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1 Mimicry in Ted Elemefforo's Fountain of Betrayal

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5 **Abstract**

6 This paper examines mimicry as an opportunistic pattern of behavior where women or the
7 oppressed copy or imitate the lifestyle, pattern, language, values, dress codes and food of
8 people in power with the hope or desire to have access to that same power in the future in Ted
9 Elemefforo's Fountain of Betrayal. Although the concept of mimicry has received significant
10 attention, Fountain of Betrayal has not been examined along this axis. Furthermore, most of
11 these earlier studies conceived mimicry only as an attempt by the colonized (black) to mimic
12 the colonizer (white).

13

14 **Index terms—**

15 **1 Introduction**

16 mimicry is the art of mimicking somebody or something with the intention of becoming exactly like it but only
17 arriving at a blurred copy of the original. It can also be called the unsuccessful imitation of the values, dress,
18 and life pattern of others with the intention to belong or be seen and addressed like the object being mimicked
19 but becomes ambivalent in the same process of being a mimic man or woman. The idea of mimicry has gained
20 scholarly attention in recent times, especially with the works of Homi Bhabha who popularized the concept and
21 asserts, "that mimicry is the process by which the colonized subject is reproduced as 'almost the same, but not
22 quite'" ??Bhabha 86). The copying of the colonizing culture, behaviour, manners and values by the colonized
23 contains both mockery and a certain 'menace', 'so that mimicry is at once resemblance and menace' (86).

24 In other words, mimicry is an attempt made by those in disadvantaged positions, especially women to become
25 like others or imitate the behaviors, values, and attitudes of people in authority but end up in regret as all
26 attempts to become exactly like their postcolonial or oppressive forces proved abortive.

27 A closer study of Elemefforo's Fountain of Betrayal foregrounds many instances of mimicry, especially on the
28 part of the female characters. It is clear from the text that Elemefforo's women are trapped in a web of hegemony
29 and, they are all in search of greener pastures or escape routes. They all try to mimic a better life out there.
30 They all wished for a better life and acted as people of the said class by attempting to live above their earnings.
31 This can be seen in the characters of Bodiere, Ovie, Mama, Angelina, and Imomotimi, as well as, Ovie's mother.
32 It is obvious in the text, that these characters all belong to the lower class or the poor but they strive to join the
33 hegemonic class by living above their means. They cherished the ostentatious lifestyle of the rich and mimicked
34 it. No wonder, many involved themselves in different forms of immoral conduct just to feel among but could
35 not achieve that. The target of this paper is to examine Elemefforo's female characters as mimics of hegemonic
36 neocolonial masters and agencies of state forces through the lenses of Homi Bhabha's concept of mimicry.

37 **2 Author's Bio Data**

38 Ted Tonbara Elemefforo hails from Okordia in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. He had
39 formal education at St. Mathias Primary School Amarata, Bishop Dimieari Grammar School Yenagoa, and
40 the University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, where he is rounding off a Graduate Programme in International
41 Relations. He had a brief spell in politics in his early twenties when he was elected Councillor representing Ward
42 14 (Okordia-Zarama) in Yenagoa Local Government Area (between 1991 and 1993) and had afterward remained
43 an advocate for good governance. His entrance novel, Child of Destiny published by Kraft Books, Ibadan in
44 2009 has been listed twice as an approved literature text for secondary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. He is a
45 Deacon in the Church of God Mission International, the current State house of Assembly member, representing

4 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

46 the good characters of Yenagoa Constituency 3 in Bayelsa State house of Assembly and above all, married with
47 children.

48 3 II.

49 4 Review of Related Literature

50 The subject of postcolonial mimicry has garnered critical attention. Each of these critical voices sees the concept
51 through the glasses of Bhabha, the apostle of this ideology. Since his popularization of the concepts, many
52 postcolonial writers have also adopted the concept in their analysis of postcolonial texts.

53 In his essay "Inversion and Subversion, Alterity and Ambivalence: "Mimicry and "Hybridity" in Sherman
54 Alexie's Ten Little Indians", Eva Becker examines mimicry and hybridity and their ambivalent in postcolonial
55 discourse. Becker stressed in this paper the need for the colonized to adopt mimicry as a strategy to subvert
56 colonial hegemony. According to her, "an ambivalent one that is able to be deconstructed and thus subverted
57 through "hybridity" and "mimicry" illustrates how Alexie's characters have recovered from the cultural agency"
58 ??Becker,12). This implies that colonial decolonization can only be achieved through the agencies of subversive
59 mimicry which is not most times far from mockery.

