasizes that

> Nígbà ayé rẹ̀ gégẹ́ bíí ìtàn àròbá ti Ògún bá múra láti lọ igbó oḍẹ orin ìrèmòjé yìí ló máa ń sun fún àwọn oṃoḍé. Yóò máa kì wọ́n lọ́kọọ̀kan; ìgbà míràn bí ó bá wà lóde àríyá, ó máa ń sun ìrèmòjé yìí láti dá àwọn olùwòran lára yá. (pp. 107-108)
>
> [During his life time according to the oral history, when Ògún was preparing to go for hunting, he chanted ìrèmòjé for children, he praised them one by one, and sometimes when he was at a party he chants ìrèmòjé to entertain his audience].

Ajuwon (1980) also points out that in relation to Ìrèmòjé dance "[t]he god Ògún himself is said to have invented the style, either for worship or social dancing. When skilful dancers perform Ìrèmòjé today they resurrect an otherwise forgotten dance-form for the enjoyment of all present. What interests the dancers most, however, is the hope that their dance is pleasing in the sight of Ogun, whom they are honouring" (p. 69) Ògún's style of singing and dance is peculiar, being poetic and like a chant. This makes *Ìrèmòjé* distinct from other poetic/chants of the Yorùbá people like the Èsà and Ẹkún ìyàwó.

Ìrèmòjé is usually referred to as "*Aré Ìṣípà Oḍẹ*"— the performance for disengaging of the hunter from hunting and transitioning him into the world beyond. It is a rite of passage designed to allow the dead hunter to rest peacefully. In the world beyond, the hunter may continue hunting with the dead. According to the hunters' chant, Ìrèmòjé takes place only at the night:

> Ìrèmòjé kì Í s'orin ìgbà-kúùgbà,
> Orin tá ì í koọ́ lọ́sànán,
> Àfi lóru ni. (Àjùwòn, 1981 p. 9)
>
> [Ìrèmòjé is not a song for every time
> It is a song not sung in the noon
> Except in the night].

They also sing:

> Ìrèmòjé kì Í s'orin ìgbà-kúù-gbà,
> Kì Í s'orin tí à á gbọ́dẹ̀dẹ̀ ẹnii koọ
> Orin tí à á koọ nígbà tó bá sọ̀ro fún oḍẹ ni. (Àjùwòn, 1981 p. 9)
>
> [Ìrèmòjé is not a song for every time
> It is not a song normally sang in the comfort of one's compound
> But a song of difficult time for the hunters].

Àlàgbé (2006) captures the essence of *Ìrèmòjé* in the following passage:

> Ìrèmòjé jẹ́ orin ti ó wà fún ìdágbére fún oḍẹ tí ó ti kú àti pàápàá jù lọ, ó

jẹ́ orin tí àwọn egbẹ́ọ̀dẹ fi ń yọ ọwọ́ọ̀dẹ tí ó kú nínú egbẹ́ọ̀dẹ ayé kí ó lè darapọ̀ mọ́ egbẹ́ rẹ̀, àní egbẹ́ọ̀dẹ òrun. Ní ṣókí, a ó ri pé orin ta á ń koọ lákòókò tí ó bá ṣòro fún ọ̀dẹ ni. (p. 110)

[Ìrèmọ̀jé is the song of farewell for a dead hunter; more so, it is a song the hunters' guilds use to disengage the dead hunter from the activities of the living hunters so that he may join the hunters' guild of the world beyond. In short, it is a song usually sung at a difficult time for the hunters].

Ìrèmọ̀jé rites are usually performed from about 10.00 pm to about 4.00 am. After the death of a hunter, a day is picked for his *Ìrèmọ̀jé* (severance from human activities and transition into the world beyond). The announcement is made and well publicized to attract a crowd. All the hunters' guilds around are informed, and hunters from within and around his community usually turn out in large numbers. When performed, generally accepted organizational patterns are maintained in Ìrèmọ̀jé rites as is typical of many Yorùbá peoples' activities. For example, in relation to the hunters' performance, apart from dialectal differences and peculiarities of the types of drums used in specific Yorùbá communities, the performance styles are largely the same. The hunters across the Yorùbá land see themselves as one, and they obey one rule. They sing:

Ọ̀dẹ Ìbàdàn, ọ̀dẹ Ekòó;
Kọ́dẹ má dalẹ̀ ọ̀dẹ
Ọ̀dẹ Èkìtì, ọ̀dẹ Ọ̀yọ́ọ́;
Kọ́dẹ má dalẹ̀ ọ̀dẹ

Ọ̀dẹ Ìjèṣà, ọ̀dẹ Ègbáá;
Kọ́dẹ má dalẹ̀ ọ̀dẹ
Ọ̀dẹ Ekiti, ọ̀dẹ Ondòó;
Kọ́dẹ má dalẹ̀ ọ̀dẹ

[Hunters from Ìbàdàn, hunters from Ekò (Lagos);
No hunter should betray another
Hunters from Èkìtì, hunters from Ọ̀yọ́;
No hunter should betray another
Hunters from Ìjèṣà, hunters from Ègbá;
No hunter should betray another
Hunters from Èkìtì, hunters from Ondò;
No hunter should betray another].

Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ Land

References to Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land in this paper include all the surrounding towns and villages of Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́, like Ìrẹṣà Pupa, Àjáàwà, Ìkòyí, Igbọ́n, Ahó, Jàbàtá, Fájé and Másífà which are strongholds of the hunters in which the hunters' guilds are well organised. The people themselves call the combination of these places "Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land", that is, Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ and its environs. In Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land, the hunters cooperate with one another, irrespective of any rancour among their kings. There is a popular saying among them that "ọ̀dẹ ò yàtọ̀ igbó kan náà l'ọ̀dẹ ń dẹ"—hunters are the same because they hunt in the same forest. The hunters often come together to hunt at intervals. They are also members of a central union. Its executive, which meets on an *ad hoc* basis, contains a representative from each community. Accordingly, information is easily passed around all the guilds in a very

short time enhancing their solidarity.

Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ is one of the ancient Yorùbá towns, a city in Ọ̀yọ́ State, in the South Western part of Nigeria. The majority of its people are Yorùbá. According to many of the hunters interviewed in the course of the study, including those from outside Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land communities, Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ is one of the most highly respected and notable towns. The origin of the town is rooted in the history of its hunting expeditions. Adegbite (2017 p. 7) points out that "Ogbomoso sprang up as a hunting camp but later assumed a military status due to the military might of her early settlers". The age long tradition of hunting that gave birth to Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land has been kept intact and is still very much in practice all over the land till today so much that almost every street has a well organized hunters' guild.

The place we call Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ today is located between Igbọ́n and Ìresà and is surrounded by four ancestral kings. Aresà on the axis of Gabasì [East]; Oníkòyí on Yàmà [West]; Olúgbọ́n on the axis of Aríwá [North] and Tìmì on Gúsù [South] respectively. That is, the four Obas covered the South, North, East and West of the Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ region. (See Plate 1 on the following page). Although Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ is thought to have been founded by Ogunlọ́lá in the mid 17th century, Adegbite (2017) observes that Aálẹ̀ the first settler in Òkelérin, one of the three different settlements that existed in Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ before the arrival of Ogunlọ́lá, was actually the founder. He was said to be

> [a] powerful hunter, who was of Nupe origin but previously lived in Igbon, first pitched his tent in the area that became Ogbomoso today. He went from Igbon on hunting expedition to a hill where elephants were found in

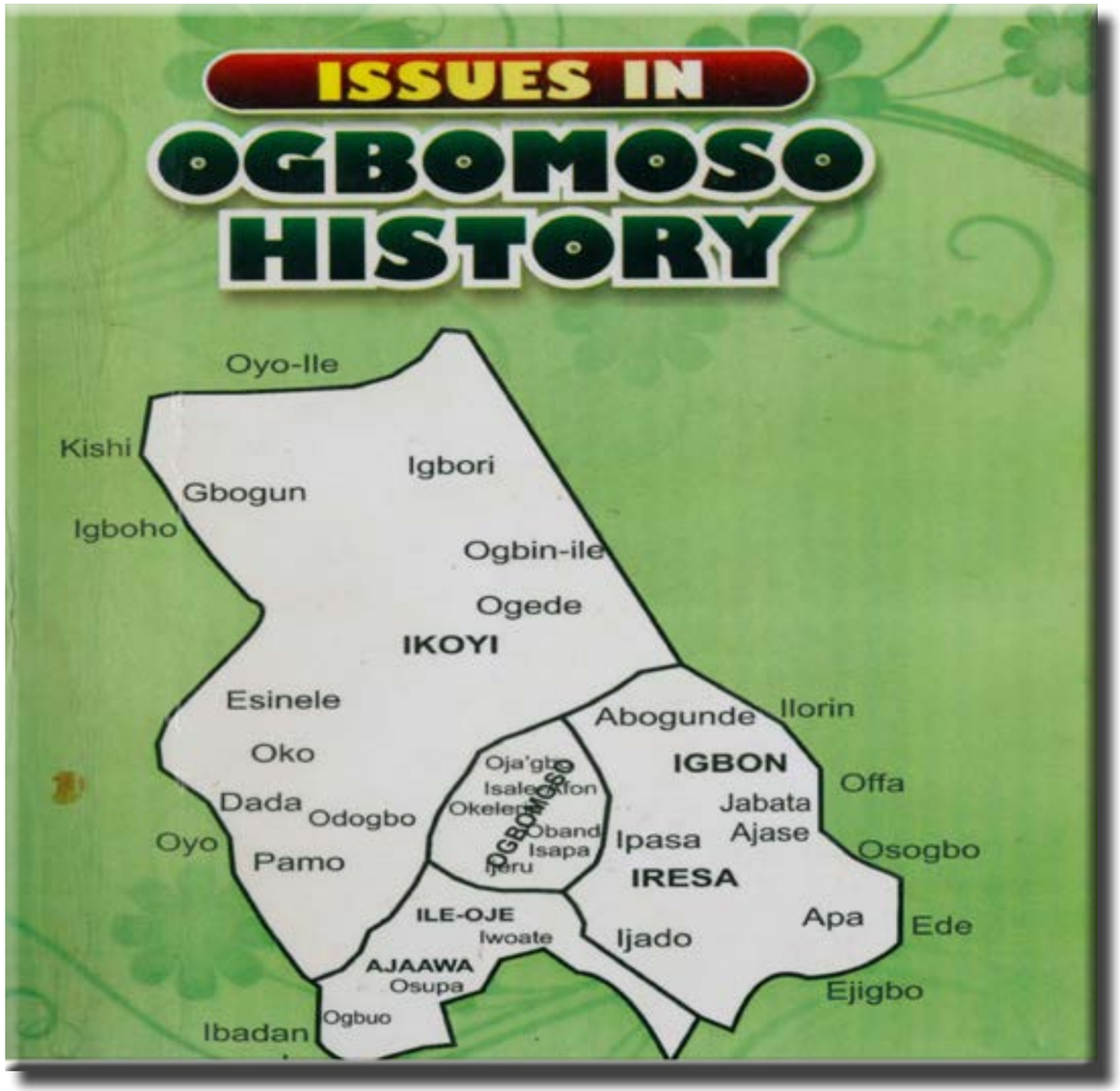

PLATE 1: Showing the map of the study area with the neighbouring towns. Photo culled from Adegbite (2017).

> abundance. He later made the hill his settlement around 1611. (Adegbite, 2017, p. 7)

In Oyerinde's account of the history of Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́,

Ogunlola who was of the Ibariba descent was said to have come to Ogbomoso in pursuit of his hunting profession. On arrival he stayed under Ajagbon tree (still by the side of the palace) and used the branches for hanging gears. This happened in the middle of the seventeenth century where the whole place was a thick jungle. He was an expert archer and a very brave hunter. Ogunlola and his wife Esuu, built their hut by the side of the Ajagbon tree and lived there. Unknown to him there were other settlers around. They were Budo bale Oke Elerin, (as claimed by Adegbite), Budo bale Ijeru and Budo bale Isapa. (Oyerinde, 1934 p. 26).

After some time, Ogunlọlá realized that he was not alone in that environment. He noticed smoke oozing from some nearby locations. He took courage and approached these places and discovered other hunters. The first one named Aale at a site now called Oke-Elerin quarters, the second called Onsile at the site now known as Ijeru quarters, the third Orisatolu at Isapa quarters and the fourth Akande quarters. The descendants of the first three of these hunters are still today the Bales of Oke-elerin, Ijeru and Isapa quarters respectively. There is no more Bale Akande. (Wikipedia)

Today, Aálè Street still exists in Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ at Òkelérin. The inscription placed at the entrance of Okelerin Community Hall, Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ bears the addendum "The Genesis of Ogbomoso Land", indicating that the people continue to believe that Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ began or originated from there. (See Plate 2).

PLATE 2: Showing the signpost in front of Òkè Elérin Community Hall, Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ clearly stating "The genesis of Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́".

Of the three hunters, Ogunlọlá became historically prominent and was given credit for founding the town. It was he who rallied the other hunters together by forming the *Egbẹ́ Alongo* (Alongo Society):

> Ogunlola, after the discovery of these hunters, took the initiative to invite them to form the Alongo Society. The Primary objectives of the society were: Defence against Sunmoni (slave prowler) raids, Group hunting of wild animals, and mutual assistance. At the take off of the society, Ogunlola was, made the chairman. After each day's hunting, they retired to Ogunlola's hut where they were treated to beans and other meals and were served with sekete wine brewed by Ogunlola's wife from fermented guinea corn. They also engaged in discussing current affairs and planning. Later, other settlers

> came and built their huts and thus formed the nucleus of a small village. Ogunlola's hut became the place for settling disputes and other matters. He, Ogunlola had the final say. (Wikipedia)

At this point, Ogunlọ́lá became the head of what Olorode (2010) describes as "a Republic or Federation of "civil" interests comprised of hunters, farmers etc; that was about 700 years ago" (p. 2). Ogunlọ́lá continued to be an interim leader of these settlements until he was arrested and detained in Òyọ́ for killing a man. This incident occurred when Òyọ́ was experiencing a terrifying attack by the Ìbàrìbá people led by the dreaded warrior, Ẹlẹ́mọ̀ṣọ́who. Ogunlọ́lá pleaded with the Aláàfin to be allowed to challenge Ẹlẹ́mọ̀ṣọ́ in battle. His request was granted, and he succeeded in killing Ẹlẹ́mọ̀ṣọ́ and freeing Òyo.

> Alaafin was so impressed by Ogunlola's prowess that he, the Alaafin, requested him to stay in the capital Oyo-Ile instead of returning to his settlement. Ogunlola politely declined saying "Ejeki a ma se ohun" meaning let me stay yonder". His majesty, the Alaafin, granted Ogunlola's wish to return to his settlement. Later, travellers passing to and fro, used to refer to the settlement as of him who beheaded Elemoso meaning "ido eni ti o gb'Elemoso". This was later contracted to Ogbomoso. (Wikipedia)

Ogunlọ́lá returned to his former settlement referred to as Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ (the term coined from the war scene where Ogunlọ́lá fought and killed Ẹlẹ́mọ̀ṣọ́ as "idó ẹni tí ó gb'Ẹ́lẹ́mọ̀ṣọ́" or "ògbórí Ẹlẹ́mọ̀ṣọ́"). Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ means "here is the settlement of he who beheaded Ẹlẹ́mọ̀ṣọ́." At this time, Ogunlọ́lá also earned the title "Shọ̀ún" for telling the Aláàfin to allow him "stay yonder". He was invited by many kings to assist in wars against

their enemies and face other challenges. For example,

> Oba of Alapa sent for Sohun (i.e. Ogunlola) when they are being faced with the terror of a wild giant animal. His wife this time around followed him to Apa and as fate always [had] it, Sohun conquered and killed the animal. Oba Alapa demanded from Sohun [what he wanted] as compensation and his wife asked the king to give her husband another wife from his household so as to make them become in-laws. This was granted by the king and this trend [enlarged] Sohun's coast as he became friends with the people of Alapa, Onikoyi, Olugbon and Aresa. (Olorode, 2010, p. 34)

Ogunlọ́lá became more successful in battles and grew to be greater and more respected among the people and the warriors. Accordingly, Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ became one of the safest places to live in among the Yoruba settlements. People ran from the many war-ravaged settlements of the Yorùbá land to stay under Shòún's protection. Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́, surviving the Muslim Fulani onslaught, of the 19th century, "attracted many Oyo refugees and became one of the largest Yoruba settlements" (https://www.britannica.com/place/Ogbomosho). During the Fulani wars, many towns and villages, about 147, were deserted while their people took refuge in Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́. Ige (2014) also asserts that Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ was "ready to accommodate migrants" who ran there for safety (p.12). Welcoming refugees helped the speedy enlargement of the town.

Ogunlọ́lá "was consequently made the head of the settlement. His compound by the Ajàgbọn tree then became the Sọ̀ún's palace and a rallying point for all Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ citizens". (Oyerinde 1984, p. 30) The Sọ̀ún trained warriors from all these neighbouring villages to fight together against their enemies. Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́, because of its strategic

location, quickly grew, and its people were renowned warriors.

Since then, the Soọ́ún's dynasty has been established in Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́, and they rule under the title of Baàlẹ̀. In 1952, when the Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ District Council changed the title of the Baàlẹ̀ of Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ to Soọ́ún of Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ with the approval of the Western Region Government. The existing five ruling houses, as represented by the descendants of Kumoyede son of Jogioro and grandson of Soọ́ún Ogunloọ́lá, were officially recognized. (https://www.ogbomoso.net/about-ogbomoso/soun-dynasty).

Ìrèmọ̀jé performance in Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land

As Akinsipe and Babarinde-Hall (2018) point out, "rites are sets of formal religious ceremonial procedures ,undertaken and accepted by a group of people or community as a way of doing things. The entire Yorùbá people's lives are shrouded in series of rites especially of birth, marriage, and death" (p. 118). Like all the Yoruba peoples' rites, Ìrèmọ̀jé performances contain unwritten patterns of events and follow a set of unwritten rules. recognised across the Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ communities. Four stages are observed in the these ceremonies: there are the first rites, and then the funeral celebration, followed by the second rite and the final rite.

The First Rite

Generally referred to as *Ìró Ẹ̀pà*—erecting the effigy or fortifying the effigy—the first rite usually begins at any time from 10 pm when it is dark. The senior hunters and the Chiefs among the hunters gather at the house of the deceased. After preparations that fortify them, they open the deceased's house and enter the charm's (strong) room, taking along any of the dead hunter's sons who are knowledgeable about the belongings of dead man or who are also hunters like him. They go through the charms one by one and

PLATE 3: Showing the long shot of *ẹ̀pà ọdẹ*.

begin to separate those whose signifigance and purpose is unclear. After sorting out the ones whose use they can vouch for, they gather the rest together for passage to the dead hunter to take away. They move these to the backyard of the house. In the backyard, a hole is dug where a stick that is shaped like a crucifix is firmly fixed into the ground. They attach palm fronds (the symbol and cloth of Ògún) to the stick and hang most of the charms on it, Then they dress the stick with the late hunter's hunting cloth (Gbérí), using the vertically crossed part as a shoulder blade. Some of the remaining unknown charms remain attached to the cloth, and at the top of the stick they put the hunter's cap. Also attached to the cloth are the bones and skins of the wild animals that the hunter had killed. Everything is carefully placed to create the effigy of the late hunter. Some special knots of the palm fronds are made on the cloth. (See Plates 4 and 5 on the following page).

Other hunting materials of the hunter are brought before the *Èẹ̀pà* (effigy). They include his hunting basket, calabash, cutlass, hoes, and knives. The children also make provision sfor hot drinks (usually schnapps), a goat, a calabash of water, and a pot to accompany and complete the ritual materials. (See Plate 5). All senior hunters are gathered around the set up and the chiefs among them are made to pour libations. Each will hold a cup of the hot drink, sip a little and pray. After the prayer each hunter pours the drinks three times at the base of the effigy and drinks from the rest. He then passes it to another person, with the left hand, who does the same till all of them have prayed. The drink is topped intermittently so that it is not finished. Some of the prayers they say are translated as follows:

Oḷádèẹ̀jọ Àdìgún, (name of the deceased)

You have gone to join the ancestral hunters

Go and rest and stop hunting

Let your children have peace and your children's children

Let not people die one after the other

From today stop hunting on earth

Join the hunters in heaven

All the battles you faced while on earth

As you are dead now let them stop.

Your *èẹ̀pà* is made today,

So, do not hunt with the living again

Start hunting with the dead

As early as possible reincarnate through one of your children

Do not allow this community to scatter

Oḷádèẹ̀jọ Àdìgún,

You heard what was said, go and rest

Don't allow problems come among your children

Don't allow problems come among your family

Don't allow problems come among relations

Don't allow problems come among the community

Don't allow problems come among us (hunters)

Don't allow problems come among the hunters' guild

Oḷádèẹ̀jọ Àdìgún,

Your children have prepared your *èẹ̀pà*

Plate 4: Showing the close up shots of *ẹ̀pà ọdẹ*.

Plate 5: Showing the other materials present at *ìró ẹ̀pà*.

Help them not to encounter problems

Help us the living hunters to succeed

Let us kill animals and not humans

You did not kill human being while alive

Let us not turn our guns against each other

(Sample taken at Fájé, Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́, December 30th, 2017.)

The hunters address the dead directly, because it is believed that the dead hunter is present at the rite listening and watching everything being done. It is, therefore, believed that as they carry the Ẹ̀pà into the forest, the dead hunter will follow them to receive it and so will not return again to the community (world) for any reason.

The Funeral Celebration

This is referred to as *Ayẹyẹ Ẹ̀pa Òkú* – the celebration of the Ẹ̀pa for the dead (the funeral celebration in honour of the dead). It generally features *Aré Ọdẹ* or *Aré Ògún* – the hunters' entertainment or Ògún's entertainment. This last stage of the funeral commences precisely at midnight. It usually takes place an available open place at the hunter's house or at a location that is very close to the late hunter's house where the people are already gathered and waiting while the *Ìró Ẹ̀pà* was going on. The space for the celebration of the *Ẹ̀pa* is constructed to create a square form. Within its perameters, the *Ìjálá* musicians set up their instruments. They are seated along one side of the square, while the senior and Chief hunters occupy the front side and the rest of the people (the audience), comprised of the deceased's families, relations, neighbours, and well-wishers fill the remaining **L** shape that is left vacant.

The *Ẹ̀pá* , now covered in an *agbádá* (an ordinary native cloth of the late hunter) is

brought into the space. It is positioned so that the sightlines from it into the performance area are unobstructed—set in front of and to the right side of the senior/Chief hunters' seats as shown in the diagram below:

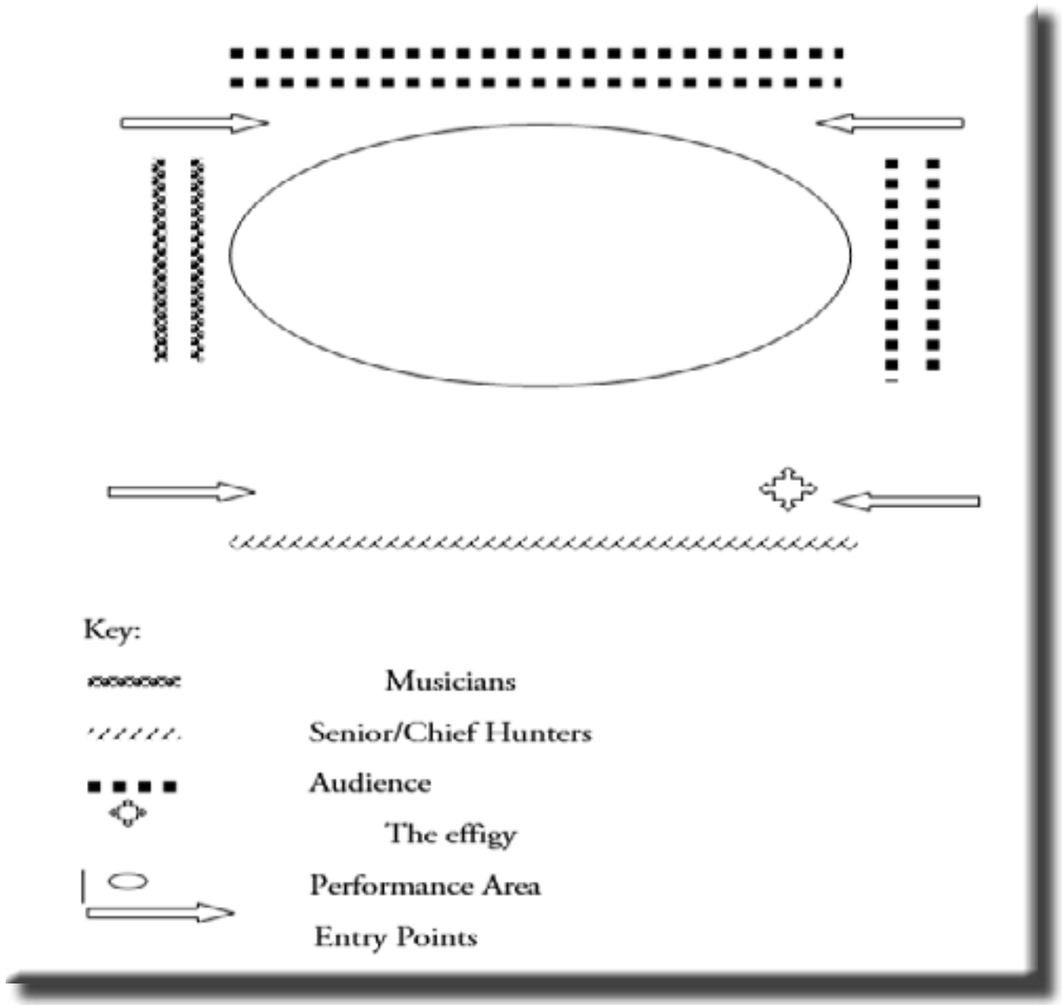

PLATE 6: Showing the set of the performance arena for Ìrèmòjé performance

Plate 7: Showing the *Èpá* in public now covered with *agbádá* (an ordinary cloth of the dead hunter)

As soon as the stage is set, the funeral celebration begins, usually in the following order:

a. Opening Dance

At the social and the sacred performances of the hunters, there is usually an intoduction. Before the chants and any other thing happens, a solo dancer opens the floor with musical accompaniments. This sets the stage for the evening's performance. It is at this point everybody gathers and settles, noting that the programme has commenced. The dancer generally goes around the space and greets the people present, prostrating

himself before the elderly ones, the notable/senior hunters (*Àgbà Ọdẹ*), and the hunters' Chiefs/executives (*Olóyè Ọdẹ*) who are present. This is known as *Ìjúbà* (homage paying) in the Yorùbá worldview. It is believed that homage must be paid to the living and the dead, and the elders must be reverenced before any activity can be performed successfully.

The dancer then goes to the middle of the performance area and begins his dance. The dance starts slowly and gradually gathers momentum. Some people may join him in the dance and anybody among the audience who wishes can give money to the dancer (which they throw at him, paste on his forehead or drop on the ground in front of him) as a mark of appreciation. After a while, especially when all the performers (other hunters, singers, chanters, musicians and celebrants) are settled and ready, the dancer leaves the stage amidst clapping and admiration from the people, but he does not forget to greet people again, especially the elders/senior hunters as he did before the commencement of his dance.

b. The Ìrèmòjé Chants and Music

As soon as the dancer departs, the chants begin. The chanters also start with Ìjúbà asking for the permissions of the elders to take proper control of the floor. The homage goes first to the Supreme Being *Olódùmarè*, the elders (seen and unseen), the herbalists, past hunters, present hunters, past *Ìrèmòjé Ìjálá* singers, senior singers, and very special witches and wizards. One example of this homage follows:

LAMIDI Ni me pé mo júbà lọ́wọ́ èyin ọkùnrin,
Ìbà lọ́wọ́ èyin obìnrin,
Ìbà 'yàá mi Òsòròngà.
Òpòkí, Eléṣè osùn.
Omií gbóná ò ṣe mu kílokílo
Agbada ńlá ni wọ́n fií mu po
Ewúré dúdú a b'àmú rẹ̀dẹ̀rẹ̀dẹ̀
Lóde 'òn 'yáà mi
Àgùntàn dúdú a b'àmú rẹ̀dẹ̀rẹ̀dẹ̀
Eran-an 'yáà mi ni.
Adìẹ òkòkó dúdú, a b'àmú rẹ̀dẹ̀rẹ̀dẹ̀
Eyẹ 'yáà mi ni
Eyẹ a ba 'pá hé
Eyẹ a beṣẹ̀ hẹ
Eyẹ a beṣẹ̀ méjèèjì héréhèrẹ...
Àjé kan è é rorò
Kó jewúré dúdú
Àjé kan è é rorò,
Kó sì jẹran funfun
Òràn àjé onu Ayi, ó dìmùlè
A à kìí báni tan
Orin la fi gbè
Orin la fi ko
Orin Ìyá mi toto, n ó ṣè 'bà re
Ìyá mi toto, n ó ṣè 'bà re
Ò lépo ńlé, è méjè ròfó
Egbe Ìyá mi toto, n ó ṣè 'bà re
Lile Ò lépo ńlé, è méjè ròfó

Egbe Ìyá mi totọ, n ó sẹ̀ 'bà rẹ

Lile Ò lépo ńlé, è mẹ́jẹ̀ ròfọ́

Egbe Ìyá mi totọ, n ó sẹ̀ 'bà rẹ (Ajuwon, 1981 pp. 90-91)

[I pay homage to all men
Homage to all women
Homage to my Osoronga (witchcraft) mothers
People with crimson legs
Hot water that cannot be hurriedly drunk
Who drink palm oil in a big bowl
Black goats with heavy belly
In my mothers' compound
Big sheep with heavy pregnancy
Are my mothers' meat
Black native chicken with heavy pregnancy
Are my mothers' birds
Birds with one hand
Birds with one leg
Birds with both legs...
No witch can be so fierce
That will eat a black goat
No witch can be so fierce
To eat a white meat
The case of witches and big sheep is only known to the initiated
We don't talk about it
We chorus with it
We sing with it

Song	My dear mothers, I will salute you
	My dear mothers, I will salute you
	You have palm oil at home but choose to
	prepare vegetable soup with blood
Chorus	My dear mothers, I will salute you
Lead	You have palm oil at home but choose to
	prepare vegetable soup with blood
Chorus	My dear mothers, I will salute you
Lead	You have palm oil at home but choose to
	prepare vegetable soup with blood
Chorus	My dear mothers, I will salute you]

Such songs and chants are also integral parts of the hunters' music. *Ìjálá* is essentially a verbal art. It thrives in poetry/chants peculiar to the hunters and distinct from other forms of Yorùbá poetries and chants.

c. The Display of the Charms

During *Ìrèmòjé* performance, the display of charms takes place. Hunters generally accord themselves the prestige of being the greatest custodians of charms in Yorùbá land. They proudly say, according to Chief Ògúnlékè, "ká má puró odẹ ló lòògùn" (without lying hunters are the owners of charms). The charms are needed for protection against spirits,

wild animals and many dangerous monsters that inhabit or parade the forest. In part, the Ìrèmọ̀jé performance is about removing the powerful charms of the dead hunter.