60 Aligning with Becker on this view is Nasrullah Mambrol who avers that mimicry should be a channel for the
61 subaltern to resist class oppression. This is because since mimicry is not far from mockery, it should be used
62 to locate a crack in the postcolonial masters and attack with the intention of weakening the power it possesses.
63 He puts it succinctly: ? mimicry is never very far from mockery since it can appear to parody whatever it
64 mimics. Mimicry, therefore, locates a crack in the certainty of colonial dominance, uncertainty in its control of
65 the behavior of the colonized (Para. 1).

66 The implication of the above is that mimicry is not just a mere imitation of the values and behaviours of the
67 colonial, postcolonial, or neocolonial masters but a tactic to achieve sarcasm as he observes:

68 [This is because] mimicry has often been an overt goal of imperial policy. For instance, Lord Macaulay's 1835
69 Minute to Parliament derided Oriental learning, and advocated the reproduction of English art and learning in
70 India (most strategically through the teaching of English literature). However, the method by which this mimicry
71 was to be achieved indicated the underlying weakness of imperialism (2).

72 From the above, it is clear that mimicry is a tool to create a crack in the walls of the superstructure and
73 humble their wings of dominance.

74 On her part, Archana Gupta opines that postcolonial literature is replete with such examples of colonial
75 mimicry. Citing the character of Ranjit Kripal in V. S Naipaul's The Mimic Men who changed to Ralph Singh
76 for the sake of becoming an Englishman and to be respected. However, he becomes ambivalent and disillusioned
77 with a fractured identity at the end. His sole idea of seeing English as a promised land finally fails him:

78 "So quickly [just so soon] had London gone sour on me. The great city, the center of the world, in which,
79 fleeing disorder, I had hoped to find the beginning of the order. So much had been promised by the physical
80 aspect? there is no light like that of the temperate zone" (18).

81 He feels ambivalent and begins to have feelings of discomfort as a result of the disappointment he has received
82 at the end of the day. Gupta presents the effects of the fake life of imitation that the central character receives:
83 "We pretended to be real, to be learning, to be preparing ourselves for life, we mimic men of the New World,
84 one unknown order of it, with all its reminders of the corruption that came so quickly to the new (146)." This
85 confirms Bhabha's conclusion after studying the works of Rudyard Kipling, George Orwell, and V. S. Naipaul
86 "that the effect of flawed colonial mimesis in which 'to be Anglicized, is emphatically not to be English" (qtd in
87 ??upta 4).

88 Frantz Fanon is another critic who examines the psychological effects of colonial domination in Black Skin,
89 White Masks. According to Fanon, mimicry exposes the trauma of being a 'Black' and the lingering desire to be
90 like the Whites. Fanon questions the rationale behind such actions: "What does the Black man want?" (qtd in
91 Gupta, 5). To Fanon, Black is not even a man. Thus, the desire to mimic the White haunts the Black day and
92 night. He concludes: "I am obliged to state it: For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is White" (5).

93 Similarly, Rodríguez Carmona and Miguel Pedro in their essay "He Milton Homer'd Himself: Parody, Mimicry,
94 and Postcolonial Insurgency in Alice Munro's Who Do You Think You Are?" analyze "complicity with postcolonial
95 issues of mimicry and parody as oriented to cross-examine colonialist modes of tradition, fiction, and subjectivity.
96 Double talks, ironies, and postcolonial transposals of domination come manifest in this short story whose mockery
97 proliferates in the hesitant uses through which the European tradition is watered down and parodied in order to
98 resist colonialist authority (11). Carmona and Pedro examine how Munro through the agency of characterization
99 parades the superiority of the Canadian masters. Munro's story locates somewhere between both constituents of
100 the colonial and cultural encounter and circumscribes itself within an insurgency that openly and self-consciously
101 reflects on the conditions of its own production. The above presupposes that the colonized people interacted
102 with the whites, as well as, examined their behaviours closely, forming certain aspects of their identities.

103 More so, the Europeans, as vividly explored by Edward Said in his well-received work Orientalism (1978),
104 established a belief that they were more sophisticated, refined, closely controlled, and conversant ones as compared
105 to colonized people who were considered as instinctive, primordial, and ill-bred ones. Said argues [?it is] the
106 representations of the 'Orient' in European literary works, travelogues and other writings [that] contributed to

107 the creation of a dichotomy between Europe and its 'others'" (43). This dichotomy was central to the creation
108 of European culture as well as to the maintenance and extension of European supremacy over other lands (43).