The display of charms session involves one or two hunters who perform the act of cutting their bodies (tongues, necks, stomachs and so on) with knives, cutlasses and other sharp objects. Their performances also include the swallowing of metal and dangerous items without any harm or injury to the actors. These acts express the fact that the hunters are still very powerful medicine men.

d. Pantomimic Session

In this part of the performance, the hunter recounts the tasks, methods, ordeals and successes or disappointments encountered in the course of hunting. This takes the form of dramatic enactment or pantomime as no dialogue is employed. Most often a supporting song with instrumentation accompanies the action. The hunter acts out various encounters in the forest until game is successfully shot down or lost. Àjùwòn (1980) states,

> The dramatic essence of *ìrèmọ̀jé*, however, lies in the extensive use of gestures to act out the ideas. This use of improvised drama in the performance recalls past actor heroes whose fame is itself preserved in oral tradition, as in the dirge. (p. 69)

This type of enactment is also found in the *Ìjálá* performance. Ajayi (1998) asserts that the "*Ìjálá* dance-style is highly reminiscent of the hunter in action—semi-crouched, alert, and noiselessly hunting an animal in the forest" (p. 197).

e. The Dance

This phase of the *Ìrèmọ̀jé* performance is its main session. During it, many willing hunters come into the arena to dance. It is usually not a performance by a group, for each hunter does his own dance. The hunters' dance (*Ijó Ọ̀dẹ̀*) also called the Ògún dance (*Ijó Ògún*) replicates Ògún's prowess and style of dancing by his devotees. Ògún is said to have been a great dancer who chanted and danced to amuse himself. Before his demise, he instructed his followers to continue dancing to remember him. This dance exhibits his dual nature and characteristics as a god of creation who could become destructive. Like the hunters' chant, which illustrates and emphasizes the points being made by the chanter, *Ijó Ọ̀dẹ̀* is also competitive, Each dance is expected to demondtrste its dancer's skill and dexterity being above those of the other dancers. Because the need to outdo the other dancers is paramount., these dances are individualistic in nature. Space is usually cleared for each dancer to display his mastery of the steps. Even in a group dance, these dancers do not dance in uniformity. "They dance simultaneously, yet independently" (Drewal, 1997, p. 216).

The dance is generally accomplished bare-footed, with the standing posture involving slightly bent knees and the trunk bent forward being earth bound. The dancer's hands are held loosely by the sides of his body and flung into different positions as the dance progresses. The dance is performed more by shoulder and foot movements. One leg takes up the dance actions flicking forward and backward in quick succession, while the other leg supports the body. A shift of the legs can be made in such a way that the legs alternate the actions. These movements are fast or slow, depending on the tempo of the music. Generally, the music begins slowly and gradually increases in tempo until the climax of the performance is reached. Accordingly, the dance also increases in tempo,

following the music's pattern.

Apart from the short flicking movements of one of the legs, one leg at times may take a sustained elaborate slide outwards, moving the dancer suddenly from one spot to another. This can be repeated two to three times or more, taking the dancer around the dancing arena. A return via the other leg may follow or the dancer may simply go into another movement entirely. When the leg is not leading the movement, the shoulder does. The dance alternates between strong and sustained actions, being indicative of Ògún's sometimes violent and sometimes gentle nature. The shoulders are jerked forward and sideways.

At times the dancer hops around and takes many sudden turns in any direction without notice. When in native dress like the Agbádá, the dancer uses the cloth as an extension of himself. It is held and thrown about during the course of the dance. The dancer's head is often stable, only following the body wherever it goes but generally not initiating any of the movement. The dancer relates to whatever prop he is holding whether it is the apàrù – the fly whisk, cutlass, or the gun, as the case may be.

Second Rite

This is the rite called *Orò Ẹ̀pà* (the rite of *Ẹ̀pà*). It is meant to determine who carries the *Ẹ̀pà* and to which location. These decisions are made by the casting of kolanuts (obì). The rite usually commences at 3.00 am. The chanting, singing, dancing, and drumming is halted. Every person present, adult and child, is commanded to be awake and alert. The *Agbádá* on the *Ẹ̀pà* is removed to reveal it as it was in the backyard. People then are required to make "prayer requests" with any amount of money and drop before the *Ẹ̀pà.* It is believed that the dead hunter (who is present and transitioning to the world beyond) will carry their requests to the appropriate quarters. Outstanding and great demands are expected to be made at this time. For example, barren women are encouraged to seize this opportunity to ask for a baby and those whose marriages are not doing well may ask for peace in their homes.

The senior members and Chiefs among the hunters then gather round the Ẹ̀pà, removing their shoes and commanding everyone else to do so. A bowl of water is provided and inside it a bitter kola (*orógbó*) and a kola nut are placed. Some of the water is sprinkled on the floor in front of the *Ẹ̀pá* , and using the kola nut, the devotees begin to ask the *Ẹ̀pà* whom he wants to be his carrier:

> Ọládẹ̀jọ Adigun,
> Your children are demanding that you stop hunting in this world
> And they have done all necessary rites
> Now, who do you want to carry your Ẹ̀pà among them?

Here, the kola nut is broken into four parts and used to ask the question as they begin to mention the names of the children one by one as follows:

> Is it Ògúnníyì you want to carry you to your destination?

The broken kola nut is thrown on the floor and observed. The answer is "yes" when two of them are face down and the other two face up. When the answer is "no", the same process is repeated mentioning another name, This divination process can proceed as far as the grandchildren while the casting of the kola nut affirms who is to be the carrier.

When the carrier is confirmed, the process of asking which location or destination the hunter would like to be taken to rest begins. "Is it your farm at Adùn you want to rest?" Different places are mentioned until one is confirmed. Immediately one is confirmed

there is shouting of joy and praise of Ògún. Drums roll and the firing of guns take place. The chosen carrier picks up the effigy and proceeds towards the confirmed destination followed by the senior and chief hunters. It is said that he who carries the effigy must not look back during the journey. Also nobody must meet them on the way. This is probably why this ceremony is done at such a late hour. As well, the chants that accompany the carrier will make any one approaching flee.

The Final Rites

The final rite is the actual *Ìṣípà*— the final disengagement of the dead hunter from hunting and all other human activities. This is the stage occurs when the *Èṣpà* arrives at the final resting place chosen by the hunter. According to Chief Ògúnmọ́dẹdé, the *Olúọ́dẹ* of Areṣà Pupa, at a particular *Ìrèmọ̀jé* ceremony, a very young boy was chosen to carry the *Èṣpà*. On the way, the boy told them that he could see some hunters all in their hunting attires moving ahead of them. Though the elders could not see anything like that they knew that the late hunter's dead friends must have attended the ceremony with him. It is believed that as soon as the *Èṣpà* is positioned in the place that he chose, he will never return to the community or harass anybody in the family and the community.

Conclusion

Ièmọ̀jé, the hunters' sacred performance is deeply embedded in the culture and traditions of Ògbómọ̀ṣọ́ land. The cultural functions of the hunters' performance make it almost impossible to eradicate. The tolerance the performance has for other religions is also an advantage which will prohibit its elimination.

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Now, as if always, a seamless garment

Now, as if always, a seamless garment,
Gloria
The music of one sphere to another's thrum
So there's an African dance to Ave Maria
A ballerina pirouetting to an African drum
Gloria
As if for the dances the music had been meant.

Weaving ballet, break and modern dance
Or crawling like a beetle on the belly
Button of the world, animals among men
Baffled by pollution on a paper boat
Camels in the snow, penguins in a sea
Of sand, an elephant in an urban trance
How long will they be able to float.

Each dancer has a disability, one eye
Missing, another has short legs, one
Man wants a dress to dance for pleasure
Another's breasts are too big, they said
Then all the come to dance, all for one

And one for all, a chorus with a score
Of breasts, too French, you say, why?

All were different sizes. This is pleasure
No less for differences in measure.
They danced against a film of themselves
Dancing nude before shots of a famous nude
Throughout the pictorial tradition, smiling elves
Impish, challenging both the refined and crude.

When will the pistol shot leave the pleasure dead
When will the jackboots come and soldiers shout
That this display must end. It is NOT DONE
According to rules they that have made instead
There cannot be the slightest moment of doubt.
Though the joy of life is infinite --- a sun
In its glory, in *excelsis Deo,* Gloria ---
It is also doomed as any instance of euphoria.

—*Jefferson Holdridge*

Precambrian #3

Stuart Matheson

The Comic Vision in Elechi Amadi's *Pepper Soup, Dancer of Johannesburg* and *The Woman of Calabar*

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Abstract

Every playwright has a special compass that creates humour and laughter. This paper investigates Elechi Amadi's comic vision.In *Pepper Soup* (1977), *Dancer of Johannesburg,* (1978) and *The Woman of Calabar* (2002), Amadi combines language that is predominantly pidgin with the over-reaching themes of love and generally happy endings that benefit all the characters.

Keywords: Elechi Amadi, Comic vision, Humour, Laughter, Love.

Introduction

Scholars usually associate humour with laughter, gaiety, mirth, and feelings of happiness (Berger, Roventa-Frumusani, and Attardo). Jeannine Schwarz remarks that humour "represents a central aspect of our everyday conversations and it is a general fact that all humans naturally participate in humorous speech and behaviour" (8). Michael Billig also observes that humour is an innately intricate phenomenon that plays a central and necessary part in social life. Associated with amusement, humour and laughter are produced in comic performances, particularly in plays and stand-up comedy acts. As Elliot Oring points out, comic performances and events that create humour are part of human cultural universal, and humour is a condition for humanity (1). X. J. Kennedy, on the othr hand, broadly defines comedy in drama "as whatever makes us laugh" (1033). For W. D. Howarth, comedy is a play, which mirrors the occupations of ordinary people, in ordinary language, which has a happy ending (10). Howarth maintains that as a form of drama, the subject matter of comedy is limited to the affairs of this world; its heroes are representative men and women engaged in ordinary pursuits. He emphasizes comedy being concerned with the civic and private concerns of its characters—courtship, marriage and adultery, the acquisition of money and social status (2-3). The function of comedy, he says, is to hold a mirror up to ordinary life (11). In this way, comedy reflects certain social realities (Howarth 16) and accommodates satire and farce (Abrams 26).

Barenet et al note that the movement in comedy is from some sort of minor disaster to success (Barnet et al 592). The following features characterize comedy: first, people get into trouble through error or weakness (Kennedy 1033). Later, they extricate themselves from it. Joy is also present in comedy. The genre's most important characteristic is its happy ending. Love is comedy's predominant theme (Abrams 26). This paper considers

Elechi Amadi 's comic vision in *Pepper Soup, Dancer of Johannesburg* and *The Woman of Calabar*, by examining their use of language (particularly pidgin), their overriding theme of love, and their happy endings.

Comic Vision in *Pepper Soup*

Pepper Soup (1977) is not Elechi Amadi's first play. According to Amadi, his friend, Uriel Paul-Worika, made him write it. *Pepper Soup* is a comedy about polygamy and cultural diversity. While on tour in London, Ichela has an affair with a British girl, Mavis. Mavis falls in love with him, and the two stay in touch after Ichela returns to Nigeria. Back in Port Harcourt, Ichela starts a relationship with Ineba, a Nigerian nurse who also falls in with him. Both Ineba and Mavis want to marry Ichela, setting the stage for a Shakespearean comedy of errors. In the end, he agrees to marry them both. Paul-Worika's production of *Pepper Soup* made Amadi a popular playwright, and his constant prodding of the writer also led to Amadi to write *The Road to Ibadan.* Paul-Worika directed both plays while wrking as the Director of the Rivers State Council for Arts and Culture, Port Harcourt.

According to Amadi, the published edition of *Pepper Soup* is the longer and controversial version.The issues in the play are largely topical. Indeed it seems that the author is more interested in flirting with many ideas than developing any one of them in detail. Amadi mentions the following in the course of the play: the Nigerian indigenisation policy which is satirically alluded to, the loan system which is indicted, the Nigerian attitude to punctuality which comes under fire, the strict adherence to time by the whites which is laughed at, and the idea of marriage which forms the basis of the comedy.

*W*ritten in four acts corresponding to the four or five episodes found in classical drama, *Pepper Soup's* plot is straightforward. All its scenes contribute to the development of a single storyline. The world Elechi Amadi presents is one in which people are in search of the essential to satisfy basic needs and grapples with the conflict worked out in Ichela and Ineba and Mavis' triangular relationship. Oti is used to smooth the path for Ichela as he thinks about how to cope with the two women. As a confidant, Oti is used to provide solutions to Ichela's problems. In the opening scene, the lack of food to entertain him shows show us the level of intimacy between them: he receives the treatment Ichela gives without complaining.

In comedy, the incongruous is admitted as being a part of human existence. Since the play is set in Port Harcourt, and Ichela is presumably an Ikwerre and Ineba, a Kalabari, we would have liked to see an attempt at showing how their would-be union could be rooted either in the traditional practices of the people or given credence according to the laws of the land. In Port Harcourt, people can marry in one of three ways: traditional marriage, court marriage and church marriage. Until a girl is married in one of these ways she does not consider herself anybody's wife. Though the idea of a traditional marriage would seem alien in England, the church and court marriages are western practices that were imported into Nigeria via the church and the government. One, therefore, wonders why both Ineba and Mavis consider themselves wives. As far as the play is concerned neither is properly married to Ichela in any of the abovementioned ways. Ineba and Ichela have been friends, no doubt, but at no time has Ichela proposed to marry her; the very fact that she becomes pregnant by him is no guarantee that he would marry her. Mavis is naïve in thinking that her infatuation for Ichela is means that she is married to him. The author does not attempt to establish a firm ground for any of the women to lay claim to Ichela as a husband. However, in the *weltanschauung* of the play, the concession is made

to accommodate both Mavis and Ineba as wives of Ichela within the scope of traditional marriage, as the birth of Ineba's child must be made to appear legitimate. In polygamy, every child is legitimate even if he or she is the product of the man and the fiftieth wife.

Characterisation in *Pepper Soup* consists of comic types as a single trait tends dominate in the case of each person. There is no depth of treatment given to any character. Oti does not disappoint our expectations when standing behind Ichela even as he attempts the almost impossible feat of marrying Mavis with no *kobo* (that is, money) in his pocket. But that does not mean that there is a lack of motivation for the things the people do in the universe of the play. For anybody who respects the institution of marriage, the resolution of the conflict appears forced. After all, a white girl does not just decide to marry a polygamous Nigerian without reasons. Mavis' comically incongruous change of mind is suspect. We wonder why she doesn't carry out her threat of leaving for England. . What has Mavis seen that is attractive in Ichela or Ineba and convinces her that she should suddenly decide to stay? After using Oti, Amadi discards him and leaves us to imagine what happened to him. Otis is instrumental in Mavis' coming to Ichela or at least, he advises lchela to marry Mavis. Perhaps the way the author leaves him out of the end of the play may encourages the audience to think that Ichela has grown to take charge of his family and no longer needs to depend on the counsel of another as to how to live his life. But that is as far as conjecture can go. How the feud between Ineba and Mavis ends is hard to accept. That Ineba has got a baby is no guarantee that Mavis would forget that they are both vying for Ichela's love. After quarrelling, Ineba and Mavis suddenly turn into angels. They sink their differences in an unsolicited manner, but the unexpected happy ending is the stuff of comedy. There is a comforting aspect that in comedy what we expect is not reality as it truly is. *Pepper Soup* can be said to be devoid of problems or factors that are external to those comic worlds produce.

Whatever its shortcomings, *Pepper Soup's* ending is pleasant, harmonious, and. very entertaining on stage. The greatest asset of this play is the simplicity of its language. There are two levels of language present in the play: the English of educated Nigerians and Pidgin English. The two levels of language present in the play differentiates the characters and enhances the comic nature of the play. Only when Oti is educating Ichela on how to approach Mavis in conversation is there an attempt in being grandiose. Pidgin has a capacity for provoking laughter that Standard English does not have.

Comic Vision in *Dancer of Johannesburg*

A work for the stage, *Dancer of Johannesburg* (1978) is an espionage thriller set in South Africa that ends with the dismantling of apartheid. Drawing on Kennedy's broad definition that comedy in drama refers to whatever makes the audience laugh (1033), it is instructive to say that Amadi's *Dancer of Johannesburg* is a play filled with comic acts and scenes. The comic aspects of this play include the use of pidgin, the thematic preoccupation of love and the happy ending of the play. It has been observed that Nigerian Pidgin is a good medium for communicating humour and laughter among those that understand the language form. Chikogu and Efobi have investigated the deployment of Nigerian Pidgin by Nigerian stand-up comedians and humour creators as against the standard Nigerian English. Their study reveals that comedians deploy pidgin intending to reach their audience, because it is the informal language is the most widely used and understood in Nigeria's multilingual society; it is perceived to be uniquely informal in tone and can easily lend itself to comic adaptations (30). Because of the humorous implications of Nigerian Pidgin, playwrights and humourists eliberately shun

the Standard English form. In *Dancer of Johannesburg*, scenes are rendered in pidgin to generate laughter. In the play, illiterate characters in the Night Club and Happy Daddy all converse in an amusing pidgin. The jovial nature of this form contributes greatly to the comic situation. Rose, Vero and Happy Daddy use pidgin to lighten the mood of their conversation. When Ekpo asks Rose what she would like to drink at the club, their use of pidgin creates an informal atmosphere.

Ekpo: Girls, what will you drink?

Vero: Champagne.

Ekpo: You dey craze? Wetin you think say I dey work? No be palmy your papa dey drink?

Vero: Oga you sef, you funny o… Ok buy me baby-cham

Ekpo initially starts the conversation in English, but he shifts to pidgin to accommodate Rose and Vero who are illiterate call girls. He jokingly refers to Rose and her father as poor and not being able to afford the kind of expensive wine which she is requesting. The switch to pidgin creates humour and emphasizes that only a lady orders champagne because that wine is socially acceptable.

When Happy Daddy enters the nightclub, his first response to being acknoeledged and praised is rendered in pidgin. He says: *Any man wey no want happiness that na im business.* This draws laughter from many of the guests because of the jocular and informal way his philosophical statement is rendered. The idea here is that if such a statement was to be said in Standard English, it may lose its element of humour and modesty. In the scene, Bello and Ekpo mostly use Standard English. In the case of Bello, his Standard English suggests that he is in a very tense situation, unlike the characters that use pidgin who are free and more relaxed in the club's environment.

A similar situation plays out in Act One Scene III. This time, Happy Daddy, Chucker, Rose, and Vero all converse in pidgin, while Binta, Matiya, Ekpo, and Bello use Standard English. The conversation and dialogue of the first group is much lighter through the use of pidgin, and feelings of anxiety are not as obvious. The group using pidgin is in the club to relax and catch up with old-time mates The second group using English is there for purposes that do not promote humour and laughter. For example, Binta, who suspects that her fiancée is in love with Matiya, is in the club to catch a glimpse of her competition. Bello is also tense because of the amorous feelings he has for Matiya. He is also unhappy about managing Binta's feelings. Ekpo is in the middle of all these currents, trying to off-set both Bello's and Binta's anxieties, so that the outing does not deteriorate into a relationship crisis. Lacking the atmosphere for fun, excitement and humour, Bello, Binta, and Ekpo do not speak like the other guests, who are at the club to 'enjoy' their lives.

Love creates humour and comic encounters in this romantic comedy. Like most of Shakespeare's comedies which pivot on incongruities of the heart, Amadi's *Dancer of Johannesburg* relies on the dynamics of true love to develop its comic plot. The love affair between the Bello and Matiya (and the need to nurture and preserve it) does not make room for dark moments in the play. Even when Matiya is searched and arrested, true love enables the mood to remain light. This situation contrasts with Bello and Binta's affair that is full of tense moments, riddled with lies, deceits, and hatred. For example, in Act

One Scene Two, Binta accuses Bello of jettisoning their love. Bello in turn lies about his visit to the nightclub and his love for Matiya. Bello deceives Binta by sneaking out to dance with Matiya; Binta reports Bello to his boss to get him sacked for abandoning her and falling in love with an expatriate.

The same can be said of the relationship between Matiya and the co-dancer, Njoroge, who insists Matiya belongs to him and him alone. Njoroge's statements are oppressive. Subjugationg Matiys's freedom, he attempts to forcefully take her back from Bello. These actions and the ones between Bello and Binta demonstrate that there is not much genuine love between the parties involved. The love affair between Bello and Matiya is more genuine. It enables risk-taking and sacrificial acts. Bello is willing to risk his life to save Matiya by allowing her to remain in his house. Their genuine love also enables Bello to end his failing and 'fake' relationship with Binta, not minding the consequences to his career. As for Matiya, though she comes into Nigeria for a mission to help her nation, South Africa, she cannot resist the mutual feeling of love and attraction between her and Bello even even though it may jeopardize her mission. In the end, Bello and Matiya find ways to resolve the little conflict amicably via a piece of superior information that prevents the police from arresting them.

The ending tof *Dancer of Johannesburg* is one in which almost everything turns out for the best for the main protagonists, while the villains/antagonists are defeated. Amadi's storylines combine to produce a happy ending in which Bello and Matiya successfully complete their missions and consummate their love in spite the factors that tried to thwart it. In the last scene, the tension is high, because it appears that Bello and Matiya will pay dearly for their crimes against the state. Then, the restorative power of drama via comic agency ensures that Matiya is happy to have been a member of the revolutionists who bring independence to South Africa, and Bello's love and relationship are secured. Ironically, even the police are happy not to have made an honest mistake.

Comic Vision in *The Woman of Calabar*

The Woman of Calabar is based on the legend of Calabar being an infamous haven for "beautiful bewitching ladies" who truly understand how to "service" and maintain their relationships with their lovers, notably those from outside the town. Eme, a 24-year-old Ikwerre surveyor onf the National Youth Service in Calabar, falls in love with the gorgeous Adia, a young Efik girl, and the lovebirds' cohabitation causes problems in the families of Adia in Calabar and Eme in Port Harcourt. Despite all thei efforts, which include Eme's family dispatching his uncle with spells in Port Harcourt to dissuade him from maintaining contact and Adia's parents' repeated recall of their daughter from Eme's residence, the bond continues to grow stronger. At the end, Eme's parents arrive in Calabar ready to save their son from the love knot, believing it to be unusual. Eme's parents arrive at Adia's house to permanently end the relationship, only to discover that both mothers were high school classmates. They reminisce about their longstanding friendship, and Eme and Adia get their parents' permission to marry. Throughout, this comedy relies on the use of pidgin, the thematic preoccupation of love and its happy ending for its humor.

The use of pidgin is not an obvious comic marker in this play, but the few instances in which it is deployed still generate informal humour. Etuk, who speaks very little but mostly in pidgin is comically typical of the stereotyped Calabar house helps who come to major cities to render menial jobs in cooking, cleaning and gate keeping. In the play,

most of the characters are educated and speak proper English, but Etuk's pidgin affords short answers and expressions like *Ma, mbok, na-wa-o, saar, Ee mma,* and *mmama*. These non-standard English interruptions are deliberately infused to elicit humour and remind the audience that not all the characters are highly educated. There are also instances in which Eme and other characters have to code-switch to pidgin for comic relief and emphasis. For example, Eme in Act One, Scene Three says *no be small o* in response to Felix, who remarks Eme is in love with Adia. The switch to pidgin comically confirms the statement for those who use and understand the Nigerian Pidgin.

Like *Pepper Soup* and *Dancer of Johannesburg*, *The Woman of Calabar's* preoccupation with love creates an atmosphere of love and a genuine feeling of trust. The lovers bring their own lightened mood of happiness and Joy to the stage. In many of the scenes where Eme and Adia appear, laughter and conviviality becomesa source of real joy and comic relief, especially when compared with the tense and frightening nature of the scenes in which Mrs. Akrika appears. Mrs. Akrika hates the idea that her son is in love. Her fear of losing her son darkens the mood created by others. When a person first falls in love, dopamine, the feel-good brain chemical associated with reward, is especially active. "That is a mood intensifier, so people feel extremely positive and much appreciated, hence, that "on cloud nine" feeling one gets in the throes of a new relationship. Fuelled by dopamine, Eme is very satisfied with the type of love he gets from Adia and same can be said of Adia.

When people feel securely attached, their stress levels go down. Just being in the presence of someone who greets us with positive regard and caring can lower those levels of cortisol and adrenaline and create greater homeostasis, which means that your neurochemicals are back in balance. Studies have pointed out that loneliness can hurt your health, from increasing inflammation to activating pain centres (Schwarz 8-9). The feeling of loneliness stimulates anxiety, which is mediated by different neurotransmitters, like norepinephrine. Also, cortisol and adrenaline levels rise when people feel insecure and threatened," and this response triggers your body's stress response. Mrs. Akrika first worries about losing her son and then transfers her anxiety to her husband and Acho, their family member. Their shared worry prevents them from enjoying the good feeling that being in love produces.

Finally, the happy ending in *The Woman of Calabar* is a marker of Amadi's comic vision in which things unexpectedly turn out to be in the best interests of the individual, and in which earlier circumstances, no matter how bad they were, are revealed to be humorous. Thus, Mrs. Akrika, who has been the most worried, discovers that her childhood friend, Mrs. Ekpeyong is the mother of the girl whom she has been against her son marrying. Both Adia and Eme find happiness ever after as the problem of convincing both parents that they need to marry is resolved quickly because of this discovery. Both sets of parents quickly forgive them and say a word of prayer for the union. The lovers' union also benefits most of the characters. Mrs. Akrika and the husband are happy that their only son is in a good hands, Acho is happy because the charm he brings in earlier did not harm the relationship, Mr and Mrs. Ekpeyong are delighted and no longer ready to destroy Eme for taking their daughter captive.

Conclusion

Similarities in Elechi Amadi's plays, *Pepper Soup*, *Dancer of Johannesburg*, and *The Woman of Calabar,* reveal their playwright's comic vision. Amadi conistently creates humour and laughter wirh Nigerian pidgin. Love is the main theme that appeals to our universal

consciousness in these plays. Each drama has a happy ending in which things turn out unexpectedly and in the best interest of the individuals in question and in which earlier circumstances, no matter how bad they were, are revealed to be humorous. Most of Amadi's characters, in the three plays examined, find happiness, somehow, in the end. Holding a mirror up to ordinary life, his comic vision reflects our social realities, offering gentle satires and humorous farce.

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Precambrian #4

Stuart Matheson

The Rhetoric of National Unity: The Unity of the Elite and the Dilemma of the Poor

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Abstract

Complicating class struggle, the multi-ethnic nature of Nigeria's society has created rivalry among its various groups. This article discusses the rhetoric of national unity by examining two classes that make up Nigerian society – the elite and the poor. Drawing on literature modeling, this paper finds the elite in society invariably united in state capture and their marginalization of the poor. The researchers conclude that if the rhetoric of national unity must make any headway, justice, equity, and competence must be promoted above class and ethno-religious sentiments in poiical appointments and social transformation.

Keywords: Rhetoric of national unity, Dilemma of the poor, Unity of elite, Social exclusion, Class struggle.

Introduction

> … Insofar as millions of families live under conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests, and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile competitions to the latter, they form a class. (Karl Marx, 1972, p. 106)

For centuries, economic inequality has been a global problem that many countries have made efforts to combat. Whether primitive or enlightened, local or foreign, all societies house class struggles in which the rich (or elite) are bent on sidelining, oppressing, and dominating the poor (Agbaje, 2014). In short, the rich continue to get richer, and the poor inexorably become poorer (International Monetary Fund, 2015). As in the past, class struggle continues to be a major impediment to the development of nations. In every society, state, or nation today, one finds economic inequality (United Nations, 2020). Like the Hobbesian state in which people take for themselves all that can be taken and in which life is nasty, brutish, and short, modern societies are characterised by the desire of the elite to dominate the hapless. Oxfam International (2017) remarks that

> [o]ver the past 40 years, the gap in between the rich and the poor has been growing in developed and developing countries alike. In 2015, just 62 people had as much wealth as the rest of the world combined. At the same time, the poorest people are being denied their fair share: since the turn of the century, the poorest half of the world's population has received just one percent of the total increase in global wealth. (p. 1)

The Pandora Papers, which recently became sensational, have revealed a number

of extremely wealthy individuals whose massive fortunes include assets and deals kept in offshore tax havens. In Nigeria, there are people who own billions of naira stashed away in foreign accounts. This revelation is paradoxical as the country was ranked the poverty capital in the world in 2020 (*Borgen Magazine*, 2020). Earlier, Oxfam International (2017) observed that "while more than 112 million people were living in poverty in 2010, the richest Nigerian man will take 42 years to spend all of his wealth at 1 million per day." More recently, *Premium Times* (2020) also noted that the combined wealth of Nigeria's five richest men (estimated at $29.9 billion) could end extreme poverty at a national level (p.1).

The event leading to the 29th birthday celebration of the Nigerian sensational and award-winning singer, Davido,(David Adedeji Adeleke) is a telling example of the ability the wealthy have to remedy poverty. The singer made an online request to his over 22 million followers on Instagram to donate money to a specific bank account in support of his birthday. No sooner had the request been made than millions started rolling into his account—in just a matter of two hours, he had realised ₦40 million ($90,000.) In just a matter of two days, the donations had skyrocketed to a whopping sum of ₦200 million ($500,000) (*Vanguard*, 2021). Davido actually pledged to disburse the funds (plus his added ₦50 million, totalling ₦250 million) to orphanages across the country and set up a committee to that effect. That he was able to garner such a stupendous amount in a time when the country's economy is in the doldrums puzzles many Nigerians. Without doubt, this woud certainly have been not have been the case if the request was made by a Nigerian who was neither wealthy nor influential. As Agbaje (2014) rightly points out, the voices of the poor in society are, more often than not, rarely heard.

The foundation of the Nigerian state is multi-cultural, multi-religious, and multi-ethnic. In Nigeria, these groups struggle for state resources. Over time, dominant groups have maintained their hegemony over smaller ethnic groups. A perceived feeling of neglect has led to ethnic agitations and inter-ethnic rivalry which threaten the unity of the nation. In response, the federal government has mounted various campaigns aimed at national integration. But in spite of these campaigns, inter- religious and inter-ethnic hatreds continue to hold sway. As the rich cook and serve a tripartite broth of mass conspiracy, overwhelming classism, and unnerving exploitation, the poor, constantly feeding on the crumbs thrown by the elite, are the majority of the population (Oxfam International, 2015; 2017). It is the minority, the elite, that invariably beats the drums of 'national unity.' Time and again, extremely affluent persons who have seized state power accentuate national unity is non-negotiable. In Nigeria, business don and political bigwig, Ahmed Tinubu, has reiterated the mantra of national unity at different forums. In his condolence visit to President Muhammadu Buhari over the plane crash that claimed the lives of the Chief of Army Staff and ten other persons, Ahmed Tinubu stressed that:

> [w]e have already made our position clear – that we want one united, peaceful and stable country. A productive and promising one. Nigeria is not a rat village. It's a nation and we intend to keep it as one. (*Guardian*, 2021, para. 5)

Similarly, the vice-president of the country, Professor Yemi Osinbajo too has stressed the need for citizens to embrace national unity. During the Interdenominational Church Service held to commemorate the Armed Forces Remembrance Day Celebration at the National Christian Centre, Abuja, Osinbajo stated that: "Nigerians [sic] to endeavour

to ensure the country's national unity, because the nation is stronger together than apart" (*Ripples Nigeria*, 2021, para. 1). The two-time President of the country and a political and economic juggernaut, General Olusegun Obasanjo also underscored the significance of national unity when he stressed that: "Nigeria must be loved and we must treat Nigeria as we treat love affairs. It must be massaged. Nigeria must be massaged by all of us. No exception. It's like a husband and wife" (*This Day*, 2017, para, 10).

President Muhammadu Buhari stressed the need for national unity, when remarking on "the resolve by our countrymen and women to remain in one indivisible and indissoluble nation, Nigeria is at the centre of this celebration. Indeed the Remembrance Day Celebration is being marked on the 15th of January instead of 11th of November as in other Commonwealth nations to commemorate the end of the Nigerian Civil War – a war that was fought to keep Nigeria one. We must therefore cast our minds back at the events that led to the civil war, the immense human capital loss of the tragic war, and resolve that never again shall we allow our dear nation by our actions or inactions to experience another war" (*Premium Times*, 2017, para. 3-4).

According to Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923) and Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941), every society is divided into the upper class (also referred to as the elite) and the lower class (Duru, 2012). Those in the upper class (who always form the minority) are the ones who head various sectors in their society and therefore rule. According to Pareto, the elite always constitute 20% of society whilst the poor and underprivileged make up the remaining 80%. The French word *elite* (from which the modern English 'elite' is derived) simply means 'the elect' or 'the chosen,' accommodating the notion that people with outstanding abilities hold their powers and privileges by divine sanction. The elite in society may or may not be a part of government (Gomes, 2009). Whether or not they are a part of government, the fact remains that these few wield enormous power and determine the policies and direction of the country. Gomes (2009) remarks that "even though every citizen is entitled the right to political participation and membership in different kinds of organisations, only a small population actually shapes policy and makes binding decisions" (p. 1).

Here, the elite theory is pertinent, because it sheds light on classism and power as well as the forces that shape economic inequality. This theory also elucidates the elite's capture of state power, to the detriment of the masses. By emphasising how the actions of the elite shape and influence every sector of the society, this theory helps explain the conundrum in which the poor and underprivileged have found themselves. For economic equality to be ensured, the widening gap between the elite and the poor must be bridged. A number of salient questions then arise. How can classism be removed from societies? How can the walls of conspiracy and exploitation built by the elite be brought down? How can the poor escapetheir dilemma? How can the century-old gap that exists between the rich and the poor be bridged? How can economic equality of persons and groups in societies be ensured? How can national unity, in every sense of be word, be promoted?

Conceptualising National Unity

National unity has long been a key concept in the fields of politics, political science, and political communication. Ojo (2009), as cited in Zamare (2015) defines national unity as "the process of unifying a society which tends to make it a harmonious city" (p. 87). Eme-Uche & Okonkwo (2020) refer to national unity as "the process by which members of a social system develop linkages and location so that the boundaries of the

system persist over time and the boundaries of sub-systems become less consequential in affecting behaviour" (p. 678).

Ogbeide (2021) says that national unity "has to do with combining efforts to bring diverse areas or aspects of an entity called nation into a coherent whole" (p. 35). Ogbeide further states that national unity "is taken as a process of constructing an identity for a group of people to form a self-defined socio-cultural community with shared characteristics including sovereignty, language, territory, population, culture, amongst others" (p. 35). The most comprehensive definition of national unity is given by Zamare (2015). Zamare sees national unity as:

> [a] process that produces an omnibus of initiatives put in place by a state, its representative or institution guided by respect for the unique traditions and cultural background of ethnicities sharing the same polity with the goal of harmonising all interests through a form of dialogue and representation and addressing differences that may be divisive and conflictual using the instruments of fairness, justice and equity in the sharing of resources, benefits, opportunities and responsibilities in order to guarantee stability, longevity and prosperity of the polity as long as the inhabitants decide to remain in the polity. (p. 87)

The scholars above all agree that national unity is a situation in which all members of a society work with oneness of purpose and in harmony for the uplifting, growth, and betterment of the whole society. National unity is what exists when there are no ethnic or class or religious boundaries in a society. It is pertinent to state here that national unity is a process as well as an outcome. National unity, as a concept, is synonymous with concepts like national cohesion, national integration, nation building, national solidarity, and national harmony.

National unity can only be achieved when strife among members of a society is brought to the barest minimum and when individuals – irrespective of background, age, ethnicity, religion, and ideology – subject their interests to the overall interest of their country. Adeosun (2022) aligns with this stance when he remarks that national unity can only happen when the desires of the citizens are geared towards meeting the collective interest as opposed to their individual interests. National unity is what holds the key to national development (Zamare, 2015; Adeosun, 2022). If countries must attain development in every sector, then the citizens as well as their leaders must make constant and conscious efforts to embrace national unity. Scholars (Agbaje, 2014; Eme-Uche & Okonkwo, 2020; Ogbeide, 2021) agree that economic equality is one of the key indices of national unity. Therefore, when there is a huge financial gap among citizens of a country, then national unity will, at best, be a mirage.

The Unity and Conspiracy of the Elite

The wealthy and privileged few have a strong hold on the various sectors that make up the economies of countries. While some of these elite hold political positions, others are business moguls who wield enormous influence on political forces and events (Gomes, 2009; Duru, 2012). To begin, the elite, in their bid to acquire more wealth, exert more influence and edge out the poor, by setting up strings of businesses. These already affluent men and women venture into every line of business that that they can think of. In a country like Nigeria, Alhaji Aliko Dangote is a prime example of someone ilike this. With what began as a cement business, this tycoon has delved into other lines of businesses,

so that it is difficult to find a household in the country where a product of his is not or has not been used. There is Dangote Cement, Dangote Salt, Dangote Sugar, Dangote Spaghetti, Dangote Flour, Dangote Noodles, Dangote Semolina, Dangote Seasoning Cubes, Dangote Tomato Paste, Dangote Vegetable Oil, Dangote Petrochemicals, Dangote Fertilizer, Dangote Beverages, and Dangote Packing Materials. Aside from these, the business don also dabbles in logistics (port management and haulage), real estate, and the Aliko Dangote Foundation. Other economic bigwigs like Dangote include, but are not limited to Ahmed Tinubu, Mike Adenuga, Sir Gabriel Osawaru Igbinedion, Femi Odetola, Folorunsho Alakija, Abdul Samad Rabiu, Theophilus Danjuma, Jim Ovia, and Oba Otudeko.

With these heavyweights dominating the business terrain, entry, especially by newbies, becomes extremely difficult (if not impossible). Government policies are designed to favour their interests. Before the cement backward integration in the country, only Dangote cement and Bua cement were permitted to import cement and sugar into Nigeria. Considering the population of Nigeria, these business men easily amassed wealth with minimal efforts. These power holders also know exactly how to access the powers that be, press some buttons, and modify or alter the rules, controlling the means of production and distribution in the country. It is believed that anyone who controls the channels of production and distribution in a system ultimately controls such system (International Monetary Fund, 2015). Oshelowo (2010), having taken a critical look at the trend in Nigeria, laments

> this is a very tragic situation when one considers the fact that Nigeria has had over $300 billion in oil and gas revenues since independence. Up to 95 percent of this great wealth is controlled by about .01 percent of the population. (p. 265)

It is pertinent to add that the masses who work for these economic elite are always made to work for a long time, if not a lifetime. With their paltry salaries, they can hardly afford two-square meals daily, let alone meet their basic needs or fend for their families. Akinwotu and Olukoya (2017) observe that

> [t]he rich don't want the poor to make progress. If you are a poor man working for them, they prefer that you stay poor for the rest of your life. They think if they enhance your life and you become rich, you may refuse to work for them again. They want only them and their families to be rich forever.

Another way in which the elite resist economic equality is through the control and domination of the mass media. From newspapers and magazines to radio, television, and book publishing firms, the power of the elite in terms of ownership and control is conspicuous and palpable. Croteau, Hoynes, and Milan (2012) remark that "one of the clearest trends in media ownership is the increasing concentration in fewer and fewer hands" (p. 32). Bagdikian (2004), having taken an in-depth look at the media landscape in the United States, argues that the ownership of the mass media has become so concentrated that by the mid-2000s, only five global firms dominated the media landscape. These were Time Warner, The Walt Disney Company, Viacom, News Corporation, and Bertelsmann AG.

The situation is no different in other countries. In Nigeria, for instance, people

like Ahmed Tinubu, Raymond Dokpesi, the Ibrus, John Momoh, Nduka Obaighena, and Sir Gabriel Osawaru Igbinedion dominate the media terrain. These media owners wield more communication power than was exercised by any despot or dictator in world history (Bagdikian, 2004). Remarking on the negative effect this has on society, Ehiagwina, Emwinromwankhoe and Oviasuyi (2022, p. 333) stress that:

> [m]edia stations across the world hardly carry any report that portrays their owners in a bad light whereas they would not hesitate to present a myriad of such reports whenever it is about the rival(s) to their owners. For instance, during the period when Cecilia Ibru, a one-time Chairman of the defunct Oceanic Bank, was fingered and investigated for misappropriation of funds, *Guardian* newspaper never carried any report on the issue.

In instances in which the elite do not own the media, they control the media through the power of advertising. Since mass media are basically business enterprises set up for the purpose of making profit, owners of mass media give preference and privileges to the elite who are big fish in advertising. This factor can even propel media owners to prevail on their staff to kill a news story just because they do not want to lose a 'big' customer.

The elite also dominate the political sphere. They ensure that their children and children's children get involved in politics at an early age to be in control of state power. The case of Sir Gabriel Osawaru Igbinedion is just one of many. Aside from him being a notable chief in Edo State, a knight of the Catholic Church as well as a renowned business mogul, his son, Lucky Nosakhare Igbinedion, has served as a two-time Governor of Edo State. That is not all. His daughter, Barrister Omosede Igbinedion, once served as a

member of the country's House of Representatives.

In addition, the elite place their children in major organisations and large corporations. This is done even when these children are not professionally qualified or certified for such positions. For example, during the inauguration of 22 judges of the Federal Capital Territory held on November 2021, it became known that four of the newly inaugurated judges were children of serving and retired judges in the country while the other was a sibling of a serving judge (*Punch*, 2021). The Ibrus, the Odetolas, the Kutis, among others, are no exception to this rule. Although one cannot completely rule out the possibility of a child being attracted to a parent's career and eventually entering such career, the large number of elite's children working in large organisations in the country stirs one's curiosity. The sad commentary about these job vacancies in big corporations and government agencies is that they are seldom advertised, and even when they are, performance is not a criterion for selection.

Furthermore, the elite perpetuate their hegemony by orchestrating hook-ups and marriages among their children. It is unusual to find a rich man's son marrying a poor man's daughter or vice-versa. These two classes are more like day and night that never meet or mingle. It is important to state that the case of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle which made headlines in 2018 is just one in a million cases. Even at that, report has it that Lady Markle, though from a middle-class background, was actually worth over £3.5 million and was earning about £330,000 annually by the time she met the prince. Theirs was still a case of the rich marrying the rich. The only twist was that Lady Markle was from fairly new money whilst the prince was from very old money. As a result, the wealth of the rich stays with them and them alone. Among the poor in Nigeria, religious

doctrines and differences are played up to stop marriages, but among the elite, mariage is a matter of common interest and the spirit of national unity. The list of the elite in rich marriages usually cuts across party lines and ethnic and religious orientations.

The Poor and their Dilemma

The actions of the elite have devastating and debilitating effects on the poor. The poor are often perplexed, ill-treated, oppressed, and marginalised. The poor can hardly set up thriving businesses because of the elite's dominance in the business sector. The elite literally hold all the keys and dictate the direction of the business environment. The elite can also easily penetrate those at the helm of affairs when necessary and make lasting changes that would favour them and their business enterprises. Oxfam International (2017, p. 27) paints a very clear picture of this situation when it asserts that:

> [t]here is a strong overlap between the political elite and those who hold economic power. Campaign financing by the elite often results in situations where policymaking processes and the functioning of institutions are hijacked, and skewed to work in favour of a small percentage of the population made up of economic and political elite. This has reinforced the ability of this small group to use government at all levels to reap economic benefits.

As well, the system of taxation across countries is meant to favour the elite to the disadvantage of the poor. Tax systems are largely regressive as the burden of taxation mostly falls on smaller companies and individuals (United Nations, 2020). To the elite, this advantage is two-sided. On the one hand, large businesses owned by the elite often receive tax waivers and tax holidays from governments. On the other hand, the elite take advantage of the loopholes in tax laws to evade tax payments and store billions of profits in foreign tax havens. The Pandora Papers are testaments to this practise. In instances where the poor do not own businesses, value-added taxes on products and services fall back on them and significantly reduce their earnings (Oxfam International, 2015; 2017).

Because of the domination of large business organisations and multinational corporations, the poor are left with menial jobs. Many roadside hawkers, builders, and farmers in Nigeria are from poor homes (Oxfam International, 2017). Many poor men's children in Nigeria are graduates who came out with excellent results. Just because they do not have long legs and are not connected to the elite who can pull strings for them, many of them roam the streets helplessly in search of decent jobs. When they realise that their chances of getting such white-collar jobs are very slim, they fall back to menial jobs. In addition, and as an extrapolation of the above point, the poor are often used as thugs to perpetrate violence during electioneering periods. It cannot be denied that Nigerian elections and violence are closely related. There has been hardly any election in the country where violence was not the order of the day. Because the poor are unhappy, they easily accept monies given by political candidates and then carry out vicious and violent acts to ensure that their benefactors are announced as winners.

The poor also fight over ethnic and religious differences as well as market spaces, but they cannot seem to unite to fight against the elite. It is not uncommon to see a poor person from a Christian background launch a bitter diatribe against his/her counterpart from a Muslim background and vice-versa. The same is also true of persons of various ethnicities who orchestrate acts of violence against those who are not of their ethnic

groups. Eme-Uche & Okonkwo (2020) observe that ethno-religious conflicts, especially on the part of the poor, are great factors militating against national unity in Nigeria. Meanwhile, the rich – irrespective of their ethnicities and religion – unite in their quest to sideline, oppress, and marginalize the poor.

Owing to the elite's control of mass media, the poor are always shut out. Even when the poor have significant points to make or salient things to say, they often cannot find the means by which to air their views. Although social media should come to the rescue of the poor by offering public spheres for debate in our contemporary world, the elite controlssuch social media, especially in emerging democracies. President Muhammadu Buhari's ban on Twitter in the year 2021illustrates this assertion in no small way. Thus, the poor stand at the crossroads of society. Try as they may to make headway and achieve success, the walls erected by the rich cannot be brought down.

Bridging the Gap of Economic Inequality

Economic inequalities can be addressed. First, there should be a favourable fiscal policy. Retrogressive tax systems which favour the rich to the detriment of the poor should be abolished. Progressive and all-inclusive tax systems should be the order of the day. The higher the income of individuals and business taxes, the higher the tax that should be paid. Moreover, every loophole in tax systems should be blocked. That way, evasion of taxes by the elite would be extremely difficult. To further strengthen a favourable fiscal policy, those found evading thir taxes should be arrested and prosecuted to serve as a deterrent to others.

Second, societies should adopt policies that promote investment. The creation of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) by citizens should be greatly encouraged. This would make some part of the income of the elite to flow into the coffers of the poor who would own a number of such businesses (Oxfam International, 2015). Then, as this financial flow is sustained, economic equality would become the trend. The government has a huge role to play in this regard. The government should end every policy that discourages the poor from setting up businesses and come up with those that encourage them to do so. Another way by which the gap of economic inequality can be bridged is the formulation of policies aimed at creating massive employment opportunities. The International Monetary Fund (2015) observes that the major cause of inequality in countries is the lack of employment opportunities. The situation is especially bad in Nigeria as it is reported that the country ranks second highest in the Global List of Poorest Countries (*Bloomberg*, 2021). There are also a staggering number of ghost workers in majority of public enterprises in the country. If Nigeria in particular, and other countries in general, are to make headway, they must rid the public enterprises of ghost workers and create opportunities for more citizens to have gainful employment.

Nations also must embrace education. Education takes centre stage in this regard, because it can help change the mindset, principles, and values of people. No wonder the late Nelson Mandela remarked that education is the most powerful weapon that can change the world. When they are taught the negative effects that hijacking of sectors of society has on society, they will change for the better. One of the surest ways to change minds is to incorporate topics geared towards doing this into the curriculums of nursery, primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions.

There is also the need for the formulation of an all-inclusive policy by those in government. Policies that marginalise the poor and other vulnerable groups, such as

women and youths, should be scrapped. Similarly, qualified women and youths should be encouraged to vie for political positions. By so doing, the old structure in which only the elite hold political power would be brought down. In Nigeria, the Not Too Young To Run Campaign is a right step in the right direction.

Conclusion

To date, the rhetoric of national unity has been in favour of the elite while the poor have received the shorter end of the stick. The elite continue to dominate every sector of society, especially the business and political sectors. The elite also ensure that their enormous wealth remains with them. In short, the elite mastermind the economic inequality that is prevalent in nations. As a result, the poor are are disadvantaged, marginalised, helpless, hopeless, and hapless. If societies break class structures and free their individuals from the elite's hegemony, then economic inequalities could be corrected.

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Evaluating the Potential of the Azhili Eggon Cultural Festival as a Platform for Identity Projection and Cultural Integration

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Abstract

Festivals are key to understanding the traditional values of a people. This study considers the efficacy the Azhili Eggon cultural festival in Nasarawa State as a tool for cultural integration and a marker of cultural identity. Investigating various cultural and theatrical forms, the researchers adopted a mixed method research methodology focusing on questionnaires, direct observation, and key informant interviews. Their findings reveal that dance, masquerade, traditional delicacies, costumes makeup, songs, drama, and storytelling transmit features peculiar to the Azhili Eggon.

Keywords: Festival, Azhili Eggon, Cultural integration, Identity projection.

Introduction

Festivals and celebrations offer possibilities for human interaction, not in our day-to-day lives (Marti, 2004), and are indicators of a vital pulse found in every society. The very idea of festival evokes positive associations. At the very least, the thrust behind every festival is that participants enjoy the experience. Festivals also have a very specific social function: their utility lies in their ability to instill in their participants respect for difference and a collective spirit of oneness. Festivals across Nigeria fulfill different purposes. For instance, the New Yam festival which is common among the Igbo people of Eastern Nigeria is marked to celebrate a bountiful harvest; the Argungu fishing festival in Kebbi State Nigeria is observed to celebrate the fishing culture of the people of Kebbi state in Northern Nigeria. The Eyo Festival celebrates the unique and colourful culture of the Yoruba in Western Nigeria. Each festival promotes the value of living together respectfully and the need to build bridges between different ethnicities.

As Naz, Khan, Hussain and Daraz (2011) point out, people make cultures, and cultures make people; the transmission of cultural traits affects assimilation and acculturation, which indirectly influences the cultural, religious, and economic structure of local communities or societies. According to Enrique and Herrero (2004) festival goers experience cultural integration and identification via macro, mezzo, and micro approaches. The macro approach to festival takes the form of participation, the mezzo is achieved through social networks, and the micro occurs at the level of intimate relationships. Simply put, the traditional and cultural festival is a means by which people integrate social institutions into their lives and participte in the informal lives of their communities.

Here, it is important to note that societal interactions over the course of history have affected our orientation to and acceptance of indigenous cultural festivals in Nigeria and throughout Africa. Despite this, cultural performances are still a vibrant cultural and functional form through which the people interact. Owned and nurtured by all, indigenous performances are carried out for the sanctity of everyone. No one person can lay claim to the art. Festval creates communal pride. Festival relationships propel community members to act, behave, and interact with others in ways that bring about community development.

Native to the people of Eggon in Nassarawa State, Nigeria, the *Azhili Eggon* festival is a platform for cultural integration. *Azhili* is the name of a deity of the Eggon people, located or reached via a shrine where the people go to pay obeisance. The festival is an annual celebration of the people's traditions and culture performed during December. Enabling all the sons and daughters of the Eggon nation to gather together, the event usually lasts seven days with pageantry (dances, songs, drinking, and eating) that preserves and promotes their community memory. This study is based on the assumption that traditional festivals, the unsophisticated, and the complex, perform utilitarian functions. In part, the celebration and observance of cultural traditions of the festival enables individuals to see themselves traditionally as one. Tradition helps define individuals' identities, because it offers cognitive, historical points of reference that are extremely important for social and collective growth. The sense of tradition conveyed in festival is not only important; it is also indispensable, for without tradition, no society is possible.

To date, most academic research has focused on consumption (Prentice & Anderson, 2003) or motivation of visitors attending festivals (Boyd, 2002; Kim, Uysal & Chen, 2002; LeBlanc, 2004; Lee, Lee & Wicks, 2004). Scholars like Edensor (2001) and Shepherd (2002) have studied festivals in terms of cultural commodification without revealing how festivals represent the social integration within, the unity, and the identity of a community. Interrogating the "*Azhili Eggon"* festival as a cultural expression that engenders cultural integration, this paper indentifies the unique cultural forms of the "Azhili Eggon" festival which lead to the integration of the Eggon people, ascertains the socio-cultural relevance of the "Azhili Eggon" festival, and determines the ways in which "Azhili Eggon" festival enhances cultural identification and the integration of Eggon ethnic nationality. Three questions guided the research. What are the unique cultural forms of expression in the "Azhili *Eggon"* festival that can lead to the integration of Eggon ethnic nationality? What is the extent to which the "Azhili Eggon" is culturally relevant to the peaceful co-existence of the Eggon people? In what ways can "Azhili Eggon" festival enhance cultural identification and integration of Eggon ethnic nationality?

Conceptual Review

Arnold (2001); Edensor (2001); Maurin (2001); Derrett (2003); Jeong and Santos (2004); Lade and Jackson (2004); Omoera (2008); Omoera & Atuegbe (2010); Omoera & Oseghale (2012) affirm that cultural festivals are an avenue for cultural exploitation, manifestation, and enculturation among the people of a community whose cultural values, norms, and shared beliefs are a subsidiary. For a people whose ways of life is uniquely and deeply rooted in culture, the avenue which festival creates is a platform in which they socialize and integrate. Festivals afford their audience a first-hand, interactive experience with culture. The people's culture, assembled in festivals and festivities, becomes a driver of cultural creativity appreciated by all who are directly (and indirectly) connected to that way of life (Coker & Coker, 2009).Social and cultural interaction between immigrants and established residents creates cross-cultural understanding that helps community members gain a level of comfort with one another and widens their appreciation for all cultures. Culture plays a significant role in defining our identity and world view. For newcomers, culture is shapes interactions with other newcomers and with established residents in their new community. Such interactions can occur anywhere and everywhere, in the park, community centre, school, and grocery store. They are made more meaningful, because festival programmes bring people from different cultural backgrounds together.

A community's image, spirit, character, pride, relationships, and networking express its cultural identity and integration (Bush, 2000). Its sense of community stems from a shared vision, in which one finds a clear sense of purpose, individuals' ideas and contributions, and people working together. Developing a sense of community is challenging, long-term work, involving levels of connectedness, belonging, and support (Derrett, 2003). Organisations and civic institutions managing festivals and events temporarily offer a spatial boundary (or place), which harnesses their community's vision of itself and provides participative opportunities to nurture and sustain what is important to its constituencies. In short, festivals and events provide opportunities for community cultural development (Getz, 2002). Their programming can shape the views of attendees through symposia, workshops, skills development workshops, dreaming places, graffiti walls, and postcards. Festivals also reflect the dynamic value systems of individuals united by the same customs, images, collective memory, habits, and experiences. When festivals are replicated, each generation can pass on something of its experience to the next. This is of particular interest to families that use events to assemble reunions. Enabling people to

share their special spaces and favourite places with visiting friends and relatives assists in healing, awareness-raising, and understanding issues of sustainability. Values and beliefs held by individuals in a community are inextricably linked and shape their actions in specific situations. Under study is how the values, interests, and aspirations of individuals are influenced by their bio-physical environment (space and place), how space and place influences the ways in which the community celebrates, how those celebrations affect the community's well-being, and how this, in turn, informs the environment in which individuals and groups define their values and beliefs.

The informal participation afforded by festivals and events provides residents with a sound overview of their community. They can often be more willing to contribute to the solution of community problems. This social capital (Cox, 1995), or social glue, or social fabric, is now a feature of the regional development agenda. It focuses on minimizing the gaps between people, particularly in socio-cultural and economic ways. It is also observed that communities create festivals and events to emphasize the value they recognize in the feelings of ownership and belonging generated for resident participants. Festivals can be the gatekeepers of community values, encouraging some people entrance, while keeping others out. Case studies demonstrate that community offers individual members a means for attending to general aspects of life. Challenges arise as individuals and groups within communities initiate, plan, prepare, promote, and manage community celebrations. The operational aspects of these events provide a framework by which to explore local distinctiveness that influences the contact, conduct, and reception of festivals as well as the extent to which a festival ensures social integration and identity.

According to United Nations (2005), social integration is a dynamic and principled process in which all members participate in a dialogue to achieve and maintain peaceful, social relations. Here it should be noted that social integration does not mean coerced assimilation or forced integration. The need for social integration by the United Nations was premised on the need for a safe, stable and just society. According to Jeannotte (2008), the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development explains social integration as being

> [t]he process of fostering societies that are stable, safe and just and that are based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons. (6)

Social integration should be seen as the process of promoting the values, relations, and institutions that enable all people to participate in social, economic, and political life on the basis of equality of rights, equity, and dignity. Beresnevièiûtë (2003) points out that promoting social integration requires attention to three different, but inter-linked, processes that shape the extent to which people are able to live and work together on an equal basis via the recognition of diverse social groups, cultures, and identity in order to promote respect, dignity, and co-operation.

Beresnevièiûtë further observes that social integration moves the community towards peaceful social relations of coexistence, collaboration, and cohesion. Social integration is the process of building the values, relations, and institutions necessary to achieve the goals of that society. Social integration is about making societies more equitable. It

requires actions to renegotiate and redefine existing social contracts that define the rights and responsibilities of citizens, states, and the private sector. In its broadest sense, the term, integration, is used to define developments that determine connections of related diverse elements into the social whole, system, community, or other unit. The concept of integration is a fundamental one in functionalist theories, defined by a mode of relations of the units of a system. On one hand, these units act to avoid disrupting the system, and, on the other hand, they cooperate to promote its functioning. When discussing ethnic processes, Beresnevièiûtë (2003) also points out that the concept of integration is not just closely related to the processes of socialisation, acculturation, and assimilation; it is also an inseparable part of the course and result of these processes. Every phenomenon of social integration is conditional and insufficient, because it is a continuous process, a nd a certain level of it is necessary for the functioning of every social system.

Methodology

The mixed method survey design was adopted for the study; qualitative methodology was deployed in the study. The study was conducted in Nasarawa-Eggon Community of Nasarawa state. The total population of the study consisted of 380 community members (comprising men, women and youth). Proportionate stratified random sampling technique was adopted to obtain the sample size of 380 people drawn from the study location, Nasarawa-Eggon. This was carefully done to reflect all the levels of custodians of the culture who celebrate the festival. A structured (close-ended) questionnaire was adopted as the instrument for data collection. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed with the help of research assistants. The sampling techniques gave the researcher the impetus to administer the questionnaire to respondents who were part of the festival and could ultimately fill it and return it. Interview and FGD were also conducted with key stakeholders in the community who are custodians of the culture and understand the performative essence of the festival.

Result and Data Analysis

The data which were obtained from respondents were analysed using descriptive statistics, specifically, using simple percentages for the research questions.

Research Question 1: What are the unique cultural forms of expression in the "Azhili *Eggon"* festival that can lead to the integration of Eggon ethnic nationality?

Table 1: Unique Cultural forms of expression in *Azhili Eggon* Festival which can lead to the Integration of Eggon Ethnic Nationality

S/N		**Degree of Agreement**				**Total (%)**
	Benefits	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree(%)	
1	Dance, acrobatic display, Costumes, makeup and designs	129(34.6)	218(58.4)	26(7.0)	00(0.0)	373(100.0)
2	Masquerade performances and carnival procession	129(34.6)	218(58.4)	26(7.0)	00(0.0)	373(100.0)
3.	Songs/mime/drama, storytelling to espouse the Eggon mythical worldview to the young ones.	156(41.8)	143(38.3)	26(7.0)	48(12.9)	373(100.0)
4.	Peace offering and traditional rituals for the sustenance of the community	70(19.8)	80(19.8)	124(37.0)	99(23.3)	373(100.0)

Table 1 shows that 93.0% of the respondents indicated that dance, acrobatic display, costumes, makeup and designs are some of the unique forms of expression during the festival. The table also shows that masquerade performances and carnival procession are unique cultural forms of expression experienced during the festival (93.0%). In the same vein, 80% of the respondents indicated that songs/mime/drama, storytelling transmitted

the mythical Eggon worldview to the younger generation, while 60.3% of respondents indicated that peace offering and traditional rituals towards the sustainability of the community are not unique cultural expressions.

Research Question 2: What is the extent to which the Azhili-Eggon is culturally relevant to the peaceful co-existence of the Eggon people?

Table 2: Socio-cultural relevance of the Azhili-Eggon Cultural Festival in Nasarawa State.

S/N		Degree of Agreement				Total (%)
	Features	Strongly Agree(%)	Agree (%)	Disagree(%)	Strongly Disagree(%)	
1	To mark a cultural event that is known within the community	146(39.1)	143(38.3)	14(3.8)	70(18.8)	373(100.0)
2	To sustain the rich cultural relevance of the Eggon people	178(47.7)	77(20.6)	70(18.8)	48(12.9)	373(100.0)
3.	To create a forum for Eggon people to meet and interact in order to address salient social issues that affect them worldwide.	187(50.1)	108(29.0)	78(20.9)	00(0.0)	373(100.0)
4.	To unite Eggon people both in Nigeria and in the diaspora	187(50.1)	108(29.0)	78(20.9)	00(0.0)	373 (100.0)

Table 2 shows that 77.4% of the respondents indicated that the purpose of organizing *Azhili Eggon* cultural festival in Nasarawa State is to mark an event that is known within the community; 68.3% indicated that the festival is for sustaining the cultural relevance of the Eggon people; 79.1% indicated that the festival is a forum for Eggon people to meet and interact in order to address salient social issues that affect them worldwide, and 79.1% indicated that the Eggon festival is to unite the people of Eggon within Nigeria and the diaspora.

Research Question 3: In what ways can the "Azhili Eggon" festival enhance the cultural identification and integration of the Eggon ethnic nationality?

Table 3: Ways through which *Azhili Eggon* festival can enhance Cultural Identification and Integration of Eggon ethnic nationality

S/N		Degree of Agreement				Total (%)
	Benefits	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	
1	Publicity and Promotion	146(39.1)	143(38.3)	14(3.8)	70(18.8)	373(100.0)
2.	Documentation (through video and the internet)	97(26.0)	118(31.6)	64(17.2)	94(25.2)	373(100.0)
3.	Sponsorship/partnership funding	101(27.1)	151(40.5)	121(32.4)	0(00.0)	373(100.0)
4.	Advocacy and involvements of government and agencies saddled with the responsibilities of cultural preservation.	138(37.0)	87(23.3)	74(19.8)	74(19.8)	373(100.0)

Table 3 above shows that 77% of the respondents indicated that publicity and promotion of the festival will inadvertently create visibility for the festival amongst Eggon nationals within Nigeria and the diaspora. Also, 57.6% of the respondents indicated that the use of internet and video recordings as means of documentation can help enhance the role of the festival in engendering cultural integration; 67.6% of the respondents further indicated that availability of sponsorship and partnerships is important to raise adequate funds in order to make the organization of the festival more efficient and productive. In addition, 60.3% of the respondents supported the idea that the involvement of government and agencies saddled with the responsibilities of cultural preservation will enhance the festival .

Discussion

Dance, plays, costumes, makeup and designs, masquerade performances, and carnival procession are the unique cultural forms of expression found in the Azhili Eggon festival. Although the above-mentioned features are evident in all festivals in Nigeria, findings

revealed peculiarities in the masquerade performance and carnival procession which define the Eggon people as being different from other ethnic groups. Where there is masquerade performance and carnival procession, there is bound to be attraction; this attraction leads to entertainment and at the same time serves as a projection of the realities and peculiarities of the Eggon people.

Figure 1. Ashum Angbie masquerade during Anzhili festival, 2017.

Carnival is an integral part of Azhili Eggon festival. The study observed that the festival usually begins with a procession that is carnival in nature. Different performing groups start the movement from a point, which marks the beginning to a destination or arena where the main festival takes place. People stand by the streets and watch as the procession flows through to the main arena. The central arena is located at the heart of Nasarawa Eggon; the arrangement of the procession begins with the dancers at the front row followed by masquerades and finally by the drummers, flutists, singers, and the contingents from each clan. The spectators also decide which clan or faction to follow, and they usually follow right behind the train or bandwagon.

Figure 2. Carnival procession during Azhili Eggon festival, 2017.

Songs/mime/drama, storytelling are also unique features of the festival. Responses form the interviews and FGD's. They asserted that these features espouse the Eggon mythical worldview to the young ones and to the non-Eggon people who attend the festival. These features are the carriers of the oral tradition of the people that has been handed from generation to generation. As such, they must not be allowed to slip into oblivion. Storytelling can relate heroic deeds, morals, religious doctrines, and social values that are exemplary and worthy of emulation. Songs linger on in the minds of the people and are used for weddings, farming, religious worship, sacrifices, coronation, entertainment, and education. It, however, was shown that the Eggon cultural festival showcased these features as a constant practice to create cultural awareness and also to entertain

visitors and indigenes during the festival. This finding concurs with Okwori (1998) who states that traditional dances, drumming, songs, and the regalia are important aspects of festivals.

Data showed that before the festival, several community meetings with stakeholders are organized for its planning. These meetings afford the elders of the community, the organizers and various stakeholders opportunities to agree on certain modalities on which the festival thrives, because they ensure the development and the projection of the Eggon ethnic nationality in a good light. These meetings make the festival unique, as the issues addressed forestall setbacks in the actual festival.

Figures 3 & 4. Warrior dance performance during Anzhili Eggon festival, 2017.

Enacted to mark a cultural event known within the community, the Azhili Eggon festival is a tool for sustaining the rich cultural values of the Eggon people. Findings from the study also reaffirm this festival as a meeting point for people. During the festivals, people from the locality and guests from other places partake in the experience which the festival offers. Families, friends, and community members gather, and the festival becomes a forum to address issues and share ideas about the hosting community. Many sons and daughters of Eggon ethnic extraction use this opportunity to link up with one another.

Regarding the ways that the Anzhili Eggon festival enhances cultural identification and integration, our results reveal that publicity and promotion of this festival needs to be optimized to effectively continue to integrate and unify the Eggon people within Nigeria and the diaspora. As Wu and Ngernyuang (2020) point out, Internet exposure is one of the channels for the promotion and exposure of cultural festivals throughout the world. Promotion and publicity of the festival on the Internet would advertise it nationally and globally, and increase its potential for cultural integration. Documentation via video and the Internet would also enable the festival to reach larger audiences and enhance cultural preservation and promotion. Not every son and daughter of Eggon extraction can be physically present to participate in the festival. However, if the festival is recorded and uploaded on YouTube or another Internet-enabled platforms, those not able to be on site could witness the festival on screen.

Conclusion

Festivals showcase rich cultural heritage of a people. Through them, culture can be preserved. The institutions of festival have definite purposes, linking culture, sustainability, unification, and identity of various ethnic groups in Nigeria. Despite the global drive

towards one culture, the need to create diverse identities is still paramount, evidenced in vigorous efforts by ethnic groups throughout the world. The *Azhili Eggon* of the people of Eggon in Nassarawa State, Nigeria, is no exception to this rule. A platform for cultural integration, the Azhili Eggon festival consciously constructs the cultural identity of the Eggon people, giving them the sense of ownership of a unique culture and enhancing unity amongst them.

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Flora and Hypatia

In a small house on a hill beside the sea
Long ago, almost two thousand years,
Flora was born to a life not meant to be
More than one of service, of constant fears
And love for and by others, family
Prevailing as it would as long as tradition
Did as well, at lease in some form, diminished
By the strict expectations of history
And freedoms that over time were slowly won,
Latent in Flora's birth, Hypatia rose, fished
From a river, and being golden, was set to be.
But in the beginning, it could not be done
All roles were arranged, a burden to be born.
An object of veneration and subject of scorn.

One day she went outside to gather flowers
In a white gown, her hair pulled back
And lightly crossed Primavera's green
A painter saw and wished he had the hours
To do her justice, though perhaps the lack
Of time forced the moment to be seen
For in the minutes he had, as Flora stepped,
He sketched the act so ably the artist
Knew that this fresco could be his best
In angle, contrast, color, style, and concept
And felt that then the pressure was the test
To consider the subject, the nature of the lack
The two robes, a basket, the turn of the wrist.
A season's matter captured from the back.

When does a culture turn from war to peace?
From sarcophagi covered with scenes of battle
To philosophers at table on life and death
From Homer's Iliad to Jason's golden fleece
To study from a Trojan's dying rattle
And are the changes transient as a breath?
The armor is buckled, or artworks reappear
Books are written or cities are destroyed.
Is the moment of symposia or agora
Merely a prefix or a suffix of the fear
That the vandals are only elsewhere employed?
They'll soon invade to take the likes of Flora
Carrying the vase or emptying the wine

Vessels broken in purpose and design.

The frescos on the inside of the sarcophagus
Instructed the dead, like the famous diver
Launching into the unknown or like the women
Weeping over the dead. Why do they cry?
The departing souls must ask as they pass by
Reflecting on the many lives of women and men
How much of existence lies on each survivor
As he or she struggles toward refinement and thus
Remembers the artist who created the threnody
Hoping the body once corrupted would free
The spirit beyond the measure of words
Which compose the constitution of an age
Beyond the farthest migration of the birds
That Flora would be Hypatia on the page.

Reading the scrolls of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus
Hypatia figured that when they wanted was tolerance
Of strangers. In her mind that meant Christians
And Jews. What figures on her sarcophagus
Would have been painted, had she by chance
Not been murdered by the very ones
She had tolerated. Thought is like a shifting
Vowel in a visual rhyme, misleading those
Who have given themselves to dogma, while lifting
Those who think freely, who know how to expose
Themselves to the agora in all its opinion
But freedoms always crack the tune of the song
Something drastic one day has to be done
When someone's right, others much be wrong.

—Jefferson Holdridge

Precambrian #6

Stuart Matheson

Staging Cultural Transformations in Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh*

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Abstract

This paper investigates the relationship between tradition and transformation in Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* (1939). A special focus is laid on Theodore Hickey who visits Harry Hope's Saloon and tries to reform its denizens by iviting them to revise their "Pipe Dreams." As O'Neill examines American myths of material affluence, family unity, and happy marriage, Hickey parodies Christ, by acting like a preacher to save the saloon dwellers from their delusions. Throughout, poetics of parody are mediated by the transformation of classical dramatic conventions by a Greek Chorus, the presence of

monologues, and the metamorphoses of melodrama into realism.

Keywords: Tradition, transformation, parody, Christ, "pipe dreams," past-present–future.

Eugene O'Neill's controversial play, *The Iceman Cometh* has generated a diverse, ongoing critical discussion. In his *Student Companion to Eugene O'Neill*, Steven Frederic Bloom refers to the play's dominant naturalism and its role in elucidating the existential preoccupation of the saloon dwellers. He also observes that religion "functions on a figurative rather than a literal level" (2007, p.143). In her "Images of women and burden on Myth," Patricia Behrendt pays attention to the gender issues in the play and criticizes O'Neill for writing a male-dominated play in which women are almost absent. She blames the playwright for what she calls his "misogynistic train of thought which first insists upon endowing woman with all the stereotypical qualities long associated with her image" (1999, p.168). Behrendt's claims are supported by the feminist critic Gayle Austin who calls for a better representation of women in the theatrical productions of *The Iceman.* In *Feminist Theories for Dramatic Criticism,* Austin suggests "represent[ing] the missing women by having actresses in a different part of the stage area, particularly those of Rosa and Evelyn" (1999, p. 36). In "Evangelism and Anarchy in the Iceman Cometh," Robert C Lee focuses on "Hammer Nihilism" and the absurd mood of the play. In *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth century American Drama*, W. E Bigsby also conciders the absurdity poduced by the oscillation between illusion and truth and compares *Iceman* to the Beckettian nihilistic approach, shedding light on O'Neill's representation of the humanity of the saloon visitors and definition of modern Man: "Man is a misture and mud and munure is negated by a human sympathy expressed through action" (Bigsby, 1984, p. 89). In his "The Iceman and the Bridegroom," Cyrus Day compares Miller's Loman and O'Neill's Hickey asserting that "Loman is adrift in contemporary American society; Hickey is adrift in the universe. The difference is a measure of the difference between O'Neill's aims and the aims of almost all other dramatists" (1987, p. 9). Lauren Porter who examines O'Neill's linear plot in "*The Iceman Cometh* and *Hughie*: Tomorrow is Yesterday" argues: "[the] audience is acutely conscious that these efforts to escape linear time are doomed to failure" (2005, p. 17). Mojgan Gaeini, on the other hand, embraces a cultural materialistic approach to the text. In "Cultral Materialistic Reading of Eugene O'Neill's the Iceman Cometh," she concludes that "*The Iceman* is the symbolic and artistic picture of the US policy which brings disillusionment and death for Americans" (2017, p. 79).

Building on these insights, this paper considers *The Iceman Cometh*'s deviation from the Christian tradition and its characters who are obsessed with accumulating wealth,. *The Iceman Cometh* was composed during a transitional period for American society when its theatre was marked by its loss of faith in the America's traditional ideals and values. As American theatre turned to translate the dilemma of modern man, O'Neill used parody to express his concerns with the American Dream, imitating traditional myths for the sake of transforming them. His use of parody accords with Linda Hutcheon's view which "conceives of parody as a creative way of approaching tradition, a process that involves resisting and assimilating the previous literary texts" (Aizenberg, 1990, p. 214). His modern American Adam fails in his quest for material gain, spiritual success, and psychological comfort, demonstraing how capitalism transforms an individual into a commodity, cuts the closest ties inside the family, and affects the institution of marriage.

America's Puritan traditions underpin the spirit of this Adam's tendency to believe in dreams. Embedded in American exceptionalism, his romantic vision of moving from an unfortunate state to a blissful situation is underpinned by the Puritan promise of establishing "a city upon a hill." As the Puritan preacher John Winthrop declared: "We shall be a city upon a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in the work we have undertaken. And so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a by-word through the world" (1996, p. 10). The recurrent use of the inclusive "we" conveys not only the responsibility but also the pride Americans have regarding the consideration of their land as an edenic space and as a model for the other nations. Thieir motivation to create "a city upon a hill" is coupled with the belief in "Manifest Destiny," creating a democratic zone where dreams can be achieved by respecting the Puritan values of hard work and individualism. As John O'Sullivan points out, "the manifest purpose of providence is that the light of democratic freedom should be borne from our fires to the domain beyond the Rocky Mountains" ("John O'Sullivan," 2006). Poets also offer a romanticized view of American uniqueness. For instance, Walt Withman writes: "Here is not merely a nation but a teeming nation of nations. Here is action united from strings necessarily behind to particulars and details magnificent by moving in vast masses" (1996, p. iv). Here, Whitman's amplification demonstrates the high-esteem associated with America that is seen as a land of golden vistas where any man may improve his socio-economic situation.

As a myth and a major component of American identity, the American Dream blurs the boundaries between the past and the present. Doing this, the Dream acts as "counter memory." "[U]unlike myths that seek to detach events and actions from the fabric of any larger history, counter memory forces revision of existing histories by supplying new perspectives about the past. Counter memory focuses on localized experiences with oppression, using them to reframe and refocus dominant narratives purporting to represent universal experience" (Lipstiz, 1990, p. 213). A critical period in American history, the late twenties was characterized by inflation and remarkable social disparity. But "it was during the great depression that the United States came closest to the fulfilling Marx's prophecy that under capitalism the mass of misery, oppression, slavery, degradation and exploitation would grow" (Fineglod and Skocpol, 1995, p. 176) A prime example of the Dream being employed as "counter memory" occurred in 1931, when Franklin Delanor Roosevelt attempted to inspire voters with the Puritan ideals of self-fulfilment and hard work, saying, "the day of enlightenment has come...Our government owes every man an avenue to possess himself of a portion of that plenty sufficient for his needs, through his own work" (1941, p. 752). .

Promoting democracy and providing citizens with equal chances for success, Roosevelt called on the nineteenth century's ideology of the Alger Hero,throughout the Great Depression. During Roosevelt's administration, especially in 1939, "the papers almost every week also reported the success of some typical Alger hero of the past" (Guimond, 1991, p. 74). However, America changed from being a shelter of the oppressed to a centre of capitalist oppression even as Roosevelt's counter memory introduced the New Deal system. During the New Deal, "the government spent more money on education including the building of new activities, black illiteracy dropped ten percent during the 1930s. The number of African Americans on relief and the amount of money available to them rose steadily" (Lewis, 2009, p. 72). Notably, the government's efforts to find remedies for the appalling socio-economic conditions were not always successful, the new reforms were limited, and the New Deal was considered by some journalists

as "[the] new deal of Hunger, Fascism and war" (as cited in Egbert, 2015, p. 353). This failure of Roosevelt's counter memory is a fine example of political myth which generates false illusions about success. Although his policy encouraged the establishment of labor unions and called for defending the rights of workers, the situation remained stagnant. Roosevelt was criticized because "the system that he brought ain't got no heart\ from the bills for days he got blood shot eyes\ the American dream was a pack of lies" (Archer, 2005, p. 249).

In 1939, Eugene O'Neill attacked the capitalist system for disseminating the roots of America's moral decline and inciting deviation from the Puritan traditions of perseverance. In *The Iceman Cometh*, this asault begins as Hope awaits Hickey's reformations to lift up the spirits of the roomers. In the first act, Hope was introduced as a life-weary character embarrassed by the dim outlook in the saloon. He uses pejorative jargon when he describing his fellow men: they are a "couple of con men living in my flat since Christ knows when! Getting fat as hogs….Let me sleep on a chair like a bum! Kept me down here waitin' for Hickey to show up, hoping I'd blow you to more drinks!" (Act 1, 22). Being "fat as hogs," Hope's roomers show that the saloon has devolved into place in which human beings are reduced to being beasts. Stasis, passivity, and apathy are shared by the hogs and the denizens of the saloon. Hopelessness and the failure to be faithful to the American traditions of success are emphasized by Hope whose name implies positivity. Hope looks for a newcomer to confer a brighter atmosphere. Ironically, it is the arrival of a self-appointed Christ that is announced to Cora: "Tell de gang I'll be along in a minute. I'm just finishing figurin'out de best way to save them and bring them peace" (Act 1, 31). When he does arrive, Hickey is seen as a model of material prosperity, because he used to be a successful salesman.

Hickey blames Hope's visitors for their passivity. He turns to Abraham Lincoln to recommend hard work as the means by which to achieve one's dreams. Lincoln, of course, is "the best example of upward mobility where hard work is rewarded with material success" (Callahan, 2013, p. 152). Parritt who divulges regret for disregarding American history and not reinventing the American ideals of democracy confirms Hickey's suspicions that those who frequent the saloon do not share Lincoln's belief in hard work. He reveals:

> I began studying American history. I got admiring Washington and Jefferson and Jackson and Lincoln. I began to feel patriotic and love this country. I saw it was the best government in the world, where everybody was equal and had a chance. I saw that all the ideas behind the Movement came from a lot of Russians like Bakunin and Kropotkin and were meant for Europe, but we didn't need them here in a democracy where we were free already. I didn't want this country to be destroyed for a damned foreign pipe dream. After all, I'm from old American pioneer stock. I began to feel I was a traitor for helping a lot of cranks and bums and free women plot to overthrow our government. And then I saw it was my duty to my country. (Act 2, 52)

Lamenting the loss of moral idealism and the obsession with amassing money, Parritt calls on political icons to remedy the situation and attacks the anarchist movement which generates chaos. Doing so, Parritt represents "the American people and the country's betrayal of its original idealism. It is hardly coincidental that his name suggests patricide" (Tornqvist, 1999, p. 150). in part, O'Neill's reference to patricide points to the decline of moral values; in part, O'Neill is also signalling the damage done to the democratic values of the Founding Fathers by the spirit of capitalism. Rocky and Chuck are workers,

who make their livings as bartenders. Both embrace the same opportunistic capitalist ideology as they exploit women for material gain. Larry rebukes Rocky's Machiavellian spirit, portraying him as "a shrewd businessman who doesn't miss any opportunity to get on in this world" (11). Hugo's criticism of Rocky pimping prostitues reflects O'Neill's "radical hostility to bourgeois civilization" (Miller, 1987, p. 61). Hugo mocks Rocky by asking: "were is your leedle slave girls?" (Act 1, 10). Because Rocky himself is enslaved by capitalism. His "success" parodies the Puritan ideal, for illegal means has replaced hard work.

Deviating from the Puritan tradition in *The Iceman Cometh* turns the American dream into a "pipe dream." The African American Joe, the Italian Americans Pearl and Chuck Morello, the Irish Larry, and the Boer Piet are equally disillusioned. Secluded in the saloon, their shared narcosis enables them to forget about their failure to assimilate into America's social fabric. Hickey tries to debunk the stereotypes associated with ethnic and racial minorities when he declares that "Joe has the right idea" about eliminating pipe dreams (Act 2, 47). Arguing that slavery is a state of mind, he points out that equality, encoded in the Declaration of Independence, is an American value. Joe, Pearl and Chuck Morello, Larry, and Piet are enslaved by this counter memory. Hickey succeeds in calling for a better representation of the different others and for social reformation, however, he fails to achieve transformation in the lives of those others.

Hickey visits the saloon to teach the roomers the rules of success, but he also fails to shed his own 'pipe dreams.' When he tries to convince the roomers to rid themselves of chimera by facing truth and invites them to reach peace, he confidently informs them: "The remorse that nags at you and makes you hide behind lousy pipe dreams about tomorrow. You'll be in a today where there is no yesterday or tomorrow to worry you…. I wouldn't say this unless I knew, Brothers and Sisters. This peace is real! It's a fact! I know!" (Act 2, 60). Appointing himself a Christ figure, he presents himself as a messenger dedicated to a new belief based on optimism. He believes that positive transformations can occur when his believers break free from their delusions and become realists. This, however, fails. When the roomers confront their reality, they become melancholic. Instead of redeeming them, Hickey proves to be "[a] great Nihilist" (Act 2, 42). Hugo criticizes Hickey for his ambivalence and mocks the other roomers for listening to Hickey and his false doctrine. He compares his fellows to animals when he describes them: "Like hogs, yes! Like beautiful leedle hogs! (*He stops startledly, as if confused and amazed at what he has heard himself say. He mutters with hatred*) Dot Gottamned liar, Hickey. It is he who makes me sneer. I want to sleep." (Act 2, 43). Barren individualism has created a Darwinian America in which modern Man is reduced to being a mere beast serving the capitalist machine. Throughout the play, animal imagery informs the tragedy of modern Man.

Ironically, when Hickey advises his mates, he commits their errors. Entering the saloon, he asks: "What's the matter, everybody? What is this, a funeral? Come on and drink up! A little action! *They all drink*" (Act 1, 35). When he criticizes the roomers' indolence, he embraces their attitude and lack of activity by talking and preaching without acting and changing his own itte situation. After giving a long lecture about the importance of optimism and the necessity of moving forward, he remarks: "I'm talking too much. It's Harry we want to hear from. Come on, Harry! (*He pounds his schooner on the table.*) Speech! Speech! (Act 2, 59). He also recommends inner reformation as the key for peace: "I couldn't give you my peace. You've got to find your own. All I can do is help you, and the rest of the gang, by showing you the way to find it. (*He has said this with a simple persuasive earnestness. He pauses, and for a second they stare at him with fascinated*

resentful uneasiness.)" (Act 2, 46). This claim contradicts Hickey's own inner world and contrasts with his ambivalent behavior. Hickey is a parody of a preacher, for he embraces the same nihilistic attitude as the roomers and hides an inner suffering which originates in his failure to establish a functional family. He confesses: "I had to do a lot of lying and stalling when I got home. It didn't do any good…. Poor Evelyn--But she did her best to make me believe she fell for my lie about how traveling men get things from drinking cups on trains" (Act 4, 94). Unable to reconcile himself with his unChristian behavior, he regrets having cheated on his wife and having failed to respect the sacredness of his home.

The institution of marriage, a major component of the American Dream, collapses when Hickey confesses he murdered his wife. In the final scene of the play he admits that he shot her in the head. He regrets his deed because "all that Evelyn ever wanted out of life was to make [him] happy" (150). His confession establishes the extent of his confused psyche, his unwillingness to establish a family ,and his dysfunctional, unChristian relationship with Evelyn. Overturning the myth of the ideal couple, George Washington and Martha, Hickey found constructing a home a heavy burden. After killing Evelyn, the iceman confesses: "I must have been insane" (242). Hickey calls the saloon visitors to go beyond the "pipe dream," but haunted by the same dream, he "leave[s] the stage, having told their whole truth" (Austin, 1999, p. 35), having acquired a deeper understanding of existence and his tragic error. In the end, dreaming "costs him his wife and his life. Money cannot buy happiness, as capitalism often seems to promise" (Bloom, 2007, p. 150). In the end, he understands that self transformation starts with revisiting the past and modernizing traditions instead of flouting them. He also recognizes that inner peace begins when individuals accept reality and act to create social reconciliation.

To conclude, Hickey's parody of Christ critiques the moral disintegration of the modern citizen who is disassociated from the traditional moral standards and religious beliefs which are part of the American dream. The saloon visitors' misunderstanding of the amalgamation of tradition and transformation that produces the American Dream leads to their downfall. Craving change but clinging to counter memory, they shun the Puritan traditions based on the principle of hard work. Their hamartia does not permit them to recognize the truth that Hickey finally understands. O'Neill's audience, however, sees what they do not and knows that "to reform is not to begin all over or to adapt to change, but to be reborn back to the past" (Diggins, 2007, p. 431).

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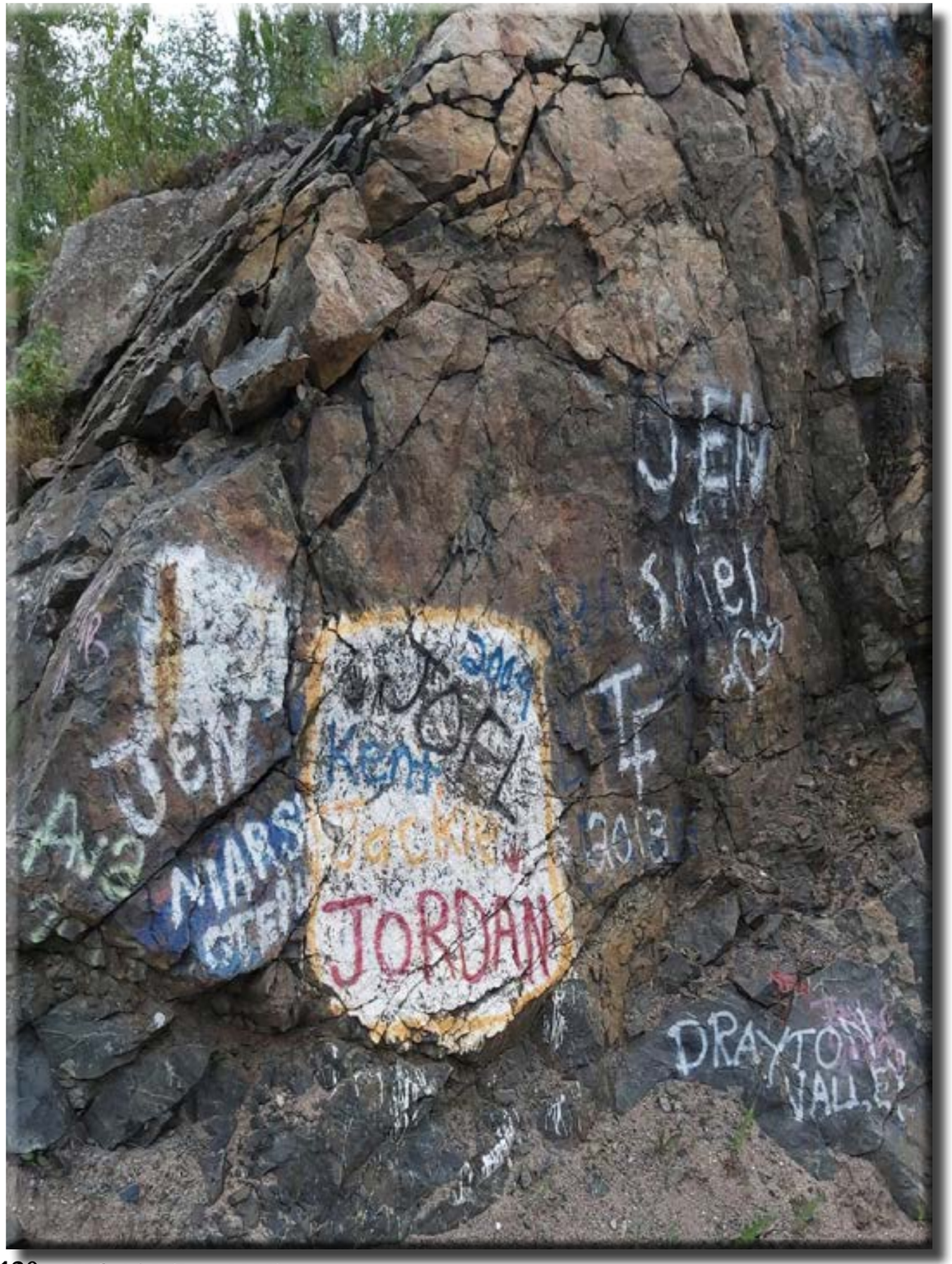

Precambrian #7

Stuart Matheson

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*: Jane's Escape from Entrapment and Quest for Life and Love

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Abstract

Attracting readers generation after generation, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is one of the best Victorian novels to successfully delineate the female psyche. Jane is generally seen as a passionate, proactive, intellectual character who never succumbs to her seeming destiny. Her story, however, reads more like that of a forsaken child with post-traumatic stress. Portraying the protagonist's childhood struggles, Brontë details Jane's challenging situations of entrapment. As an orphan, Jane does not receive protection among her relatives; instead, she is deprived of affection and attention by the Reed family who regard her as "a dependent" instead of a member of the family. The childhood that Jane experiences at Gateshead is a crucial stage in the formation of her personality and value orientations. Its trauma is difficult to erase from memory being conflated with an orphan's

hunger for love and protection. Aptly, Jane's reactions to the challenging situations of her adolescence and adulthood rest on her childhood memories. She revisits the past as she struggles with post-traumatic stress in a world determined by social hierarchies.

Keywords: Jane Eyre, post-traumatic stress, unintegrated identity.

Introduction

Since 2019, anti-epidemic measures have been sanctioned to safeguard the health of the public. One measure to deal with coronavirus has been contact tracing, wherein people who enter public venues (restaurants, shops, hotels, hospitals, schools, etc.) are required to scan a QR code. This QR code can record contact among members of the public: if an individual has been confirmed as being infected with coronavirus (including its variants), those who have appeared in the same place within a relatively short window of time will be asked to receive PCR tests and will be subsequently sent to a quarantine space isolated from the outside world for a period of at least 7 or 14 days if they do not pass the PCR virus test. Though this policy was designed to limit further spread of the virus, people fear the confinement of being quarantined. Episodes of being isolated in a confined space are common in many novels, but Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is perhaps the most impressive in dealing with issues which evoke the same fears and anxieties that are being experienced in the age of Covid-19.

Jane's Childhood Nightmare

Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre is generally considered a passionate, active, and intellectually gifted character who never succumbs to being a humiliated dependent. Portraying her protagonist's struggle for self-assertion, Brontë delineates the whole cycle through Jane's autobiography in which the protagonist departs from one home and then in a spiritual journey finds another. Jane's self-assertion first occurs when she encounters insults and physical abuse from her cousin John. She never ceases to struggle against outer forces that threaten her selfhood. Identifying Jane as a warrior, Sandra M. Gilbert's psychological observation in her "A Dialogue of Self and Soul: Plain Jane's Progress," describes her as a Bildungsroman protagonist who "struggles from the imprisonment of her childhood toward an almost unthinkable goal of mature freedom" (Gilbert 483). In much the same vein, Heather Glen in "Triumph and Jeopardy: The Shape of *Jane Eyre*" [also]emphasizes Jane's independence: "Jane is there from the beginning, distinct and defiant, not gradually gaining a sense of herself and her world but insisting on her own point of view" (Glen 54). Indeed, Jane never ceases fighting during her "spatial" journey for her ideal lodging.[1] However, Jane's story is also that of a forsaken child's post-traumatic stress disorder as she struggles for absolution from her childhood nightmare while seeking out a new world of life and love. The traumatic episode at Gateshead that she experienced in childhood is re-staged throughout her life, again and again, drawing her to a haunted Gothic space, and death. Her trauma proves to be difficult to erase from her memory as it is conflated with the orphan's hunger for parental love and protection.

Jane's experiences as a forsaken child at Gateshead initiate her yearning for a tranquil circumscribed space. As "the cold winter wind had brought with it clouds so somber, and a rain so penetrating, that further outdoor exercise was now out of the question," Jane retires to her small tranquil space (Brontë 5). In "a small breakfast-room adjoined the drawing-room," little Jane "possessed [herself] of a volume, taking care that it should be one stored with pictures. [She] mounted into the window-seat: gathering up [her] feet…

1. See Sharon Locy's "Travel and Space in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*." *Pacific Coast Philology* 37 (2002): 105-121.

[she] was shrined in double retirement" (Brontë 5). Not only does this circumscribed space render her freedom, but it also inspires imagination in a satisfactory solitary world. As Sharon notes, Jane's story is about a child "seeking refuge in out-of-the-way enclosed and solitary spaces" (Sharon 110). However, this moment of peace is interrupted as her cousin John Reed disturbs and sniffs at her: "you have no business to take our books; you are a dependent, mamma says" (Brontë 8). The two children quarrel and then Jane is punished by her aunt. Disobedient and unwilling to apologize to her unreasonable cousin's despotism, Jane is imprisoned in the red-room as a "penalty." She is deprived of the tranquil circumscribed small reading space in the breakfast-room.

The red-room is the source of Jane's traumatic memory of claustrophobia in a confined space that she remembers again and again. The red-room is where her uncle died when she was a young child. Jane's impression of him was of a kind and protective elder, who would take care of her as a parent would if he were alive. As little Jane is confined there, isolated from the other Reeds, that place becomes an overlapping of diverse meanings. On the one hand, its name signifies blood and fury. Bloody executions imposed on her by "John Reed's violent tyrannies" (Brontë 11) and Miss Reeds' "proud indifference" (11) as well as Mrs. Reed's "aversion" (11) all converge into inner voices incessantly whirling in her mind. "Unjust!—unjust!" "What a consternation of soul was mine that dreary afternoon! How all my brain was in tumult, and all my heart in insurrection!"; "I was a discord in Gateshead Hall; I was like nobody there; I had nothing in harmony with Mrs. Reed or her children" (12). The indignation of being marginalized as an outcast continues to upset her and provoke hostility toward all the Reeds. But she still can imagine parental love in this confined space, because the red-room is the deathbed of her uncle, the only Reed who has ever loved her. Providing access to her dead uncle, the red-room is a mysterious space for Jane: in it,; death and parental love coexist. Containing a "dark wardrobe" and several "muffled windows" (11), the red-room looks like an entrance to the the underworld. Jane finds herself reflected in "the looking-glass" (11). As two worlds converge—Jane's and her uncle's, the living and the dead—she perceives her alter-ego "gazing at [her], with a white face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still, had the effect of a real spirit" (11).

In this surreal space, Jane tortures herself by yelling for death, screaming vehemently to be carried away, for she knows that returning to real life will resume hostile fighting with her unfriendly aunt and cousins. A fit of convulsion follows, and she turns from fury to thoughts of suicide. "I grew by degrees cold as a stone, and then my courage sank. My habitual mood of humiliation, self-doubt, forlorn depression, fell damp on the embers of my decaying ire….and was I fit to die?"(13). She imagines, her uncle's phantom incarnating as a mysterious light that "glided up to the ceiling and quivered over [her] head"; when the phantasm approaches the depressed child, Jane says, "I wiped my tears and hushed my sobs, fearful lest any sign of violent grief might waken a preternatural voice to comfort me" (13). As Jane begins to fear the "ghost," the red room acquires a Gothic atmosphere. Jane's fantasy muffles the entire room as she becomes frightened. She remembers, "My heart beat thick, my head grew hot; a sound filled my ears, which I deemed the rushing of wings: something seemed near me; I was oppressed, suffocated" (14).

Jane's fear ignites her will to survive, and her suicidal thoughts go away. Resisting the uncanny light "penetrating some aperture in the blind" (13), she resumes her identity as a forsaken child in the loveless Reed residence. Ironically, when she "rush[es] to the

door and [shakes] the lock in desperate effort" (14), refusing to surrender to death, she returns to reality by severing herself from her father figure. As a result, she must continue to search for love and a home to compensate for the grief of losing her parents. Isolated from her cousins, Jane befriends her doll. She says, "To this crib I always took my doll; human beings must love something, and in the dearth of worthier objects of affection, I contrived to find a pleasure in loving and cherishing a faded graven image, shabby as a miniature scarecrow. It puzzles me now to remember with what absurd sincerity I doated on this little toy, half-fancying it alive and capable of sensation" (Brontë 23). The doll for Jane is no different from "an object of desire" (Vejvoda 244), as it is the projection of her affections.

Jane's adventure in the red room impresses its readers with the process of her psychic disturbance and conversion—from her inclination toward death to her struggle for life. Her story is not only a tale about the development of a female psyche, it is also a trauma narrative. Jane develops a conflicted personality because of her childhood confinement in the red room. This episode—which demonstrates Jane's yearning for parental love through death—is replaced by her yearning for love and life on earth. As an adolscent and then a young adult, Jane desires life, love, and acceptance by wider society. However, her traumatic childhood memories dissuade her from accepting the subordinate status that accompanies her desires. Jane's doll is her only friend, because it is harmless and equated to "a faded graven image" (Brontë 23) that she desires to love. The confining space that is the red room at Gateshead extends to the spaces of Lowood, Thornfield, Marsh End, and Ferndean, as episodes of entrapment repeat Jane's trauma along her journey. Each place re-stages what was her psychic disturbance as a child in what is a world of cruelty.

At Lowood

At Lowood, Jane finds her former self at Gateshead manifested in Helen Burns—another abused child who is longing for the protection of a parent-like figure in a confined space. Because Lowood, a confined school within a "boundary of rock and heath" (Brontë 72), is as much of an incarceration as Gateshead, Jane yearns to relocate and retire to her tranquil reading space. Helen Burns also offers Jane tranquility. At Lowood, Jane establishes a friendship with Helen, her first spiritual guide who helps her survive her incarceration. Helen is a religious martyr, willing to patiently endure the punishments of the schoolteacher in humiliation, a ritual which she takes as a necessary doctrine to cleanse herself of her characteristic weakness, and she rationalizes all her physical punishments as God's tests and love. All her tolerance of her teachers' punishments demonstrates a strong wish to establish a communion with her heavenly Father. Her hope lies not on Earth, but in Heaven. Helen believes in "an all-benevolent God" and "professes a personal belief in universal salvation" (Lamonaca 253). Doing so, she departs from "hard-line Calvinist doctrine" (254). Helen is Jane's mental guide as she sets up a model of Evangelical religion.[2] "I could not comprehend this doctrine of endurance; and still less could I understand or sympathise with the forbearance she expressed for her chastiser. Still I felt that Helen Burns considered things by a light invisible to my eyes. I suspected she might be right and I wrong" (Brontë 47). Helen is accepted into the community of Evangelical Christianity as she is obedient to its doctrine; she is a model that Jane can learn from if Jane tries to live in this society. Moreover, Jane might imagine

2. In discussing the development of Evangelical Christianity within Victorian society in England, Griesinger remarks that evangelical Christians in general regard them as having more autonomy than Catholics: "On the positive side, a 'religion of the heart' appealed to women because it validated intense emotion and passionate feeling as ways to know God. Evangelical worship evoked strong physical and emotional response in men as well as women, which theoretically opened a way to get beyond gender stereotypes in the church and in society generally. Evangelical religion opposed formalism, a type of spirituality that favored outward forms, decent and orderly, over inward 'heart faith' where 'the Spirit' could not be easily contained and often spilled over" (Griesinger 36).

Helen as a forsaken child, and identifies herself as Helen in her quest for life and love in a social community.

As Jane compares Helen's tolerance of Lowood's environs to her psychic disturbance in the childhood red-room, Helen's Heavenly Father is projected onto Jane's psychic parental figure. The scene of the child Jane's communion with "the ghost of the protective uncle" in the red room is reflected in Helen's communion with God. Jane persuades herself to be as obedient as Helen, and even imitates her spirit, as Jane believes it can help carry out her dream of being loved in this earthly world, rather than in an unknown world of death. However, as Jane experiences manipulation in the school and senses the deprivation of her selfhood, she becomes an indomitable character protesting against injustice. She cannot accept punishment from Mr. Brocklehurst as she is punished by standing on a stool in front of all the other students for hours. Mr. Brocklehurst, associated with Mrs. Reed and her children as a despot, "reinforces the stern and judgmental God Jane is taught to fear in the Red Room" (Griesinger 41).

Helen's Promethean spirit—"obedient to those who are cruel and unjust" (Brontë 48)—becomes a model for Jane's attachment to the Heavenly Father in the earthly state of incarceration. Jane, however, senses danger and death in this self-immolation. Though she prays for heavenly love, she also disengages herself from the cruel world of Lowood that buries Helen. If Helen is an abused child compromised by despotism at Lowood, Jane is a child protesting against injustice. The dream or hope of approaching the world of the Heavenly Father is gone with Helen's death. As Ruth Bernard Yeazell notices, "Jane feels Lowood and its environs to be 'prison-ground, exile limits,' and she utters a passionate prayer for 'liberty'—the liberty which can only be won in that wider world beyond the boundaries of Lowood" (131). Jane continues on in her quest for affection that can compensate her loss of parental love and does not abandon the thought of surviving in a "wider world beyond the boundaries of Lowood" (Yeazell 131). As she grows older, she leaves Lowood—a place of grief that evokes her childhood traumatic memory in a confined space—and she travels to the Thornfield.

At Thornfield

The same sense of uncertainty, detachment, and deprivation that oppresses Jane seems to dissipate when she first arrives at Thornfield Hall. She says, "My couch had no thorns in it that night; my solitary room no fears. At once weary and content, I slept soon and soundly" (Brontë 83). The orphan returns to her reclusive world as she senses security and tranquility at Thornfield. Each feature or element at Thornfield is a replica of a tranquil reclusive space reflecting mystery as well as a space of home for Jane:

> …on whose cushioned tops were yet apparent traces of half-effaced embroideries, wrought by fingers that for two generations had been coffin-dust. All these relics gave to the third story of Thornfield Hall the aspect of a home of the past: a shrine of memory. I liked the hush, the gloom, the quaintness of these retreats in the day. (Brontë 90)

Jane views the new surrounding as a secluded and secure lodging place: it reminds her of the tranquil reading space at Gateshead. She tries to live there as she subsists as a governess. Thornfield Hall, for Jane, is a work place where she plays piano or does embroidering for her pupil. However, Thornfield has secret of social cruelty; it is an extension of the atmosphere of the red room. The alter-ego in "the looking-glass" (Brontë 11) that Jane

occasionally encounters in her childhood reappears in the muffled atmosphere. The eerie sound from the distant third floor violates her tranquility. The sound from Bertha in the attic recalls the fear of the red-room imprisonment, or a reflection of Jane's traumatic memories about the fettering chains in the despotic Reed residence. As Adrienne Rich has observed, it is "a threat to her happiness" (476), an alter-ego attached to the world of the dead. Jane is unwilling to face the existence of Bertha, because her situation reminds Jane of her imprisonment in the red-room during her childhood and the despotic behavior of her relatives. If Jane did indeed face it, her idealization of the tranquil life of Thornfield would collapse into illusion. Nevertheless, Jane's acoustic abilities become acute; she hears "eccentric murmurs" (Brontë 93).

Jane's fear and desire to escape from the entrapment as a child is reflected in Bertha's violence—setting fire to the bed of Rochester, cutting deep with a knife into the flesh of her brother, and destroying Jane's wedding suit; it reveals to readers a helpless child on the verge of madness and death. Bertha is not Jane; she is a typical beauty in the Gothic style confined in the depths of a dark castle. Rochester does not send her to an asylum because he may be protecting her. In asylums, inmates in the 19th century were treated with cruelty. But his keeping Bertha in the attic at home does not rescue her, rather it gradually destroys her as her illness is aggravated through isolation and confinement. Jane is sensitive to sounds made by the helpless Bertha, because her confinement reminds Jane of her own childhood nightmare. Jane fears imprisonment and its association with the violent, tyrannical Mrs. Reed. Fear of oppression is expressed in her gloomy surrealistic paintings of a head struggling while swallowed by billows. Confusion towards Thornfield colours Jane's experiences. During this part of her life the young governess accepts her subordinate status in a space of confinement that is frightening. Nevertheless, Jane strives to ignore the existence of Bertha so as to repress the memories of her own childhood imprisonment.

Ignoring the miserable Bertha, Jane identifies Rochester as an ideal lover who could compensate for her loss of protective parents. Kathleen Vejvoda in "Idolatry in *Jane Eyre*" notes the relationship of Jane and Rochester is one based on idolatry:

> Early in her relationship with Rochester, she must erect a barrier of Protestant resistance to counter his idolatrous beliefs. The stark difference between Jane's and Rochester's idolatry is that her struggle against her impulses structures the entire narrative, whereas he doesn't even try to resist his. (247-248)

Rochester's past marriage to Bertha Mason is a "consequence of material idolatry" (Vejvoda 245): he marries Bertha for money and out of sexual desire. Now he seduces Jane by showing her pearls and his magnetic character as he intends to trap Jane in the world of material idolatry, much as he believes he has been seduced by Bertha. Moreover, Rochester shows his admiration of Jane to strengthen her fantasy about Thornfield. Courting Jane, Rochester shows his love by submitting to her. He likens his situation to a state of being bewitched in the fairy-tale atmosphere, encountering a wood-sprite with witchery charm. "You please me, and you master me—you seem to submit, and I like the sense of pliancy you impart....I am influenced—conquered; and the influence is sweeter than I can express; and the conquest I undergo has a witchery beyond any triumph I can win" (Brontë 222). The charismatic Rochester evokes Jane's admiration and more fantasy for her. Here, Rochester's words of fondness bring to mind her relationship with her doll—"an object of desire"—that she clung to as a child, thinking it her only friend

at Gateshead. Accepting Rochester's fondness, Jane identifies herself as the doll, capable of sensation and willing to befriend a lonely person.

Jane's fear of self disintegration, however, compels her to depart Thornfield. Critics tend to explain Jane's departure from Rochester/Thornfield as her refusal to be an immoral mistress or her refusal to abandon religion, but her departure is also prompted by her fear of being confined like Bertha, who exists in her dream—and in her unconscious—as her alter-ego. The experience of this helpless, imprisoned alter-ego parallels Jane's nightmare in the red room. As she listens to Rochester's account of Bertha, Jane turns down the possibility of staying at Thornfield. She begins to fear her situation as Rochester offers his hope that she could accept his proposal of a bigamous marriage. "Your mind is my treasure, and if it were broken, it would be my treasure still...I should receive you in an embrace at least as fond as it would be restrictive," Rochester says to Jane (Brontë 257). He strengthens his bond with her, claiming, "*You* are to share my solitude" (257); "if you won't, I'll try violence" (258). From Rochester, such violence suggests another dungeon and a sadomasochistic relationship. Although referring to a lover as a treasure is his way of expressing fondness for her, Jane finds his terms unacceptable. Rochester's words evoke her anxiety: Jane fears she will become another Bertha, imprisoned and isolated as she was at Gateshead. She realizes that Rochester confines himself in a world of madness, on the verge of death, rather than a world of life.[3] As Yeazell observes in "More True Than Real: Jane Eyre's 'Mysterious Summons,'" Thornfield is not Eden:

> The Fall has already taken place, and the lovers' "paradise of union" (II. viii.321) is an illusion. The reiterated references to *Paradise Lost* (most of which cluster around Jane's relationship to Rochester) keep constantly before us the fact that the lovers inhabit a post-lapsarian world. Rochester speaks like an Adam whose Eve is still attached by some divine umbilical cord to the rib cage from which she emerged. (132-133)

Though Jane fantasizes about Rochester's idolatrous love, she knows it will lead her to annihilation. Her fear of being drawn further towards the world that Bertha inhabits is expressed in her cynical attitude towards Rochester's offer of jewels and luxurious clothes: she finds Rochester's love for her assuming "the appearance of a despotic sultan" for "his pampered slave" (Yeazell 134). As Rochester playfully talks of Turkish harems, Jane becomes further repelled by his fondness. His words trigger her memories of phobia and trauma in the red room, her inferior status in the Reed family, and the deprivation of her autonomous selfhood. When Jane learns of the secret bond between Rochester and Bertha on the day of her wedding, she escapes Thornfield; she escapes "that chaotic disintegration of the self" (Yeazell 135). Her departure ends her fantasy of having a safe home, and she again assumes the identity of an orphan. "Who in the world cares for *you*? or who will be injured by what you do?" (Brontë 270) her inner voice says, telling her that she is without kinship. To survive her isolation, Jane resorts to the evangelical communion with God that Helen taught her at Lowood. She thinks, "I will keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man" (270). Jane resorts to Christianity not because she agrees with the discipline she endured at Lowood school, but because she needs an excuse to refuse Rochester.

3. Thornfield is a world of madness, as its inhabitants cannot step outside its imprisonment. Rochester doesn't send Bertha away to a sanatorium, but keeps her in his dungeon "under watch and ward" (Brontë 249), though she now and then threatens his life as a phantom. Rochester assumes an unfavorable position when confronting the stout Bertha. "He could have settled her with a well-planted blow; but he would not strike: he would only wrestle" (250) because of his recognition of Bertha as his wife—"*That* is my wife"—who was attractive to him in his younger age (251). He never retaliates; he even sacrifices one arm and his eyes for rescuing Bertha from her arson. As for Jane's departure, he "grew savage" (364), deliberately torturing himself in drink and deep disappointment. Looking for the runaway bride like a madman, "he walked just like a ghost about the grounds and in the orchard as if he had lost his senses" (364).

During the night of her parting interview with Rochester, Jane dreams of the "Great Mother of the night sky" (Rich 479). This dream gives her courage to "flee temptation" (Brontë 272). This experience is significant, because Jane "is in touch with the matriarchal aspect of her psyche which now warns and protects her against that which threatens her integrity" (Rich 479). The "Great Mother" is one of the images of "a nurturing or principled or spirited woman on whom [Jane] can model herself, or to whom she can look for support" (Rich 470). Like the other women in the novel who function as guides or helpers, the "Great Mother" appears when Jane fears disintegration of selfhood. This appearance of the "Great Mother" also suggests that Jane is modeling another parent-child relationship, and this helpful parent is not a father but a mother.

This dream of "Great Mother" signals Jane's wish not to be deprived of love. When Jane leaves Thornfield, she finds herself again an orphan without protection. Confronting the convergence of the two worlds—the real world of hunger and poverty and the spiritual world of the "Great Mother,"—she considers dying. A death wish occupying her mind, Jane returns to her childhood, obsessed with the drama that took place in the red room at Gateshead. Just as she once wished to die to escape from repression and acquire a protective parent, Jane, wandering in the wilderness, turns her thoughts to suicide. "That childhood vow" resumes (Yeazell 137); Jane's childhood death wish whispers, "[I]f that could not be effected, never eating or drinking more, and letting myself die" (Brontë 12). However, on the verge of death, another voice tells her that she cannot "reconcile [herself] to the prospect of death" (281). At that moment, her survival instinct urges her to look for life and love in a social community. She prays to God, "Oh, Providence! sustain me a little longer!" (281). Jane is rescued by Diana and Mary, who aptly "bear the names of the pagan and Christian aspects of the Great Goddess—Diana or Artemis, the Virgin huntress, and Mary the Virgin Mother" (Rich 480). As her death wish subsides, Jane turns to an evangelical religious community in which mothering figures offer alternatives to the "Great Mother," rendering life, not death.

Moor House

Jane finds a tranquil circumscribed space in the evangelical community of St. John and his two sisters, Diana and Mary, at Moor House. This happy world is destroyed when St. John proposes a loveless marriage to her. Griesinger notices despotism in St. John's proposal:

> Jane's encounter with St. John draws attention to the potential abuse of spiritual authority. "God and nature intended you for a missionary's wife… [Y]ou are formed for labour, not for love. A missionary's wife you must—shall be. You shall be mine: I claim you—not for my pleasure, but for my Sovereign's service" (*JE* 501). Thus are the perverse (Jane later calls them "monstrous") terms of St. John's loveless marriage proposal. The conversation that follows marks the moment of Jane's second greatest temptation…Here the temptation is similar, to surrender her own identity and allow a man, St. John Rivers, to control her access to God or to speak to her for God. This too is idolatry. (Griesinger 51)

St. John is an evangelical Christian—like "the real-life missionary Henry Martyn, who was an 'evangelical icon' among Victorians" (Griesinger 50). Imposing his will on Jane's life in the name of God, he threatens Jane's "development of an autonomous spiritual 'self'" (51). The purpose of St. John's life is to serve God as a perpetual missionary

and commit self-immolation to attain religious martyrdom. In contrast, Jane is no martyr. If she had consented to St. John's wishes and agreed to living a missionary's life in a loveless marriage, she would have had to accept the subordinate status of a wife divinely ordained by her husband. If she had allowed St. John to impose his will upon hers, she would not have been able to "experience God directly, 'through the heart'" (53). She would have become like most evangelical women in Victorian society, obeying her husband when her own wishes conflicted with his desires. It is not surpring that St. John's proposal evokes her fear of being confined and imprisoned as she was in the red room at Gateshead. St. John is not at all like the doll that Jane loved and cherished in her childhood. Alert to her own voice which speaks against St. John's lethal proposition and aware of the deprivation of selfhood that lies in a loveless marriage, she rejects him and leaves Moor House.

The Garden at Ferndean

Jane never ceases seeking refuge, but is unable to settle down because of her fear of losing her autonomous selfhood. Although she loves Rochester, she fears his power sanctioned by his social class. To return to Rochester as a bigamist, she persuades herself that the situation at Thornfield has changed. Her faith in God and an unexpected elevation of her social status also embolden her. First, Jane rationalizes her return to Rochester as divine ordainment at the moment of spiritual crisis:

> I still again and again met Mr. Rochester, always at some exciting crisis; and then the sense of being in his arms, hearing his voice, meeting his eye, touching his hand and cheek, loving him, being loved by him—the hope of passing a lifetime at his side, would be renewed, with all its first force and fire. (Brontë 312)

The voice of Rochester Jane hears comes from "the divine powers or from the depths of her own psyche" (Yeazell 140). Jane can hear "the mysterious summons" of her lover, since she persuades herself to re-hold faith in direct communion with God by heart. As Locy comments, "her flight back to Rochester is an assertion of her own definition of herself" (117). What she asserts is a reunion with Rochester. Second, Jane rids herself of the fear of being Rochester's "pampered slave," because she acquires an unanticipated inheritance from a deceased uncle that makes her financially independent.

The nature of Bertha's death also encourages Jane to construct a home with Rochester. According to Rochester's butler, Bertha

> was a big woman, and had long black hair: we could see it streaming against the flames as she stood. I witnessed, and several more witnessed Mr. Rochester ascend through the skylight on to the roof: we heard him call "Bertha!" We saw him approach her; and then, ma'am, she yelled, and gave a spring, and the next minute she lay smashed on the pavement. (Brontë 365)

The butler's eye-witness report of Bertha's death being an accident is of paramount importance to Jane. Because Bertha is Jane's alter-ego, her death signifies the end of the trauma that Jane, as an abused child, suffered in the red room. When Bertha jumps from the flaming roof, her end expresses the helplessness of all victims confined in a circumscribed space. Her death parallels Helen's self-immolation: both are caused by the cruelty of confinement. While Helen does not protest against her imprisonment, Bertha

reacts violently to her entrapment. Bertha's death reminds her reader that contemporary Victorian women also suffered from mental stress and could not receive appropriate healthcare. In Jane's eyes, Bertha's death stands for the emancipation/release of the self, if indeed death is the end of all suffering. Jane desires to be reborn, unchained, and unconfined, as the alter-ego she associates with her traumatic memories is unfettered and set free. Jane is finally able to bury the memory of her childhood nightmare when Bertha dies.

As Yeazell notices, Rochester's sad voice that Jane hears when she is far away from him and Berta's firey death signal the "psychological phenomenon" of the psyche longing for love and life:

> [f]or Bertha's death and Rochester's maiming are not simply convenient twists of plot—they themselves, in this intensely autobiographical work, become metaphors for the transformation within Jane. The madness which she fought has at last been destroyed; the passion whose consuming force she resisted has finally been controlled. (Yeazell 142)

Another element that encourages Jane to construct a home with Rochester is the maiming of Rochester. As Jane returns to Thornfield, she hears that

> [h]e was taken out from under the ruins, alive, but sadly hurt…one eye was knocked out, and one hand so crushed that Mr. Carter, the surgeon, had to amputate it directly. The other eye inflamed: he lost the sight of that also. He is now helpless, indeed—blind and a cripple. (Brontë 365)

Rochester's miserable situation evokes so much worry in him that he urges Jane to meet with him. Because Jane desires to take care of Rochester, his maiming is subtly connected with her doll, that "faded graven image" (Brontë 23) she loved. She desires to take care of Rochester. Crippled and blind, he is like a child Jane cherishes and loves, and like a doll needs to be kept in a world of "shelter from cold and darkness" (Brontë 23).

Jane sets up her happiness in the garden of Ferndean, enabling a fusion of love, life, and Christian bliss. She says,

> I hold myself supremely blest—blest beyond what language can express; because I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine. No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am; ever more absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. (Brontë 384)

Jane's happiness represents the combination of the psyche's desire for rehabilitation via the power of evangelical bliss in a peaceful world of seclusion. Clay Daniel remarks that Jane is a new Eve and the power of life-transformation depends on her Evangelical Christian faith: Jane "nourishes rather than destroys Eden," and "Bertha's Thornfield has been supplanted by Jane's paradise" (107). That dark, gloomy red room of Jane's memory eventually fades away as she re-locates to a composed and tranquil circumscribed space. Here it must be noted that Jane's assumption that there will be a happy life in the garden of Ferndean is psychological, rather than real. Jane constructs this world for herself, because she loves Rochester.

Conclusion

Some critics argue that Jane fails to acquire autonomous spiritual power, though she has strived for it. Maria Lamonaca in "Jane's Crown of Thorns: Feminism and Christianity

in *Jane Eyre*" questions Jane's autonomy at the end of the novel: "Jane, by taking on the role of divine intermediary for Rochester, ironically renounces spiritual autonomy for a reciprocal dependence" (Lamonaca 257). It might be "human idolatry" (257) that makes Jane fail to free herself from "the rhetoric of Victorian domesticity" (258)—to be a "good household angel" (258). In "Idolatry in *Jane Eyre*," Kathleen Vejvoda also sees the new life of Ferndean as an extension of Thornfield, where the culture of idolatry exists between Jane and Rochester. Whether the happiness that Jane seeks is sanctioned by the culture of idolatry in Catholic Christianity[4] or ordained by Evangelical Christianity, Jane is still constrained in the Victorian world sanctioned by social class hierarchy. Brontë's heroine in *Jane Eyre* cannot reverse her destiny, because she will always be the orphan forsaken at Gateshead. Though an unanticipated inheritance improves her finances, it does not render her social status equal to Rochester's. Nonetheless, Jane escapes humiliation and deprivation, because she experiences injustice and cruelty in the red room of her childhood and sees Bertha's incarceration in Thornfield. She rejects St. John's proposal of marriage because his Christian community urges women to accept their subordinate status as divinely ordained. She refuses a life of integration into any social community or family that would deprive her of autonomy. Yet she remains entrapped, because she cannot live without Rochester's love. Aptly, theirs is a codependent relationship. Rochester in his helpless situation is her "childhood doll" that she "contrive[s] to find a pleasure in loving and cherishing" (Brontë 23). Their mutual dependence explains why she hears his call when they are apart. Reuniting with her soulmate, Jane creates a new Eden (an afterlife of Thornfield) and attempts to simulate her ideal of paradise—a tranquil circumscribed space in reclusion—at Ferndean. Ironically, she remains trapped. Her alpha becomes her omega as she ends her story as a member of the social class to which she was forced to succumb at Gateshead.

4. According to Vejvoda, *Jane Eyre* shows "the cultural anxieties about the perceived vulnerability of Protestant Englishwomen to Roman Catholicism and idolatry" (Vejvoda 257).

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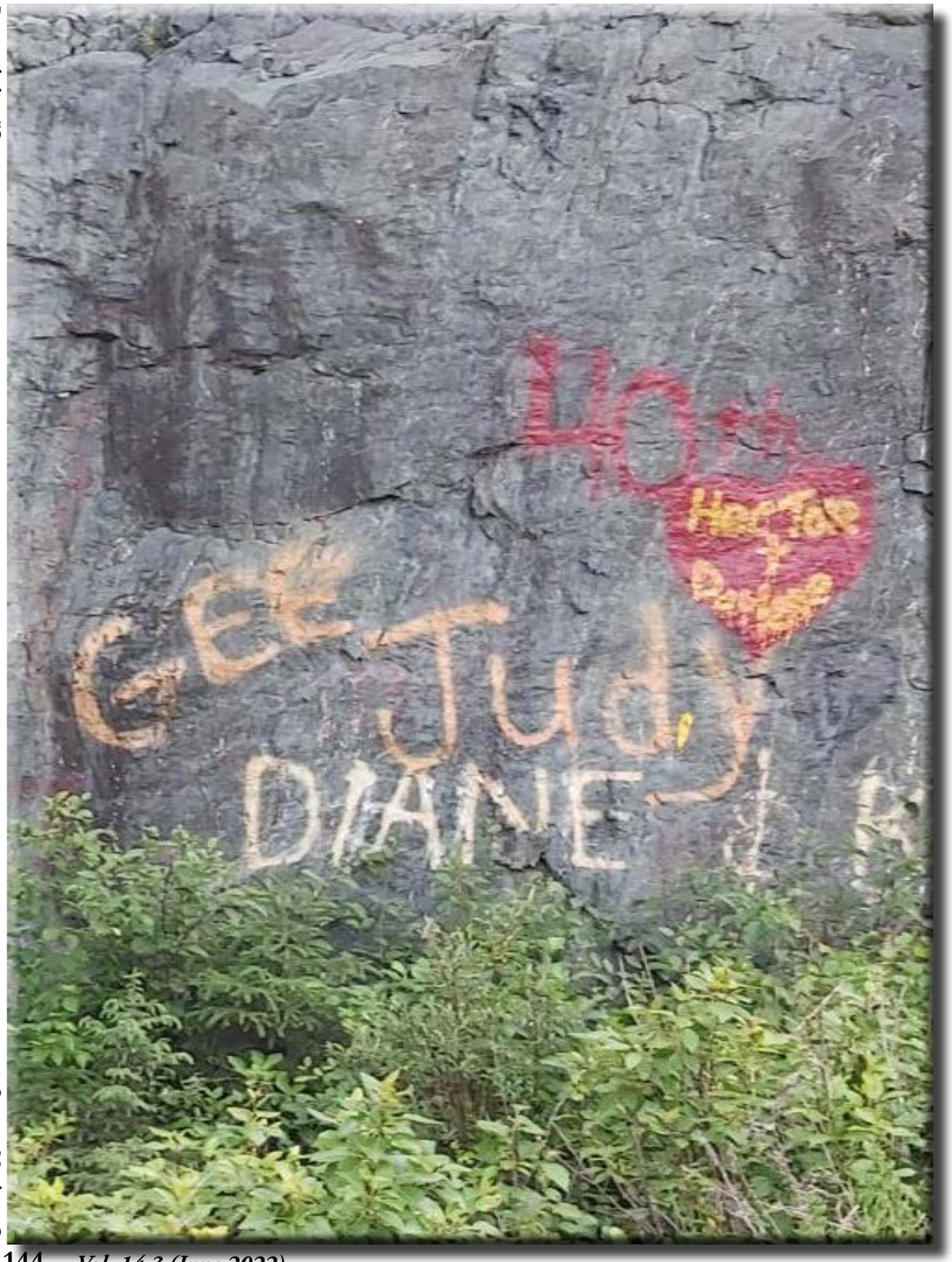

Precambrian #8

Stuart Matheso8

The Vanishing Line: separating 'discipline' from 'anti-discipline' in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

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Abstract

This paper demonstrates how William Golding's novel, *Lord of the Flies* (1954) blurs the boundary between 'discipline' and 'anti-discipline' until the line separating these notions becomes hardly detectable. Although the group of English schoolboys' predisposition to anti-discipline underpins this novel's dystopia, discipline is delicately interspersed in the internal texture of their impulses. Providing a parodic version of 'discipline' and introducing the Derridean notion of 'contamination,' the boys' undisciplined acts, carefully planned and sucessfully implemented, prove to be elements of an opposite pair. Each is contaminated by the other, resulting in the eventual corrosion of any difference between 'discipline' and 'anti-discipline.'

Keywords: (anti)discipline, binarism, contamination, deconstruction, metaphysics,

parody.

Introduction

William Golding's witnessing of the atrocity of the Second World War must have contributed considerably in galvanizing the gloomy vision he held about human beings within whom the potential for evil entertains a high presence. The itinerary of his writings reflects, to a great extent, the apocalyptic tendency in post-war literature and the literary movement known as Naturalism. Naturalism concentrates "on depicting the social environment and dwelt particularly on its deficiencies and on the shortcomings of human beings. The 'naturalist's' vision of the state of man tended to be subjective and was very often sombre" (Cuddon 479). Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954) translates these 'deficiencies' and 'shortcomings' that 'somberly' plague 'human beings' from childhood, subverting the long-standing influence of the slogan of 'the inner nobility of man' propagated by such philosophers and Romantic poets as Rousseau and Wordsworth. In *Lord of the Flies,* a group of English schoolboys crashland on an unpopulated tropical island. Marooned, they find themselves obliged to manage their own lives and sustenance away from any parental or institutional constraints. Golding's naturalism focuses on the nascent antagonism that exists among these schoolboys and its rapid development into an almost inexplicable enmity that keeps rising in proportion, culminating, eventually, in separation and even murder. All the while, the boys' school uniform, an external icon of self restraint, is denuded of its conventional associations with the sets of discipline the boys learnt at school. Their acts of anti-discipline, then, are often read by critics allegorically as examples of "the innate savage nature of human beings" (Frank 4).

Approach and Analysis

I. Derridian Deconstruction

As a common rule, adopting Derridian deconstruction presupposes that "a text can be read as saying something quite different from what it appears to be saying, and that it may read as carrying a plurality of significance or as saying many different things which are fundamentally at variance with, contradictory to and subversive of what may be (or may have been) seen by criticism as a single, stable 'meaning'" (Cuddon 206). The challenge of destablizing the text from within so that it no longer carries its conventional significance as a meaningful unit, capable of being properly constructed, transmitted, decoded and deciphered, is an integral part of the most influential break Derrida made in the 1960s with the 'one-to-one correspondence' between the signifier and the signified of De Saussure's structuralism. In short, Derridean deconstruction ousts regimental correspondence and replaces it with an openness to diversification. As J. A. Cuddon affirms, "deconstruction, so far, has been the most influential feature of poststructuralism because it defines a new kind of reading practice which is a key application of postructuralism" (206).

With this 'new kind of reading practice,' *Lord of the Flies* becomes an open vista for an array of possible meanings, not just one, since the same signifier can engender a whole set of signifieds. In her introductory notes to Derrida's book *Dissemination*, Barbara Johnson draws the critical impulse of the whole project of the Derridean deconstruction to the Western Metaphysical Thought in its congregate. For Johnson, deconstruction, as an approach, serves "to elaborate a critique of Western metaphysics, by which Derrida means not only Western philosophical tradition but everyday thought and language as well" (viii). Such exhaustive criticism questions the 'metaphysics' of 'thought' and 'language' which "has always been structured in terms of dichotomies or polarities: good

vs evil, being vs nothingness, presence vs absence, truth vs error etc" (viii).

Derrida remarks on the difficulty of criticizing this metaphysics of binarism. One may try to reverse the scale in favor of "the second term in each pair which is considered the negative, corrupt undesirable version of the first, a fall away from the first" (viii). For Derrida, this reversal results just in decentralizing the centered pole, while centralizing the decentered one, preserving the mechanism of the metaphysics of binarism intact, though in inverted terms. As Derrida notices, "to remain consent with reversal is of course to operate within the immanence of the system to be destroyed" (*Dissemination* 6). Committing himself to 'destroy' the so-made metaphysical boundaries of binarism, Derrida proposes that "[t]he metaphysical is a certain determination or direction taken by a sequence or chain. It cannot as such be opposed by a concept but rather by a process of textual labor and a different sort of articulation" (6). It is precisely this 'process of textual labor and a different sort of articulation' that orients Derrida's deconstruction beyond the mere reversal of the endless set of binarism delineating the texture of its metaphysics. At first, Derrida works to highlight the implication of the whole system of our everyday communication in itself in prior citations, foregrounding the metaphysically determined fact of its unoriginality. For Derrida, all that the text can say is already 'contaminated' by a whole scale of differientiation by which it is made subject to an established set of polarities. The constructed nature of this set acquires its metaphysical determinism from factors outside the scope of the text itself which, subsequently, invade the internal space of it, while appearing to generate a text typical to itself. In Derrida's own words:

> Since everything begins in the folds of citation, the inside of the text will always have been outside it, in what seems to be serving as the 'means' towards the 'work.' This reciprocal contamination of the work and the means 'poisons' the inside, the body proper of what was once called the 'work,' just as it poisons the texts which are cited to appear and which one would have liked to keep safe from this violent expatriation, this uprooting abstraction that wrenches them out of the security of their original context. (*Dissemination* 316)

The ever-overlapping of 'the inside of the text' with the mazes of the indefiniteness of what is 'outside' of it causes the text to become a palimpsest of several layers, with each layer hiding that which is beneath it. Thus, only the façade of the text is transmitted and tends to be mistakenly deemed as capable of leading its reader to a full apprehension of it as being authoritatively independent in terms of constructing its own particular meanings. To counteract this fallacy, Derrida deems it necessary to liberate the whole system of language from contaminating intruders besieging the text from outside. Derrida states it outright that this "is less a question of outlining than of protecting and even of restoring the internal system of language in the purity of its concept against the gravest, most perfidious, most permanent contamination which has not ceased to menace, even to corrupt that system" (*Of Grammatology* 100 – 01). This 'protective' urge is conducive to reconsider and revise the whole metaphysics of language, including that of binarism which constructs contrasts between opposite pairs.

To move beyond the metaphysics of binarism and, hence, the metaphysics of opposition, the conventional norms which set boundaries between opposite pairs have to be demolished. This first step is a matter which Derrida's deconstruction works to achieve by reconceptualizing "the subject as an 'assemblage' of texts / agencies with no

principled boundary" (Roden 99).

Derrida also makes use of the disruptive, 'poisonous' effect of 'contamination' to the inside of the text by innumerable metaphysical facts outside it. Derrida observes in "The Law of Genre" that

> [t]he line or trait that seemed to separate the two bodies of interpretation is affected straight away by an essential disruption that I shall let you to name or qualify in any way you care to: an internal division of the trait, impurity, corruption, contamination, decomposition, perversion, deformation, even cancerization, generous proliferation or degenerescence. All these disruptive 'anomalies' are engendered – and this is their common law, the lot or site they share – by repetition." (*Critical Inquiry on Narration* 57 – 8)

Being affected by contamination, the 'line,' or 'trait,' separating opposites is in itself contaminated, with all that this entails by it being 'impurified,' 'corrupted,' 'decomposed,' 'perverted,' 'deformed' and 'even cancerized.' Ironically, the entrenched pattern of 'repetition' that this sort of contamination 'engenders' acquires the same pernicious mataphysical determinism mapping out the perpetual internal invasion of the text by outside facts. As a result, being inflicted by such a metaphysical determinism of contamination, the line separting opposites, like the text, is equally invaded from within so that it no longer possesses its conventional prerogatives that allow it to taxonomize and set boundaries. Thus, the metaphysics of binarism is ultimately deconstructed, given the corrosion brought to the structure of the demarcation line between polarities. With contamination invading the immunity of that line, sheer chaos is manifested in the loss of parameters for measuring truths: "the chain of internal purity will somehow be questionable, for in stating that the inside must be pure from the outside, one already espouses a solipsism of some sort. The contamination of the center is always inevitable or, in other words, it is always already occurring" (Pada 41).

As he assumes the 'inevitability' of contamination of any 'center' whatsoever, Derrida goes a step furhter as to reread the demarcation line separating opposites in light of its vanishing because of its contamination. In this rereading, Derrida opts for the term 'trace' as a substitutable alternate for the designation of 'line.' In his essay "Différance," Derrida observes that

> [t]he trace is not a presence but is rather the similacrum of a presence that dislocates, displaces, and refers beyond itself. The trace has, properly speaking, no place, for effacement belongs to the very structure of the trace. Effacment must always be able to overtake the trace. In this way the metaphysical text is understood; it is still readable, and remains to be read. It proposes both the monument and the mirage of the trace, the trace as simultaneously traced and effaced; simultaneously alive and dead, alive as always to simulate even life in its preserved inscription; it is a pyramid. (298)

It is true that the relegation of the 'line' to a mere 'trace' makes it prone to 'effacement.' Nevertheless, the 'similacrum of presence,' which the 'trace' induces, is, depite its implied falsity, the locus of ever-spaciousness, for it lets the text be 'still readable and remains to be read,' entrenching it in a context of 'always to simulate even life in its preserved inscription.' Certainly, it is this 'preserved inscription' that functions as the main tool

which Derrida uses to undo the metapysics of binarism, for none of the opposite pairs is now immune from being a mere 'similacrum of presence' or deprived of the boon of 'preserved inscription' after its 'effacement.'

II. Derridean Deconstruction in *Lord of the Flies*

The group of English schoolboys, who find themesleves strandedon an unpopulated island, fall soon intowhat appear to be opposite polarities, manifested in their interests, tendencies, ways of life and even jargon. As these binaries regulate the novel's plot, the conflict between discipline and anti-discipline is embodied by Ralph and Jack, the two leaders who compete with each other over chieftainship. Initially, Ralph gives the impression of valuing discipline. His affinity for regulation is exhibited, for example, in his explicit references to their school's discipline. While trying to explain to the whole group of boys the critical situation they are all in, Ralph adds, "We can't have everybody talking at once. We 'll have to have 'Hands up' like at school" (33). He reiterates the necessity to abide by certain rules. He even says, "We ought to have more rules" (42). Ralph also argues for order by foregrounding the boys' need to know when their shifts begin and end: "We could have a sundial each. Then we should know what time it is" (65).

On the other hand, Jack's zest for acts of anti-discipline is revealed in his nascent revolt against any rule that Ralph sets. He dares to defy Jack, using perjorative terms like "bollocks to the rules" (91). In the words of Soofia Khan, "Jack does what he can do to disrupt the ordered world of Ralph. He continually questions his decrees" (72). His challenges to Ralph's 'decrees' evidence his outright belittling of the significance of the rules the latter sets. Rudely, he addresses Ralph, asking, "Who are you, anyway? Sitting there telling people what to do" (91). Jack, also never reveres the fact that Ralph has been chosen as a chief among the group of boys itself. Defiantly, he wonders: "why should choosing make any difference'?' (91). Then, as the narrative proceeds, we see how the desire to wrest chieftainship from the hands of Ralph motivates Jack:: he comes to say frankly, "I am going to be chief" (133). The transformation of Jack's insubordination into a desire 'to be chief' may have led Erin M. Frank to observe that "Ralph and Jack represent two classes of leadership – democracy and dictatorship" (11), and draw attention to the polarity delineating their characterization.

However, the line separating Ralph and Jack from one another is contaminated to such an extent that their apparent polarity is minimized by these characters' overlapping values and finally rendered hardly detectable. Indeed, it becomes unfair to rigidly taxonomize Ralph being mapped out solely by his affinity with discipline and Jack by its absence. Ralph is not immune from the alluring, contaminating aspects of Jack's revolt against the school-like discipline that he works so hard to install. When setting a fire in order to be rescued and, by extension, to curb the potential for anti-discipline on the island, Ralph succumbs to Jack 's tendency to act without restraint. He also shares Jack's sadistic lust for hunting and killing animals: "Ralph too was fighting to get near, to get a handful of that brown, vulnearble flesh. The desire to squeeze and hurt was over-mastering" (114 – 15).

The difference between Ralph and Jack is reduced to the ways in which their deep-seated savagery runs counter to the discipline they experienced in school. Right from their first expedition on the island, Ralph and Jack share the same happiness on discovering that the island is unpopulated and that they own everything in it. "Ralph

spread[s] his arms" and says, "All ours," while he and Jack "[laugh] and [tumble] and [shout] on the mountain" (30). All the rules that Ralph then works to put in place do not spring from a staunch loyalty to discipline. They are regulated to a considerable degree by his competing with Jack in every respect, not just his arguing over chieftainship and proving who was more skilled in the hunting and killing of animals.

D. David Wilson holds that "the whole novel is intended to state in a way that man is a fallen creature" (181). Ralph's 'fall' is certainly linked to his own disorderly impulses while allying himself with the authority afforded by regulation. Jack's 'fall,' on the other hand, is made starkly clear from the beginning by his utter refusal to respect order and regulation – a fact which he does not seem to have any scruples to conceal. Thus, the tension regulating the plot of the novel is derived from these two leaders who share the same negative impulses and predispositions, but in one these impulses and predispositions are made explicit, in the other, they are not. The explicitness of anti-discipline makes Jack ineligible for chieftainship. This is made crystal clear from the first chapter when he says, "I ought to be chief" (22). His dislike of order leads him to turn a deaf ear to all the rules that his adversary, Ralph, makes, and he never hesitates to disrupt the order that the latter works to implement. Jack neither raises his hands whenever he needs to say something, nor does he find himself obliged to listen to his adversary's diatribes. For example, we see him "scowling in the gloom, and holds out his hands" while Ralph is speaking before he retorts to the latter's assertion, "I haven't finished yet" by saying "but you have talked and talked" (81). Jack's explicit exhibition of anti-discipline is also manifested in his refusing to wait until having the conch to speak. An icon that sustains the rules that the boys observed at school, the conch "provides the boys with temporary authority and order. It summons everyone for a group meeting"

(Frank 8). In one instance, "Jack was the first to make himself heard. He had not got the conch and, thus, spoke against the rules." (87).

Ironically, rather than enhancing agreement among the group when meeting, the ability of the conch to collect the boys generates sheer chaos. Jack and Ralph's conflict over chieftainship makes the platform "full of noise and excitement" (91). Jack's explicit exposition of his stance leads him to rebuff the conch outright: "'Conch! Conch!' shouted he, 'We don't need the conch'" (101 – 02). As he decides to lead his own way of life far from the disciplined one that Ralph imposes, Jack distances himself further from the conch. Addressing his adversary, Jack affirms: "the conch doesn't count at this end of the island" (150). It is 'at this end of the island' that Jack succeeds in convincing all the schoolboys, except Piggy, to move away from Ralph and the order that the latter attempted to found. Ralph also comes to acknowledge the absurdity of the conch's authority. The measure of this absurdity is evident in the following scene:

> "What we are going to do?"
>
> Piggy nodded at the conch.
>
> "You could –"
>
> "Call an assembly?"
>
> Ralph laughed sharply as he said the word and Piggy frowned. (156)

Ralph's laughter overturns the conch's authority. Finally, the physical presence of the conch, like Piggy's own existence, is no longer needed. At the end of the novel, the conch is destroyed as the boys kill Piggy – the only schoolboy who has kept his faith in

the the conch's ability to impose order. As all the schoolboys are caught up in a moment of "delirious abandonment," Piggy's life and the conch's existence both end brutally.

> The rock struck Piggy a glancing blow from chin to knee; the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments and ceased to exist. Piggy, saying nothing, with no time for even a grunt … His head opened and a stuff came out and turned red. Piggy's arms and legs twitched a bit, like a pig's after it has been killed. (181)

This equating of the murder of Piggy with the slaughter of a pig highlights the belligerent zeal inhabiting the schoolboys which has grown to such an extent that they are unable to distinguish between animals and humans. Their frenetic zeal to hunt and kill animals on the island has developed savagery into its own discipline that is worshipped and blindly followed, a parody of Ralph's discipline deemed at first desirable on the island.

Ironically, before being slaughtered, even Piggy participated in the 'blind' path of savagery, sharing his peers' frenzy while killing Simon – one schoolboy who tended to retreat by himself. Piggy was among them when "there were no words, and no movements but the tearing of teeth and claws" (153). Piggy tries, subsequently, to exonerate himself from blame under the pretext that Simon was mistaken as being an animal, given the amount of darkness surrounding his lair. Discussing the matter with Ralph, Piggy also misrepresents the incident as "an accident"; he suddenly says, " '[T]hat's what it was. An accident.' His voice shrill[s] again. 'Coming in the dark – he hadn't no business crawling like that out of the dark'" (156). Piggy's tragedy can be attributed to his insistence on speaking for the mere reason that he holds the conch, while his friends are caught up in their rapturuous celebration of hunting. He keeps saying, "Which is better – to have rules and agree, or to hunt and kill" (180) ? Inevitably, 'to hunt and kill' is preferrable for the boys, for it has taken the place of Jack's tenets. Ironically, with its own 'rules,' savagery entertains 'agreement' among them. During the first meeting in which Ralph informs his peers that they are in an unpopulated island, we see how "Jack broke in" and said "all the same you need an army – for hunting pigs" (32). Then, he adds "We'll have rules! Lots of rules" (33)! Equally, he states the rationale behind these rules: "We are going to hunt pigs to get a meal for everybody" (36). This search for a 'meal for everybody' includes in its orbit sadism against their prey which subsumes not only pigs but also humans (Simon and Piggy). Their amalgamation of cruelty with order parodically inscribes a fallen version of Ralph's governance that was first implemented. Hence, "the island itself reflects the Garden of Eden in its status as an originally pristine place that is corrupted by the introduction of evil" (Wilson 179).

Embedded in the discipline that the schoolboys employ while hunting, this evil is demonstrated in their chanting and rehearsals of killing pigs. In one instance, they rythmically reiterate, "Kill the pig. Cut her throat. Bash her in" (75). Even Ralph succumbs to this passion while enacting his success in hunting and killing a boar. He keeps repeating "I hit him all right. The spear stuck in. I wounded him'!' (113).Ralph ultimately falls into the same belligerence as Jack and his choir. He "sun[s] himself in their new respect and fe[els] that hunting [is]good after all" (113). Ralph ends up being just a mere copy of Jack and his choir, contaminated by their desire to hunt and kill. He silences Piggy's scruples, saying, "[W]e 've had our meat" (151), signalling his deep satisfaction with the bacchanalian party.

When Ralph is contaminated by the intoxicating festivities, there remains

only the trace of his care for implementing order on the island. Ralph's insistence that discipline is necessary and desirable gradually degenrates into an artificial and awkward discourse designed to perpetuate his power. Celebrating the hunt, he hastens to remind Jack and his choir, "I am chief because you chose me. And we were going to keep the fire. Now you run after food. " Jack's retort, reminds Ralph that he is also a savage, removed from regulating ethics. "'You run yourself" shout[s] Jack. "Look at the bone in your hands!" to which "Ralph [goes] crimson" (150). The 'bone' which Ralph holds in his hands has replaced (and contaminated) the authority of the conch. Discerning his own degeneration into anti-discipline, Ralph can only "weep for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy" (202). He finds himself unable to restore order as he intended.

Results and Discussion

At the end of the novel, the schoolboys are evacuated from the island by a naval officer. This evacuation reminds readers how disorderly the schoolboys' lives became as the line separating acts of discipline from anti-discipline vanished until only the trace of discipline remained and then was reduced even more to being mere rhetoric. Jack – who openly challenges any sort of regulation – remarks that it is the discipline they learned at school that makes the boys who they are. He says, "We 've got to have rules and obey them. After all, we are not savages. We are English, and the English are best at everything. So, we 've to do the right things" (42). Jack's words, of course, prove to be themselves mere rhetoric, devoid of any applicability, The 'right things' that the boys do while stranded on the island are contaminted by their savage impulses.

Certainly, the degeneration of disciplined behavior into chaotic acts of anti-discipline on the part of these schoolboys is part of the apocalyptic vision Golding works to sustain in the novel. These boys are supposed to be England's hope for a bright future. The discipline behavior they have learned should have found soil to nurture it and grow eveywhere they go. In the words of David Spitz, "Golding chose British schoolboys because they were the stuff of which British gentlemen were made; hence, they were expected that they would know how to conduct themselves" (24). However, the boys' adoption of anti-discipline turns their island into a veritable jungle in which the desire to hunt and kill dominates. After the pitiless killings of Simon and Piggy, Ralph finds himself the prey of his peers. We are told how Jack

> hurled his spear at Ralph. The point tore the skin and flesh over Ralph's ribs, then sheared off and fell in the water. Ralph stumbled, feeling not pain but panic, and the tribe, screaming now like the chief, began to advance. Another spear, a bent one that would not fly straight, went past his face and one fell from on high... Ralph turned and ran … Then he was crashing through the foliage and small boughs and was hidden by the forest. (181)

As the schoolboys turn into a 'tribe,' life on the island becomes simply a matter of the survival of the fittest. The period in which Ralph remains hidden from his peers translates their merciless acts into successful predation. While Ralph's hunger is brought to its apex, his mates enjoy a surfeit of food. Hunger expresses Ralph's pathos:: "Ralph, for the first time since the morning [feels] hungry. The tribe must be sitting round the gutted pig, watching the fat ooze and burn among the ashes" (184). This tribe also remains intent on pursuing Ralph and killing him. They resort to "smok[ing] him out

and set the island on fire" (197). The purpose of the fire they set is to locate Ralph, so they can kill him; the fire is not set to bring about their rescue, something for whichRalph has been longing before being cornered by their attack. The tribe's setting the island on fire is also an act of nihilistm, for the island is where the tribe lives. To a certain extent, then, their tribal nihilism matches that experienced during the Second World War, in which Golding took part: in the boys' setting the island on fire, "the author's post-war frustration comes out effectively – he [proves...] that humans will descend to savagery once the restraints of civilization have been removed" (Zen 19).

Ironically, not just Ralph is 'smoked out' by the fire made by the tribe. This fire also 'smokes out' all the schoolboys, because it brings the naval officer to them. Highly disciplined, the officer puts an end to the boys' further contamination by another murder. His arrival saves them from the hazards of anti-discipline and their own whims which have proven to menace their lives. The absurdity of life on the island is rooted within the schoolboys themselves. It is ridiculous when Ralph "loudly" anwsers the naval officer's question "Who 's boss here?" by saying, "I am" (201). He has just been about to die. His assertion of chieftainship reveals how contaminted discipline has become by the tendency towards anti-discipline that also colors the schoolboys' psyches. Defeated by destructive passions, Ralph himself reacts to the reprimand in the naval officer's remark, "I should have thought that a pack of British boys – you 're all British arent't you? – would have been able to put up a better show than that – I mean –"; he poignantly replies: "It was like that at first, before things –" and then stops from completing the idea (202). The difference between 'at first' and 'now,' contextualized in the gradual effacement of discipline, is no enigma for the reader. At best, only a trace of that discipline could be recollected by Ralph, for he is well aware that 'at first' he 'was like that' while eager to implement 'a better show' on the island.

Even the trace of discipline, which Ralph seeks to install 'at first' in the island, is suggested as being prone to effacement altogether. While being evacuated from the island, Ralph finds "the island was scorched up like dead wood" and he is taken by "shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body" (202). The fit of 'grief' that overwhelms Ralph's being also contaminates the other schoolboys, including Jack, who "infected by that emotion, began to shake and sob too" (202). What is dying on the island, being left once and for all, is the opportunity offered to the schoolboys to maintain discipline themselves. The novel, in part, has been "a demonstration under laboratory conditions of the forms assumed by human behaviour once the restraints of civilization have removed" (Zen 19). Having engaged in acts of anti-discipline, the schoolboys are returned to the 'restraints of civilization' with a 'preserved inscription' of their bittersweet, tragic experience. The pathos of their evacuation speaks to their tacit need to unburden themselves of disordered acts. Being contaminated with emotive fervour, their grief, expressed in 'shaking' and 'sobbing,' could be considered a sign of their remorse for their misdeeds and imply that they would have been as disciplined as the officer expected if given another opportunity to stay on the island. As Spitz remarks of human nature,

> [w]hat is perhaps more astonishing is not there is so much evil in the world but there is a measure of good; not that there is so much violence but occasionally a period or a place that know a degree of amity and peace; not there is so much selfishness and greed but, from time to time, a touch of altruism and decency. (33)

The metaphysical implications of the ever-alternating intermittent 'measure of good' with 'so much evil' pertains chiefly to the narrative's universal thrust that introduces individuals being the loci of good versus evil. In the words of Erin M. Frank, "*Lord of the Flies* is one of the most renowned allegorical novels as the author incorporates underlying humanistic meaning in the development of characters and objects, setting and action" (2).

The potential of good versus evil to spring from the same individual may be extended to the way in which the schoolboys, without exception, conform to the discipline taught in their school and revolt against it. Accordingly, the line separating these opposites is always vanishing, being continually contaminated by the mutual interspersion of this opposing pair within the same individual. The English schoolboys gradually become no exception to this rule whose metaphysics negate rigid qualification. Even the island they leave forever is contaminated, being ultimately a mere extension of the world inhabited by grown-ups. The naval officer, who rescues the schoolboys, arrives with "a gun" and a "revolver" and "look[s] at Ralph doubtfully for a moment" before asking him, "Are there any adults – any grown ups with you'?' (201). Because the officer is also capable of being "moved and a little embarrassed" by the grief of the schoolboys at the death of their colleagues (202), the world of grown-ups to which the boys return is itself susceptible to contamination. The officer's embarassment signals that the line that promises to distinguish discipline from anti-discipline will contune to blur and even vanish as the boys themselves become adults.

Conclusion

In *Lord of the Flies*, 'contamination' unsettles the metaphysics of the binary between discipline and anti-discipline as it dissipates these opposites. Highlighted when disciplined behavior fails to differentiate characters, differences between Ralph and Jack prove to be ones of degree rather than kind. Ralph's predisposition to cruelty particularly reveals the weakness of thinking him being different from Jack. All the while, Golding's focus emphasizes the danger of unrestrained behavior on the part of his schoolboys and the humanist impulse that seems to redeem them when they are evacuated from the island. The boys' capacity for evil and good is located in an ongoing process of contamination generated by binary opposites and manifested by the presence and absence of discipline. In it, the English schoolboy belongs to a universal metaphysics in which the individual is the locus of opposite manifestations. With this in mind, it unwise to taxonomize and rigidly qualifiy Goulding's characters according to their conduct. Distinguishing between disciplined actions and and those considered not to be in this novel separates what is actually congregate behavior.

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Innocence sustains its hold over us

Innocence sustains its hold over us
Long after we have lost it, as though
Every day we maintain blind trust
Not fully aware of what's happening
We observe the difference. To know
Perhaps requires distance from the scene
Or is it that we're not fully here. A link
Exists to symbol and Eden's conception
Of one flesh and speech; we feel and think
Scouring nature and the divine, what's done
Is being done at all times and places
In ancient wisdom. You see it in the faces
Of children who first confront the necessity
Of death, that it was not meant to be.
Innocence is not as easily purged as we
Pretend, lost, we retain its traces.

—Jefferson Holdridge

Precambrian #9

Stuart Matheson

Trends of Citation and Referencing in Communication Research Journals in Nigeria: A Citation Analysis

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Abstract

This study used a citation analysis approach design to investigate how referencing was carried out in the articles published in the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* (JCMR), and *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* (TNJC). The two 2009 and two 2011 issues of JCMR, and the two 2019 and two 2020 issues of TNJC, making eight issues, were examined in this study. The 110 articles in the journals formed the population. The total of 3076 citations gleaned from the "References" sections of the journals were consequently analysed. The findings show that the authorship patterns as revealing that 70.43% of the articles were collaboratively written. Also, the hardcopy sources of literature (79.29%) outnumbered the Internet sources (15.86%). Likewise, books (41.4%) and journals (30.7%) were identified as the highest cited sources of literature. It is recommended that researchers collaborate more in publishing because of the enormous advantages involved, that public and school libraries be stocked with both hardcopies and e-books to ease the acquisition of literature for research works, and that government, individuals, and non-governmental organisations establish agencies that fund collaborative research projects to encourage more researchers to embark on solution-driven studies and research.

Keywords: Articles, Analysis, Citation, Journal, References, Research.

Introduction

Though the major focus of university academic arrangements are to teach, research, and render community service, more attention seems to be centred on research since it is a major way the academiy supports development in the society. Feasible research ideas which are expected to be capable of backing and enhancing development in various fields of human endeavour are shared through scholarly communication.This is because the world has changed, and governments are now investing in people in terms of education, health, and empowerment which would enable them to be able to compete in the world (Guanah, 2021). Research and publishing are part and parcel of not only the university system, but tertiary institutions as a whole. Researchers in scholarly communication play the roles of authors or readers as well as the four roles identified by Borgman and Furner (2002), to wit: as *writers*, as *linkers* (e.g. to cite), as *submitters* (chooser of publication channel), and as *collaborators*.

Since no man has the monopoly of knowledge, a researcher needs others to develop his work. Citing authors and authorities give credence to an academic research work any time any day. Moreover, in general, an article or a book is required to refer to other relevant documents during preparation (Yang & Dong, 2017).Because of this, reference

must be made to the writings and research outcomes of others, ensuring the interplay and interchange of ideas that promotes society`s development. To articulately come up with a good paper or article, the ideas of others, especially of experts and those who have written along that line of the study or research being carried out, a researcher needs to read and study other works. Ezema (2016) notes that an active and dependable, "method of examination of scholarly communication process in languages is to look at information resources researchers' use in the field, citations and authorship patterns. This guides researchers and other stakeholders like librarians on how to support research through acquisition of research materials in the area" (p.3).

Worthwhile insights are necessary when writing scholarly papers on any chosen topic, and this warrants extensive readings of different relevant literatures and materials to glean facts and information, and when this is done such sources must be acknowledged, hence the citing or referencing of sources of information. Referencing/citation is the listing of the sources of information assembled at the end of an academic paper. This section is sometimes referred to as Works Cited, References, Sources, or Bibliography, depending on the discipline the research work is based in. This necessitates citation analysis which determines the information sources a particular group of researchers use, the volume of research in a field, and the impact factors of journals and individual researchers (Ezema & Eze, 2012). These references reflect the situations that authors absorb or take advantage of as ideas, methods, and techniques (Yang & Dong, 2017).

The number of papers an academic publishes is important to his career, therefore, he should not only publish regularly to be afloat in the academe, he should also appropriately apply the rules that guide publishing a good paper as one of the means of increasing his

own citations. This is important since the number of times a researcher`s paper is cited can be interpreted to mean the level of effect such a paper has on the field in which it is written.Ezema and Eze (2012) agree that a number of investigators have employed citation analysis in the determination of research outputs of individuals, institutions, and even geographical areas. For instance, three Nigerian lecturers, Aliyu Isa Aliyu, Tukur Abdulkadir Sulaiman, and Abdullahi Yusuf were recently listed among the top 2% most-cited scientists in the world (AllSchool, 2022). Also, Tolu-Kolawole (2021) reports about the ten researchers and 20 authors from the University of Abuja who won a total of N1.1 billion Naira grants following publications in first-class journals across the world.

A good research paper is painstakingly written with a lot of time spent researching for relevant materials, and cross checking volumes of various sources for facts to back up the work; therefore a factor like wrong referencing should not rubbish the great efforts put into preparing a paper; meticulous attention has to be given to matters as minute as the indication of the page number of a direct quotation from a source, and the number of contributors to a paper. If an author (s) cannot reference correctly, then his/their work is not scholarly enough to merit publication in a reputable journal.

A paper or article cannot be adjudged a 'good' one without it being accompanied with references rightly cited. When a factor as miniscule as citation is wrongly done, it could ruin the quality of a paper, hence authors must be thorough while handling this section of their writing. Since you must "publish"or else "perish", you have to abide by the rules that guide a good scholarly paper to gain maximum prestige, particularly when it comes to citation.

Yang and Dong (2017) emphasize that in published scientific works, authors list

cited references to illustrate the origin of the citation data, to emphasise their reliability, to facilitate search, and to check for readers based on further research. According to Ezema and Eze (2012), the objective of citation analysis is to scrutinise how researchers make references to earlier works they have read. Consequently, to analyse how referencing is done in some journals, *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* (*TNJC)*, and the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* (*JCMR*) were purposively picked for study and examination. These journals were selected, because they are main line journals of communication research in Nigeria and beyond.

The Nigerian Journal of Communication (*TNJC*) publishes two editions yearly, that is, a Conference and non-Conference edition while the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* (*JCMR*) is published twice a year. *JCMR* is addressed to the African and international academic community, and it accepts articles from all scholars, irrespective of country or institution of affiliation. *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* (*TNJC*) is a scholarly, academic, professional, and interdisciplinary journal of the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE), Nigeria Chapter. It is devoted to research and professional practices in all functional areas of communication.

Statement of the Problem

The quality of citation and referencing are parts of the criteria to determine whether an article will be accepted for publication by any reputable journal or publication outlet. This makes them integral slices of the writing and publishing process. However, some researchers still struggle with getting their citations and referencing right, and for that reason their articles are either rejected for publication, or the validity of their research is negatively impacted. Some journals receive numerous papers sent to them for publications;

for that reason, they don't have the luxury of time to correct poorly referenced papers, no matter how well written they may be. There is also a paucity of studies on citation analysis in media studies and communication journals.

Objectives

This paper analyses the citations in two Communication research journals in Nigeria:

i. to ascertain the number of author(s) that wrote each article in the Journals, as they may have been written by individuals or written collaboratively;

ii. to identify the number of citations that have hardcopy (printed literature) and, or, Internet as sources of literature; and

iii. to ascertain the sources of the literature to establish if they are from Journals, Books, Newspapers, Magazines, et cetera.

Theoretical Discourse and the Origin of Citation Analysis

Citation analysis is said to have first appeared in the 1920s. Gross and his associates, according to Yang and Dong (2017), conducted the first citation analysis in the history of literature in 1927. They were recognised for analysing the references of papers in many chemical engineering magazines as well as fundamental chemistry education periodicals. Nonetheless, the origin of citation analysis as a field of study is traceable to *scientometrics*. Vasily Nalimov coined the word "scientometrics," which is used interchangeably with "bibliometrics" (Lowry, Moody, Gaskin, Galletta, Humpherys, Barlow, & Wilson, 2013).

Information retrieval was the driving force behind the creation of a Science Citation Index (SCI). The American system of legal documentation is said to have inspired Eugene Garfield to begin citations (Garfield, 1979). Derek de Solla Price later joined the

citation effort, according to Leydesdorff (1998), since he linked SCI data to measuring procedures. Later notions such as 'mapping science' by investigating the dynamics of citation networks were proposed, according to Price (1965) and Wouters (1998).

Though several attempts have been made to develop a viable theory for citation analysis, they have all failed (Small, 1978). Scholars such as Chubin and Moitra (as cited in Leydesdorff, 1998), and Moravcsik and Murugesan (1975) believed that the theory of citation had been established primarily with reference to the usage of citations inside articles up until then.

In 1981, Cozzens (1981) published a survey of citation theories from a sociological perspective, whereas Cronin (1981) required a citation theory from the perspective of information retrieval. Citation, according to Cronin (1984), is a role in scientific communication between works. Furthermore, as tenable in the scientific community, MacRoberts and MacRoberts (1987), and Latour (as cited in Leydesdorff, 1998) focused on the mechanical and linguistic roles of citations (Cozzens, 1989).

According to Martin and Irvine (1983), Moed, Burger, Frankfort and Van Raan (1985), Merton (1968), and Latour and Woolgar (1979), citation is regarded to be an indication of reward in the scientific system in the field of evaluation studies for science policy. Furthermore, in the 1980s, Callon, Jean-Pierre, Turner, and Serge (1983) provided additional scientometric indicators such as 'co-words,' while Small (1973), Small and Griffith (1974), and Small (1978) interpreted 'co-citation maps' as representations of citing authors' perspectives. Co-word analysis, according to Callon, Law, and Rip (1986), produced representations of semiotic networks among these writers.

Despite the fact that a variety of theoretical frameworks for citation analysis have been offered, there is no widely accepted theory of citation. "The range of indicators made scientometricians aware that citations are specific, although they share some qualities with other textual indicators," writes Leydesdorff (1998). From the standpoint of the citing article, citations relate to another word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, or title of material" (p.9).

The Place of Literature and Library in Research

Data and information are garnered from various types of literature to support views and arguments in research. There are many sources that can serve as the foundation for literature review; they include: newspapers; peer-reviewed journal articles; edited academic books; textbooks; articles in professional journals; statistical data from organisations, professional associations,or government websites; conference/seminar papers; theses and dissertations; books and monographs; inaugural lectures; magazines; primary texts library materials; Internet sources; reference books; supplementary books; workbooks; abstracts; reports; hand-outs; yearbooks; reviews; bulletins; television; radio; artefacts; government information or statistics; company financial reporting data; and blogs by public figures.

Other sources are discussion boards or forums, Wiki-style encyclopedias (like Wookiepedia), multimedia sources like Documentaries on Netflix, Interviews of public officials on YouTube, Podcasts about current events, Photo essays on the New York Times website, raw video of events broadcasted to Facebook Live, diaries, photographs, data from the census bureau or a survey carried out, original documents (like the constitution or a birth certificate), art work, pottery or weavings, transcript of a speech, bibliography of critical works about an author, textbooks, fact books, guidebooks, and manuals. Some

of these sources have both hard and soft (Online) copy versions.

Various reasons are available for mutually cited literature. Yang and Dong (2017) cites Weinstock as pointing out the following 15 reasons for literature citation after systematic induction: To respect the blazers; to demonstrate positive attitude about related works; to verify the methods and instruments used; to provide background materials; to correct their own work; to correct the work of others; to evaluate previous works; to seek full argument for their arguments; to provide existing works; to provide a guide for not being spread, rarely cited, or never cited literature; to validate data and physical constants; to check whether a particular idea or concept is discussed in the raw material; to check the cause of the characters in raw materials or other works of a concept or a noun; to deny the work or viewpoint of another, and to object to the priority of others. However,no matter the source(s) of the literature, or the reason for citing any literature, they must be rightly cited.

Before the advent of the Internet, most literature was found in the library. Rodkewich and DeVries (2001) remark that the library world was stable for hundreds of years, and librarians were content doing their jobs, building collections and assisting people in using them. Nonetheless, from the 1960s, things started to change in the society, and this change also affected the library world as well. According to Rodkewich and DeVries (2001), in the early 1970s, the computer became the main tool used to organise collections in many libraries in the United States and elsewhere.

Although, the Internet is a vast source of information, the library still remains relevant as a source of literature in the academic world. Kumah (2015) argues that the Internet was not meant to do away with research in the library, that though "the Internet has a lot of advantages, it cannot be compared with that of the traditional sources" (p.3). The library can be used to search and research books and other materials to examine the nature and manner of information they contained, which, if found useful, can be extracted, recorded, stored, and retrieved when needed

Alemna (2000) observes that for centuries, libraries have served as repositories of information and knowledge that have provided the vital underpinnings for socio-economic, political and cultural development in any civilisation. That is to say that libraries store and continue to store varieties of books and books are essential in the academic and educational development of mankind and the society generally. The library where these books are accessed is the beating nucleus of any academic environment.

Due to the importance of the library, manual and obsolete books have to be upgraded to make them more effective. Hence, the need for a digitalised method of storing information for easy free access to library materials, and their preservations as reference materials. This goes a long way to reduce the problem of the paucity of research materials. It also lessens dependency on the Internet as the major literature source for research.

Emphasising the importance of the library in the society, Reding (2005) submits that from social, cultural, and economic perspectives, libraries play fundamental roles by being the collectors and stewards of our heritage; being organisers of the knowledge in the books they collect , they acquired added value by cataloguing, classifying, and describing them. Furthermore, as a public institution, the library assures equality of access for all citizens. It also takes the knowledge of the past and present, and lays it down for the future.

Citation Analysis in Bibliometric Studies

The study of citations is an integral part of bibliometrics. It focuses on citation counts and the examination of references given at the conclusion of a research paper. Despite the fact that citation indexes were created for information retrieval, they are now used in bibliometrics. Citation analysis, according to Gooden (2001), and Aina and Ajiferuke (2002), is a broad field of bibliometrics that investigates the link between a work and the documents that cite it, or between an author and other writers that cite him.

Eugene Garfield (as cited in Leydesdorff, 2011) introduced a citation index that gave a novel way to topic control of the scientific literature, which is related with citation analysis. According to Garfield, there are certain connections between a specific article and its references. Since this link is of significant interest to researchers, the similarity between an article and its references is the cornerstone of citation analysis.

Simply put, citation analysis involves calculating the frequency with which a work or paper by an author(s) is referred to, referenced, or mentioned by other writers in their own works, papers, or articles in order to quantify and determine a publication's or author's impact. The citation analysis approach has a variety of applications. It may be applied successfully in a wide range of fields and professions, and it is becoming increasingly significant. Citation analysis has been shown to be effective in analysing the coverage of library acquisitions and for research assessment, according to Karison (as cited in Ezema & Eze, 2012).

Citation analysis, according to authors such as Shaw and Vaughan (2008) and Singh (2013), is effective in determining the pattern of research communication in the area, as well as the publishing patterns and research effects of researchers. However,

Anauati, Galiani, and Gálvez (2014) point out that using citation studies to assess the effect of various academic works without considering other factors that may influence citation patterns has been widely criticised. One of the recognised criticisms might be as a result of the tenable differences in various fields, which would, in turn, lead citation practises to vary.

Citation analysis, as useful as it is, is not without problems, because certain citations contradict the goals of motivation and behaviour. Thome (as cited in Yang & Dong, 2017) lists these citations as follows: to flatter someone for citing; biased citation for mutual praising; to quote himself/herself; to support certain academic research interests of an improper citation, and under the pressure of the cited authority. As a result, a small number of specialists and academics have questioned the impartiality and accuracy of citation analysis, claiming that citation behaviour does not represent the true process of scientific progress and communication, but rather causes confusion and contamination (Yang & Dong, 2017).

Empirical Reviews of Studies

In a study, Ezema (2016) examined data from citation analysis of language theses in Nigeria to investigate academic communication and authorship practises in language research. He researched the citation and authorship trends in language and linguistics research using theses and dissertations to improve collection development policies in linguistics research using the University of Nigeria, Nsukka as a case study.

A total of 87 theses and dissertations submitted to the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages between 2005 and 2014 were examined using bibliometric and informetric indicators. Bibliometric factors such as categories of cited sources, timeliness

of cited sources, authorship pattern, rank list of commonly cited books, and degree of research cooperation were used in a retrospective descriptive analysis.

The theses yielded a total of 5,084 bibliographic references, with an average of 58.4 citations per theses. The study found that books and monographs accounted for 63.6 percent of all citations, while journal citations accounted for 17.9 percent. In addition, 15.4 percent of the citations came from electronic sources. It was decided that citation studies in the humanities in general and linguistics in particular were lacking.

Bakrin, Adebiyi, and Salaudeen (2019) investigated the variables that characterise the trend of scholarly publishing among academics in communication studies in Nigeria in their work "Authorship Patterns in Nigerian Journals of Communication: A Bibliometric Approach." As flashpoints, they discussed inter and multidisciplinary methods to journal publication, single/multiple authorship, gender mix, and regional and institutional dissemination. The three major journals of communication in Nigeria were chosen using a purposeful sampling approach, and the volumes of the three selected journals were chosen using an available sample technique.

They were subjected to a bibliometric examination of issues from the selected journals from 2007 to 2016. Associational, institutional, and independent publication criteria were employed in the study. The volume of each publication produced during a ten-year period served as the foundation for analysis. Three areas of inquiry led the bibliometric analysis: pattern of cooperation, degree of inter and intra-disciplinary collaboration, and level of internationality of journals as evaluated by geographical dispersion of contributions.

Three major tendencies emerged from the study's findings. To begin with, the three journals chosen did badly in terms of the international dissemination of publications published over the time period. Second, only two journals (*TNJC* and *JCMR*) published a significant number of joint papers. Third, Nigerian communication researchers appeared to be reluctant to engage in multidisciplinary research. Bakrin, Adebiyi, and Salaudeen (2019) suggested that Nigerian universities provide incentives to foster joint studies and that communication journals increase their online presence.

Similarly, Ezema and Eze (2012) conducted a basic research project to find information sources for Nigerian academics interested in animal health and production. They explored the sorts of information resources used by Nigerian agricultural science researchers (with a focus on animal health and productivity) in their scholarly communication process using citation analysis.

The authors studied all of the volumes of two major line journals in animal health and production (*Nigerian Journal of Animal Production* and *Nigerian Veterinary Journal*) for a period of seven years. There were a total of 8,328 references/citations in the journals. The survey found that journal citations account for 58 percent of them, while books and monographs account for 24 percent.

Furthermore, it was discovered that more than 31 percent of the mentioned publications were published between 1991 and 2000, with the remaining 25.9 percent written between 1981 and 1990. Materials from 2001 to date accounted for 20.2 percent of the total. The study found that electronic sources were cited seldom. Similarly, the authorship pattern indicated that the mentioned sources were dominated by multiple authors. The most frequently mentioned publications were found to be about 21, with poultry being the most investigated animal. The researchers' lack of access to current

research is suggested by the age of the cited sources. Ezema and Eze (2012) believe this has a lot of policy implications for Nigerian university libraries in terms of subscribing to current journals in the libraries, with a focus on the identified frequently cited journals.

Methodology

Citation analysis uses various means, including mathematical, statistical, comparison, induction, abstraction, generalisation, and logical methods. These methods are used to analyse a variety of scientific journals, papers, objects of citation, and cited phenomena to determine the characteristics of a quantity method and the inherent law of a bibliometric analysis method (Yang & Dong, 2017).

The method adopted for this study is the use of citation analysis since this is a bibliometric study, that is, analysis of cited reference sources in the source journals. This research method was made popular by Eugene Garfield who had characterised the basic nature of citation analysis as "a very general measure of contribution an individual makes to the growth of knowledge" (Garfield, as cited in Ezema & Eze, 2012, p.2).

The Nigerian Journal of Communication (TNJC) and the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* (JCMR) were studied. Specifically, the issues studied were Volume 1, Number 1, April 2009; Volume 1, Number 2, October 2009; Volume 3, Number 1, April 2011; Volume 3, Number 2, October 2011 of *JCMR*, and Volume 16, Number 1, June 2019; Volume 16, Number 2, November 2019; Volume 17, Number 1, June 2020; and Volume 17, Number 2, November 2020 of *TNJC*.The population is 110: this is made up of all the articles in the eight journals studied. These articles had 3076 citations altogether.

The citations documented as references (3076) at the end of each articles in the journals were meticulously analysed using manual counts to find out how many authors wrote each paper; if the references were directly from the Internet, even if it was journal, e-book, magazine etc, or if they were from the hardcopy of the cited material or literature referenced. The data from the analysis were presented in tables and graphs.

Data Presentation and Analysis

S/N	Name of Journal	No. of Articles	No. of Citations
1	*Journal of Communication and Media Research* Vol. 1 No. 1	18	425
2	*Journal of Communication and Media Research* Vol. 1 No. 2	19	476
3	*Journal of Communication and Media Research* Vol. 3 No. 1	13	339
4	*Journal of Communication and Media Research* Vol. 3 No. 2	13	304
5	*The Nigerian Journal of Communication* Vol. 16 No. 1	14	416
6	*The Nigerian Journal of Communication* Vol. 16 No. 2	14	472
7	*The Nigerian Journal of Communication* Vol. 17 No. 1	10	366
8	*The Nigerian Journal of Communication* Vol. 17 No. 2	9	278
Total		**110**	**3076**

Table 1: Number of Articles and Citations in analysed journals

Fig. 1: Authorship patterns of each Journal

Fig. 1 indicates that single-authored articles in the Journals analysed were 55 (29.57%), articles with two authors were 76 (40.86%), articles with three authors were 42(22.58%), and articles with more than three authors were 13(6.99%). It means multiple authorship of articles was highly emphasised.

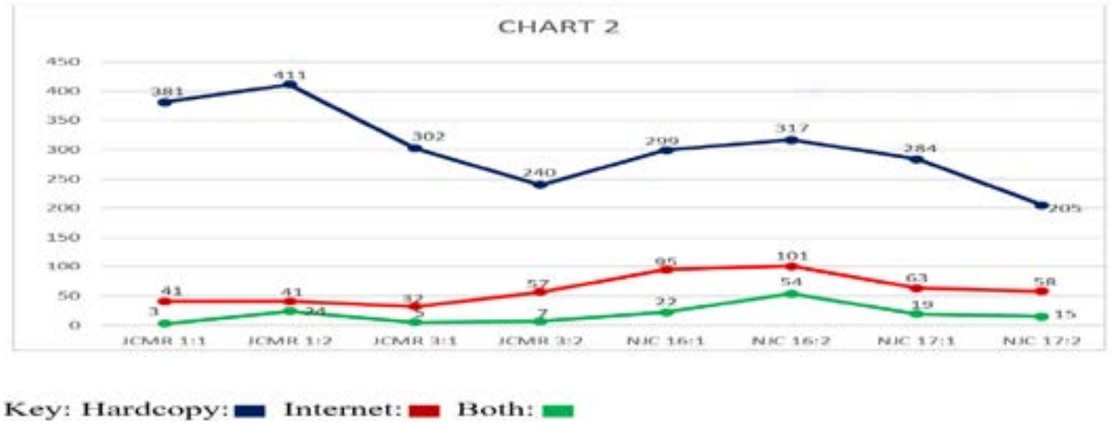

Fig. 2: Sources of literature, maybe hardcopy (printed literature), Internet, or both

From Fig. 2, it is seen that hardcopy sources of literature were 2,439 (79.29%), Internet sources were 488 (15.86%), and sources of both hardcopy and Internet were 149(4.85%).

It can then be deduced that scholars still make more use of printed literature more than the Internet.

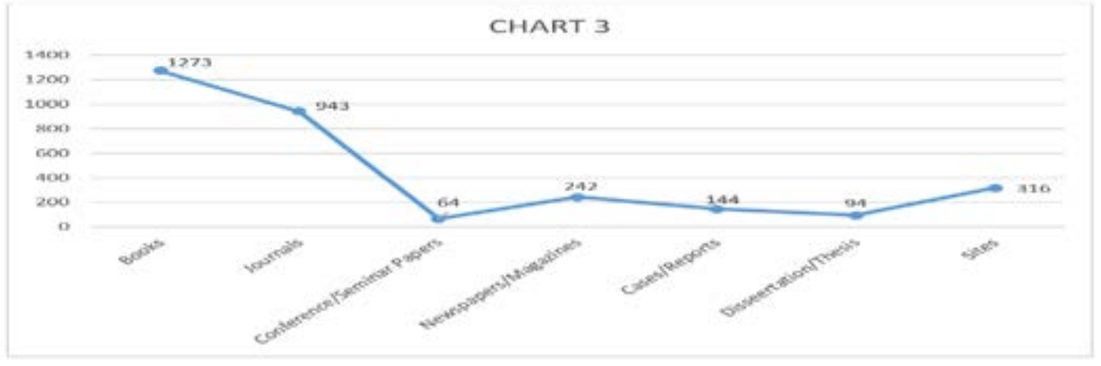

Fig. 3: Type of cited information sources

Fig. 3 reveals that the authors got their literature from the following sources: Books 1,273 (41.4%), Journals- 943 (30.7%), Conference/ Seminar Papers- 64 (2.1%), Newspapers/Magazines- 242 (7.8%), Cases/Reports- 144 (4.6%), Dissertation/Thesis-94 (3.1%), Webpage/Sites-316 (10.3%). The implication is that books and Journals are the major sources of literature for communication researchers.

Discussion of Findings

Information emanating from the data garnered to ascertain the number of author(s) that wrote each article in the Journals analysed revealed that most of the articles were authored by more than one writer. The authorship patterns showed that 70.43% of the articles were collaboratively written. Though Alemoh (2018) sees nothing wrong in joint authorship of article, he expresses fear that it,"could be grossly abused as many who may find it inconvenient to contribute meaningfully to the publication would take the easy way out by requesting their colleagues just to add their (the latter's) names to papers submitted for publication consideration" (p.108).

Nevertheless, jointly written papers with inputs from different researchers and academics can bring about the release of quality papers that can be beneficial to the society. Decrying the little or no collaboration between scientists, departments, and institutions in Nigerian Universities, which is important for discoveries and innovation. Imumorin (2019) emphasizes that "importantly, a paper published in top journals like *Science* or *Nature* with 50 authors is not the same with a single author paper. There are papers in the field of genomics these days with 500+ authors" (p.1). Collaborative writing makes room for the mentoring of upcoming researchers and encourages them; inspires more to write and research; augments weaknesses of each author; and gives visibilities to the authors` schools, institutions, and their capabilities. Shaikh (2017) points out that within the academia, it is widely accepted that collaboration in research across disciplines, between young and more senior researchers and with practitioners, is critical to the career of novice researchers. As Ezema (2016) mentions too, collaborative research reduces cost (since the cost of the research is usually shared among colleagues)and time, and produces more reliable research outputs.

The Centre for Collaborative Research for Equitable California, University of California, in the United States, defines collaborative research as "engaged scholarship in action, in which university researchers, community members, and policy makers respect the knowledge that each partner brings to the discussion so that together they might know better how to understand the complex problems facing our communities and how to design and implement research-based responses to those problems" (Centre for Collaborative Research for Equitable California- CCREC 2017, p.2). Actually, the number of authors of an article in no way adds or subtracts from the quality; it is the contents of the article that matters. It will be recalled that a physics paper with 5,154 authors broke the record for having the largest number of contributors to a research article. DeMarco (2015) cites *Nature News* as reporting that the study, published in *Physical Review Letters*, "provides the most precise estimate of the mass of the Higgs boson yet known and is the result of collaboration between two teams that operate detectors at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN, Europe's particle physics lab near Geneva, Switzerland. Of the article's 33 pages, 24 of them list author names and institutions" (p.1).

Nonetheless, there are some issues associated with collaborative authorship. For instance, some co-authors are recalcitrant when it comes to contributing financially to the publications of articles, especially in a place like Nigeria where almost all academic journals charge publication fees before articles are published. Sometimes, such behaviour is frustrating because the article may end up not being published at the appropriate time due to failure to meet up with article submission deadlines. Also, some co-authors are non-committal in playing their parts while some are lazy and delay in submitting their contributions.

The second finding of this study indicates that the hardcopy sources of literature (79.29%) were more than that of Internet sources (15.86%). This implies that communication researchers still rely more on hardcopies of literature. This result is in congruence with that of Zhang (as cited in Ezema, 2016, p. 8**)** whose study concluded that the impact of e-citation is very low when compared with the print types. However, it is contrary to the outcome of the study carried out by Markwei (2001) which submitted that the Internet continues to be an important source of information for academic studies. Elikwu (2008) admits that a research paper using only Internet sources is a weak paper, and puts the researcher at a disadvantage for not using better information from more

academic utilising sources, warning that, even though the Internet should never be a researcher`s only source of information, it would also be ridiculous not to utilise its vast sources of information Internet providers.

The reason scholars used less of Internet literature may be because most materials posted there may not be reliable and accurate since people are free to post anyone anything on the Internet. Roundy (2021) observes that there is little quality control over the information on the Internet. He says this makes it difficult to avoid bias or inaccuracies, apart from the fact that it can also be hard to locate authors and references.

Mfranks (2017) adds that "while print sources are more likely to be trustworthy than online sources, not all sources that are online-only are inaccurate, just like not all print sources are perfectly trustworthy or appropriate for use…" (p.3). Roundy (2021) submits that printed sources have generally been through some type of critical review process that prevents poor material from reaching the library shelves, a sort of quality control.

The third finding revealed that media scholars and authors got most of their literature from books (41.4%) and journals (30.7%). This finding is akin to the results got by Heinzkill in 1980, Georga and Cullars in 2005, and Gasparotto in 2014 (as cited in Ezema, 2016). In their studies, they also found that authors used more books and monographs in their works.

On his part, Mfranks (2017) tends to align himself with this finding when he declares that print journals and academic books are peer-reviewed before publication. For this reason, they are often also held to a higher standard by the universities and professional organisations that run them. Journals ensure that the articles that they publish are sound.

Books are not only essential sources of literature for research, but, according to Guanah (2018), they also perform the basic functions of the media, like information dissemination, provision of entertainment, transmission of culture, enlightenment, fighting repressive and bad governments on behalf of a nation`s citizenry, promoting justice and equity, moulding public opinion, serving as the watchdog of the society, as well as providing education to the populace of the society.

Furthermore, scholars prefer to find literature for their works in journals, because they know that the papers published in them were written with a clear understanding of the journal's audience in focus, the average length of articles and the type of criticism it publishes, and the scholarly conversation surrounding the subject. Scholars also believe that works published in journals will be more error-free and include more reliable data and information. This is because journal editors, who act as gatekeepers, must have extensively read and analysed the articles before allowing them to be published, while keeping the authors honest, accountable, and responsible.

Conclusion

Collaborative efforts in research writing benefit society more than single-authored research works.The more the authors the merrier: this is because each will carry out in-depth study of the portions they are writing on, and the outcome will be richer, because there will be more and different angles given to the topic of discourse by each contributor based on varied perspectives from which their analysis will be derived. Different contributors often bring a much-needed fresh set of eyes to research papers of which other contributors are sometimes oblivious.

Despite the fact that scholars have easy access to full text journals, full text e-books, and other publications on the Internet via their Android phones or computers connected to the Internet, they prefer to gather literature for their research work from hardcopies of materials rather than the Internet. This demonstrates that they place a higher value on the accuracy of the information provided by the former than the latter. As a result, hardcopy citations outnumbered Internet citations.

Books and journals are mostly used by researchers as their sources of literature because they are handy and available when needed. This is unlike a source like the Internet that may not be readily accessed in a place like Nigeria regularly due to unstable power supply. Maybe researchers would have preferred citing e-books. Information got from the Internet or e-books can go through plagiarism test and check more easily unlike the hardcopy sourced. With this, Internet plagiarism flagged sections of an article can be improved upon to make it less plagiarism-free than hardcopy sources.

Recommendations

i. Researchers should collaborate more in publishing because of the enormous advantages involved.

ii. Public and school libraries should be stocked with both hardcopies and e-books to ease the acquisition of literature for research works.

iii. Constant electricity and Internet connection should be made available on tertiary institutions` campuses to aid research.

iv. Non-governmental organisations should establish agencies that would fund collaborative researches to encourage more researchers to embark on solution-driven studies and researches.

v. Researchers should look beyond books and journals while accessing literature for their works, as other sources are also rich with viable information.

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Precambrian #10

Stuart Matheson

FILM REVIEW:

The Power of a Baby Face

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When reading the synopsis of Alfred E. Green's *Baby Face*,[1] one may think that the film would be about a ditzy "seductress" who makes money by innocently making men fall at her feet. After watching the film, a viewer realizes instead that the protagonist is quite assertive and powerful. Lily Powers (Barbara Stanwyck) spends most of her life working in her father's speakeasy in Pennsylvania, where he forces her to have sex with male customers. After he dies in a still explosion and she receives some advice from philosophy-loving cobbler Cragg (Alphonse Ethier), Lily leaves home with her African American friend Chico (Theresa Harris) and moves to New York City. There, she knowingly uses the power of her sexuality to survive and climb the social ladder. Lily soon finds a job at the Gotham Trust Company, making her way through several men and departments before meeting Ned Stevens (Donald Cook). Ned and Lily have an affair until his fiancée

1. American film director Alfred E. Green started his career in 1912 as an actor for the Selig Polyscope Company. After assisting director Colin Campbell and directing two-reel comedies, Green spent most of his career working on feature films with Warner Brothers. Besides *Baby Face* (1933), Green was also known for *Disraeli* (1929), *Housewife* (1934), *Dangerous* (1935) and *The Jolson Story* (1946).

discovers them in his office. The latter cries to her father, who ends up having his own affair with Lily. After moving on from these two men, Lily eventually takes great interest in the new President of the bank, Courtland Trenholm (George Brent), when they reconnect in Paris. Courtland and Lily quickly marry and soon face what is perhaps their most significant marital dispute.

The film represents the societal and cultural feelings of the 1930s toward women who find an unconventional way to survive and, for the most part, allows its female protagonist to successfully embody the power of a gold digger (Slavens 71). Although Lily spends much of the narrative demonstrating that she can break out of the stereotypical cult of domesticity, she also engages in several contradictions that lead her to slip back into her gendered sphere of influence by the end of the film. These contradictions, which involve her actions, appearance, and marriage, ultimately reflect America's changing gender and class norms during the 1930s.

The moral justification for Lily's actions is representative of the humanization of gold diggers in the 1930s. The film starts by immediately tugging at the audience's heartstrings, showing Lily's tragic beginnings when she is pimped out by her own father and the latter's subsequent death. With essentially nothing but this backstory, Lily has no choice but to "circumvent acceptable avenues in order to survive," which includes sleeping with her married coworkers and bosses to get a higher job position (Slavens 72). She does not spend time being the spoiled party girl that 1920s gold diggers are often known as (Slavens 71); instead, she rises out of hardship and focuses on aggressively becoming her own breadwinner to feel financially and socially secure, showing the changing sentiment that 1930s gold diggers are more justified in increasing their social

status through potentially unsavory methods to survive (Slavens 72). With this logic, Lily's traditionally immoral actions—engaging in sexual relationships with married men, intentionally ruining an engagement, or being the link to two men's deaths—are nullified because audience members sympathize with her less than humble beginnings. By painting her as a powerful underdog, the film encourages people to root for Lily and, by extension, for women as they break out of their cult of domesticity to become stronger contenders in the male-dominated world of the 1930s.

As Lily climbs the corporate ladder, her hair and costume change significantly, to the point where it is almost annoyingly distasteful: this can be reflective of society's hatred of the rich and privileged. At the start of the film, she has messier, looser curls and wears cheaper, more practical clothing for work in the speakeasy. Lily changes to a sleeker, permed hairstyle throughout the film, and her outfits become fancier with frilly necklines, thick furs, and large scarves. Such a transformation in appearance not only symbolizes her increasing socioeconomic status, but it also demonstrates the comedic "upper class act" that gold diggers engage in highlighting the economic disparities between the rich and the poor (Slavens 74). The film seems to dramatize Lily's new appearance and status to demonize the rich and demonstrate how out of touch they were during the Great Depression. The rich had the unfair privilege of dressing and acting so extravagantly while many people were struggling to survive, therefore justifying society's distrust of financially and perhaps unethically successful individuals (Slavens 73). While Lily's wealth and appearance change, her cynical personality and friendship with Chico largely remain the same, demonstrating that she is not a compromised, superficial figure. Thus, Lily's unchanging principles serve as a mocking reminder that she and other gold diggers are still "familiar to the working people" and not on the other side of the large economic

gap as part of the ignorant elite, even if they look the part (Slavens 74). The message is clear: do not hate poor women who become wealthy, hate the wealthy class norms in which they are forced to assimilate.

While Lily's involvement in the destruction of other marriages is suggestive of societal feelings toward long-term relationships, her contradicting preservation of her own marriage also reveals the social implications of censorship and changing sentiment toward women in this era. It is difficult to take marriages seriously in this film because, like Lily's numerous affairs with men, they do not last long. In the 1930s, marriage was considered a "joke that was not based on any real affection between the partners involved" (Slavens 75). This is especially evident when Lily has an affair with Ned, who (even before he is married) cheats on his well-off fiancée and throws away his career for a woman he barely knows. There is a precedent for "broken engagements" and adversarial relationships between men and women, which is exemplified by Lily and Courtland's first encounter and the way he sends her away to Paris (Slavens 85). When she marries Courtland, it seems the female protagonist might once again justifiably conquer a man and his wealth and then move on. Yet Lily contradicts her individualism by falling in love with someone who had previously looked down on her. At the end of the film, her declaration that she loves Courtland and does not care for her half a million dollars symbolizes that gold diggers are starting to revert to their cult of domesticity as loving wives and homemakers, signifying their loss of power by the end of the 1930s. As Clarence R. Slavens argues, in the decades after the 30s, gold diggers were once again negatively portrayed in media and seen as "the husband-killing femme fatale," "a sexual baby-doll," or "a mercenary user of men" in films such as *How to Marry a Millionaire* (1953) or songs such as EPMD's "Gold Digger" (1990) (89). These portrayals come at a time when Hollywood's new Hays Codes were introduced to enforce morality in film; *Baby Face* is the antithesis of these production codes for sex workers and adultery and openly goes against them. While some viewers may be frustrated that Lily chooses her husband over herself, having her triumph alone as an unmarried gold digger could have been too much for Hollywood and the audience of that time, forcing producers to preserve her marriage.

Lily's contradictions—her immoral but morally-justified actions, new appearance yet consistent personality and subsequent reversion to the cult of domesticity through marriage—highlight the changing class and gender roles for women in America during the 1930s. From Lily and the film we learn that women had the power to break out of the cult of domesticity (and return to it) by humanizing themselves, demonstrate their hatred for the rich by mocking them, and destroy or preserve marriages. Although the film produces a fantastical and almost empowering plot about women, it is also a product of the broader social and cultural influences during an era of economic depression and production censorship. *Baby Face* subverts gender and class stereotypes but also shows that America has complicated dynamics that may only tolerate women in power temporarily. Such conflicting dynamics are still present in society today, making *Baby Face* a stark reminder of the challenges women face when rising to the top.

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Precambrian #11

Stuart Matheson1

FILM REVIEW:

Antonioni's *Il Deserto Rosso* Is Relevant to Love in Our Times

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Il Deserto Rosso/Red Desert is a 1964 film by director Michelangelo Antonioni[1] that captures a human-all-too-human struggle to contend with yearning for love during times of tremendous scarcity. Set amidst a chilling Anthropocene, the stark poisonous power plant petrochemical structures tower over droning sounds of whirring machinery. The culpable tension produced in this stark setting is paced by the saturated imagery of a poverty stricken industrial Northern Italy. The town of Ravenna is the location where a love story full of dust clouds and heartache is born. The film is notable for its spiritual entrance into 1960s cinematography and storytelling as it contrasts a picture-perfect postcard Italy with the deviations of a science fiction alien world of industrialization amidst an aesthetics of dystopic absence. While *Il Deserto Rosso* may have been filmed in colour, it has been remarked that it looks as though Monica Vitti's character, Guiliana, was colourized post-production because of the gripping emotional visual style (Bradshaw, 2012). Vitti's performance is highlighted in this film as the focal point by many film connoisseurs. Richard Brody writes for *The New Yorker*:

> Vitti's masklike look of blank dread is the vanishing point for the polluted landscape of roaring machines; the metallic river, the riotous tangle of tubes and pipes, the yellow poison gas and orange flames that spout from smokestacks, and the smoldering fields of debris are the film's true main characters, pulling the strings of the human puppets who depend on them.

A remarkable feature of *Il Deserto Rosso* is the way the alien objects that are inanimate technologies are given life through the lens. Antonioni's visual schematic depicts a setting where the experience of objects, like the machines that represent the industrialization of Italy, are accounted for as characters in his bleak world building (Boghost, 2012). The film is extremely important in the history of film music as it presents an abstract electronic score by Vittorio Gelmetti, which was not otherwise popular outside of avant-garde music scenes in the early 1960s (Calabretto, 2018; Frolova-Walker, 2018). The soundscape weaves diegetic and non-diegetic electric and electronic sounds that lapse together with the audio and visual elements of the natural world in Ravenna to emphasize the discovery of beauty in the ominous. It is through the deep listening and multi-sensory experiencing of *Il Deserto Rosso* that more questions on this film's story arch and overall themes can be ascertained.

1. Michelangelo Antonioni (1912-2007) was an Italian film director, screenwriter, editor and painter. He is best known for his "trilogy on modernity and its discontents" (Holden, 2006): *L'Avventura* (1960), *La Notte* (1961) and *L'Eclisse* (1962). His first color film, *Il deserto rosso*, deals with similar themes, and is sometimes considered the fourth film of the "trilogy". All these films star Monica Vitti (1931-2022), who was his lover during that period. Antonioni is known to have had a significant impact on art cinema for filming long takes and scripting open-ended narratives.

Many reviewers of Antonioni's *opus* unanimously agreed that existential melancholy is what *Il Deserto Rosso* is known for. While other works by the director may concern journeying in the emotional depths of human experience, especially in the trilogy of modernity and its discontents, *Il Deserto Rosso* stands out as remarkable for it being the first colour film of Antonioni that pulls at the heart strings of the viewer. To re-watch this film, and to take in the moral question of fidelity during uncertain times, may produce an effect on the viewer that renders a heaviness, and shortened breath, paralleling the mood of the times we currently live in. Ill-suited for the purpose of escaping how we emotionally process this current viral timeline, *Il Deserto Rosso* is not for the faint of heart. In her reflection of lovestruck stickiness, nausea and infidelity, Monica Vitti's character, Giuliana, asks: "What do people expect me to do with my eyes?" Her constant search for emotional and physical intimacy never manages to appease her appetite for tenderness and warmth; it is untenable.

Within the first fifteen minutes of the film, a strong socio-political narrative is painted. Guiliana's insatiable hunger is contrasted with a petrochemical plant where a worker's strike is commencing. Like being hit by a compulsion, an echoing unmet need, the depth of her hunger insists on having bread from the striking workers, rather than going to the nearby store to purchase it on her own. Giuliana gives money to the workers for bread and feeds her child, conveying a mood that in this moment is longing, but for what exactly? Giuliana's husband Ugo (Carlo Chionetti) is the owner of the petrochemical plant. The juxtaposition of the workers' demonstration as a staging of workers' resistance alongside Giuliana's archetypal matriarchal feminine anxiety, quickly reveals to the viewer that this plot is not apolitical in kind. Giuliana is plagued by haunting dreamscapes of quicksand death anxiety, unable to know what it is that truly causes her existential dread, which looms over the ever-present strain of her existence, like the husband that cannot ease her ache. When Ugo leaves her for a business trip, she spends more time with Corrado (Richard Harris), which is when her loyalty to Ugo is tested. Much like the iconography of a map, the distilled imagery of how they stare at the printed paper that traces geospatial possibilities, to find a location where any semblance of moral compass may steer them away, yet their drive for pleasure makes it impossible to do so, the illustrious comfort of infidelity is the impulsive direction that is inevitable for Giuliana and Corrado.

Flash to the scene where Ugo is talking to Corrado, who is a visiting recruiter for workers to be sent out to work abroad. The former reveals to Corrado that his wife had been in a car accident, and while she was not physically hurt, ever since the experience she had not been emotionally well. Can Corrado ease Guiliana's emotional pain while Ugo is away? After their son wakes up and suddenly cannot walk, it is discovered he may have polio, and Giuliana is left alone to bear the brunt of the responsibility. He plays with robots instead of other children. What is the symbolism, the significance, the potential for a child that is without a father and is left alone to cope with disability alone, with a sick mother and robots that do not cuddle back? Can Guiliana be blamed to find comfort in the nearest source of warmth, that is Corrado? Where do we draw the line when we make moral judgments about fidelity in the coldest and darkest of times; are there exceptions to the rules? The tune of the feminine voice who hums notes in the soundtrack of the film is an emblazoned reminder of this question: can we forgive Giuliana for her misgivings or are they completely and entirely justifiable given the social conditions she is within?

At a memorable point in the film. Guiliana, Ugo and Corrado travel to a riverside shack at Porto Corsini to meet with their friends. They find the shack cold and their friends begin to rip off pieces of the wooden planks that hold it together to keep a fire ablaze, in order to warm up the vicinity. Meanwhile, Giuliana notices a ship nearby had been quarantined from an infectious disease, a virus, which infects her with insurmountable anxiety causing her to leave. A friend of theirs stares at one of the shipmates and comments on how he must be so starved for affection, to be alone on the boat for so long, or perhaps it has become normalized at this point?

If *Il Deserto Rosso* was previously viewed and experienced for the purpose of sheer entertainment, upon re-watch there could be a potential pitfall to the viewer, which would be a strong affective reaction. How is the re-watch different now that it could have been before the times of the pandemic? Like all the ways that experiencing love can feel cinematic, once watched, and re-watched, new parts can be discovered, and it is within these encounters, where participants may stumble into moments of wishing they could unsee what they had previously chosen to witness. The question is, was it all worth it? The only way to know is to try.

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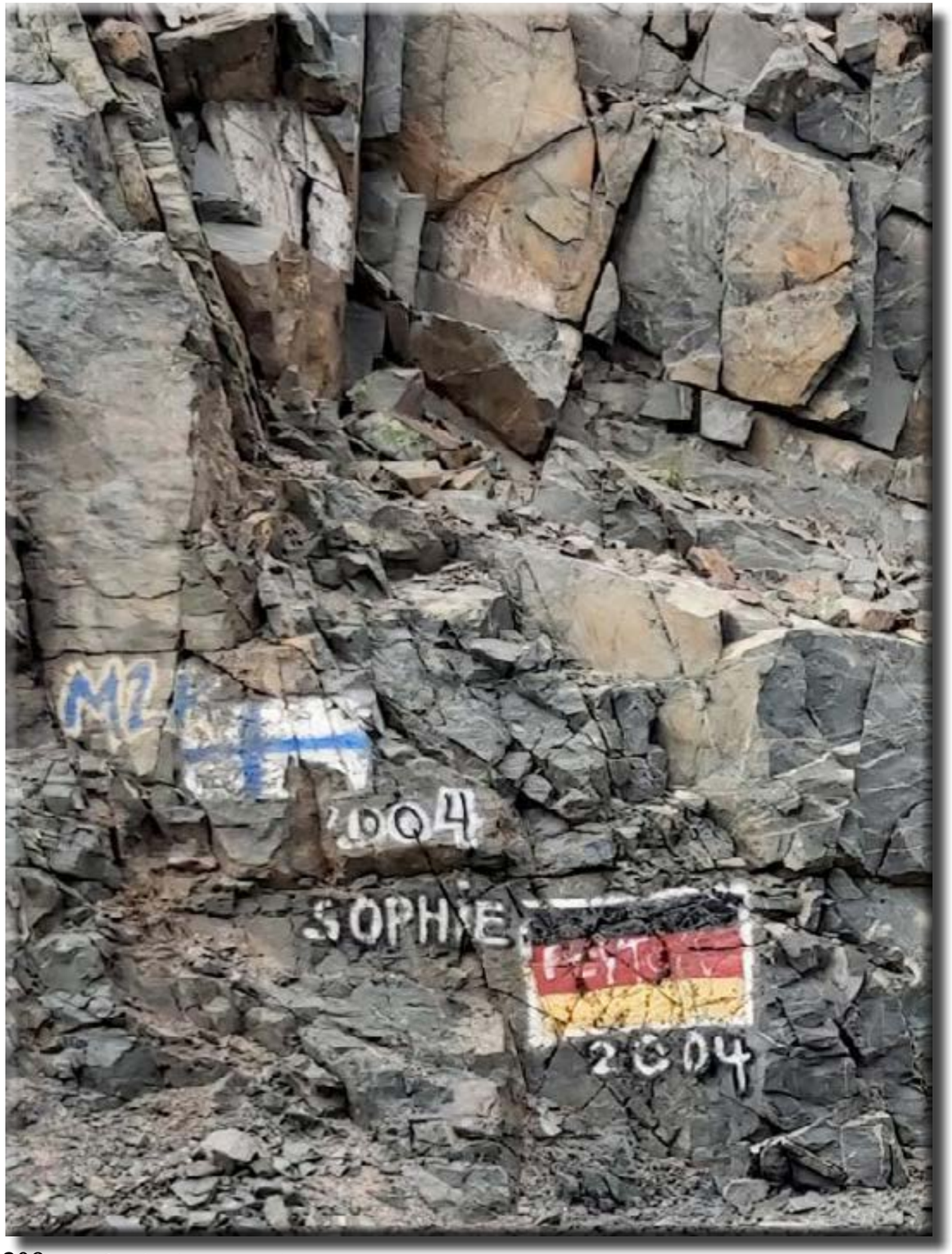

Precambrian #12

Stuart Matheson

FILM REVIEW:

Imagining Reality: A Review of Paolo Sorrentino's *The Hand of God* (2021)

Tristan Venturi

London, United Kingdom

Naples, mid-1980s. Fabietto Schisa (Filippo Scotti) is surprisingly introverted for a seventeen-year-old boy. Round-shouldered, Walkman in his jeans pocket and a default pensive look on his face, he spends his teenage years meandering through the lively Vomero neighborhood, wondering whether he should pursue a philosophy degree or a filmmaking career. One day, to the delight of local supporters, home soccer team *Napoli* signs Argentinian star Diego Armando Maradona; Fabietto is far from imagining that such hoped-for event is bound to bring both tragic loss and miraculous salvation into his existence. In fact, as chance—or, rather, the titular divine hand—would have it, Fabietto declines his parents' invitation to join them in the nearby Roccarasa mountains for the weekend in order to see his idol play at the Sunday game. That same night, Fabietto's parents pass away from carbon monoxide poisoning at their chalet. As he realizes that the

hand of God has spared yet orphaned him, Fabietto feels lonelier than ever in facing the uncertainties of impending adulthood.

Paolo Sorrentino's much-awaited tenth feature premiered at the 78th Venice International Film Festival; here, the film was awarded the *Leone d'argento* (Grand Jury Prize), while Scotti, class 1999 and the "Italian Timothée Chalamet" (Ellwood) according to international headlines, won the prestigious Marcello Mastroianni Award for his debut performance as Fabietto. After a limited theater release, *The Hand of God* landed on Netflix, where it became the most-watched Italian film of the year; it also made the shortlist for competing in the Best International Feature Film category at the 2022 Academy Awards—the same category that Sorrentino's acclaimed *The Great Beauty* (2013) had won eight editions prior. Crowning twenty years of directorial activity and marking the return to Naples since *One Map Up* (2001), the semi-autobiographical coming-of-age tale of Fabietto effectively boasts a rather unique positioning within the panorama of Sorrentino's production. Once "very skeptical" of autobiographical cinema, the director later understood that his "own life experience could be cinematic" (Sulcas) and developed what would be unanimously hailed as his "most personal film yet" (Frost).

While preserving its auteur's distinctively solemn aesthetics, as well as his recurring preoccupation with the exploration of reality and its elusive meaning(s), *The Hand of God* forgoes the previously privileged nihilistic or otherwise dark themes—such as abandonment and exploitation (*One Map Up*; *The Consequences of Love*, 2004; *The Family Friend*, 2006); politics and corruption (*Il Divo*, 2008; *Loro*, 2018) and the hypocrisy of bourgeois life (*The Great Beauty*). Undoubtedly, the film does not abstain from tackling the painful truths of loss, grief and solitude; yet it raises its questions gently, filtered through the perspective of its delicate hero's uncorrupted intention, of his urgent desire to escape a hurtful reality by fabricating his own: "Now that my family has disintegrated, I don't like life anymore … I want an imaginary life, just like the one I had before. I don't like reality anymore. Reality is lousy. That's why I want to make films." As Sorrentino has put it, "When I write, I start believing my own lies" (Sulcas)—a stance he has inherited from pioneering director Federico Fellini: "Realism is a bad word. In a sense, everything is realistic. I see no line between the imaginary and the real" (*BFI*). Antonio Capuano, Sorrentino's mentor played by Ciro Capano, reprimands Fabietto for daring to hope; for "hope is a trap," Capuano rules, that yields but mediocre movies. However, the film itself is on Fabietto's side; it is unapologetically complicit in his search for a deeper purpose.

This is perhaps most manifested in the sense of mysticality that seems to pervade Fabietto's adolescent universe made of spirited family gatherings, carefree soccer games and modest attempts at discovering a blossoming sexuality. A touch of magical realism opens and closes the film in the ghostly figure of the *munaciello*, a "little monk" of benevolent yet mischievous nature from the Neapolitan folkloristic tradition. Early on, the *munaciello* is sighted by the eccentric *zia* Patrizia (Luisa Ranieri) thanks to the intercession of a man (Enzo De Caro) who claims to be *San Gennaro*, the patron saint of Naples. No family member will believe her except for Fabietto, who will also spot the monk at a train station in the very last sequence, as he eventually departs for Rome hoping to learn filmmaking there.

Indeed, if up to this release Sorrentino's cinema had been (predominantly) one for men, *The Hand of God* operates as an important departure from this by conferring much of its mystical aura to its main female characters: besides Patrizia, Fabietto's mother

Maria (Teresa Saponangelo) and the old baroness Focale (Betti Pedrazzi) also play a crucial role in watching over him and guiding him towards a greater understanding of himself. Patrizia, a symbol of unruly womanhood and the illicit sexual fantasy of most men in the family, agrees to be confined to a mental hospital as long as she can escape a soporific domestic life; and, in so doing, she inspires Fabietto to leave his native town and try his luck elsewhere. Maria, with her prankish temperament and forgiving nature, provides Fabietto with maternal comfort as she tenderly commends him on his career plans over homemade *zuppa di latte* (milk soup). Lastly, the old baroness embodies a decaying yet assertive femininity as she initiates Fabietto to sex—as part of her mission, she says, "to help you look to the future."

Will Fabietto grow up to become as disenchanted and acrimonious as Capuano? It is the film's ultimate suggestion that he probably will not. Bizarre monks, rebellious women and Fabietto's own resilience prove that he is destined to trust the omens thrown at him—whether real or fictional, granted that such distinction is still relevant—telling him that hope was the right choice, that his "imaginary life" will indeed come into being through cinema. And, looking at Sorrentino's career today, it most definitely did. Aesthetically reminiscent of recent critical successes such as Luca Guadagnino's *Call Me by Your Name* (2017) and Alfonso Cuarón's *Roma* (2018), *The Hand of God* is an elegant celebration of its wallflower hero—"Looking is all I know how to do"—and a testament to the possibilities of personal, spiritual and artistic redemption. Most of all, it is a refreshing truce from the hopelessness of Sorrentino's previous works, a humbling acknowledgment that good and bad things happen, as Fabietto's favorite player famously recited during the 1986 FIFA World Cup, "*un poco con la cabeza de Maradona y otro poco con la mano de Dios*" (Herman).

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Precambrian #13

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