109 Volume XXII Issue VII Version I 6 () Writing on mimicry in Things Fall Apart, Monica Olsson observes, that
110 Enoch mimics what he believes a faithful Catholic should be like and Okonkwo resents men who are weak; he
111 feels they mimic their mothers. In Nwoye's case, it is his ambivalent efforts to become a man (10). Here, we see
112 the character of Enoch who has just accepted the tenets of the new religion and is making serious attempts to
113 become like them. Although he is not naturally violent, in a bid to be seen and addressed, as well as, respected
114 by all, he goes as far as destroying the community's oracle. What about Nwoye, he is originally a calm person
115 but due to his father's insults, he tries to mimic the life of hard people, but only arrives at a copy of his father.
116 He fails in his attempts to mimic his father. She writes:

117 Nwoye had since childhood constantly lived under his father's watchful eyes. He tried hard to become the
118 man his father wanted him to be, strong and masculine: "Nwoye knew that it was right to be masculine and to
119 be violent, but somehow he still preferred the stories that his mother used to tell" (Achebe 39).

120 Nwoye senses he needs to be masculine even if it does not reflect his nature. He does not have the ability
121 to be emotionally tough and angry. His images of how a man should act and behave does not agree with his
122 personality. However, he tries to imitate what he feels a man should be able to do; therefore, he begins to nag
123 about women's inability to do some tasks. He gets his father's endorsement when he does this, and he ends
124 up having contradictory feelings. His effort to mimic his father's ideals becomes difficult for him and upholding
125 it pushes him away from his father and the old culture. His failure manifests when he finds peace in the new
126 religion, which his father has discouraged him from.

127 From the above review, it is clear that the subject of mimicry has received critical attention over the years.
128 However, each presentation differs in interpretation and adaptation of the concept. More so, Elemefforo's Fountain
129 of Betrayal has not been examined along the axis of postcolonial mimicry or received such critical examination.
130 This paper, therefore, examines mimicry in Bhabha's lenses. However, here the concept is adopted and conceived
131 as an attempt by the female characters to measure up to the demands of their society, and their subsequent
132 imitation of such lifestyles with the desire to be like the rich. In the text, we see a desire by the female characters
133 to come out of their cell and live a better life. In the process, many lived in promiscuity while others on falsehood
134 to belong. Thus, mimicry here is not an imitation of colonial masters (whites) but a desire by the female
135 characters to be like the neocolonial agencies of state bourgeois: governors, commissioners, assembly members,
136 and other agents of the government.

137 5 III.

138 6 Theoretical Framework: Postcolonialism

139 Post-colonialism was developed in the early 19 th century and gained popularity in the late 20 th century. The
140 theory offers psychological relief to the colonized. Therefore, the interest of postcolonialism is to expose the evils
141 of colonialism in every postcolonial text in the form of mimicry or subtle resistance. It sees literature as a means
142 to probe into the history of society by recreating its past experiences to avoid future incidences. In their book,
143 "The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature, Ashcroft Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and
144 Helen Tiffin, assert that postcolonial criticism covers"... all culture affected by the imperial process from the
145 moment of colonization to present" (152). In essence, postcolonial attempts to dismantle in the words of Ayo
146 Kehinde, "the hegemonic boundaries and determinants that create an unequal relation of power based on binary
147 opposition such as 'Us' and 'Them', first worlds, and third world 'white' and the 'Black' colonizer and colonized
148 (273). Postcolonialism demonstrates mimicry as a feature. It is the strategy of manipulating an aspect of colonial
149 life: dress code, attitude, language, and culture with the intention to make a mockery of it, for its seemingly
150 utopian status. At other times, it may exhibit repetitions of vulgarism by imitating or reproducing a colonial
151 lifestyle that has taken centre stage in a postcolonial society as a way of resisting such oppressive tendencies
152 and exposing its banal nature. This approach is suitable for this study because the text under study examines
153 a manifestation of neocolonial traits, in the form of government agents, reproducing activities of colonialism:
154 oppression and exploitation by plundering others.

155 7 IV.

156 8 Synopsis of the Novel

157 In this episodic artwork, the writer, first of all, examines issues of double-standard with regards to moral decadence
158 in most societies as applicable to the Niger Delta. Here, we are introduced to Bodiere and her friend Ovie who
159 are out to make life meaningful for themselves since their immediate families have failed to do so. They form
160 solidarity in this struggle and begin to frolic with people of the other gender as a way of achieving their dream of
161 overcoming poverty and hegemony. The narrative reveals her immoral relationship with Amatu and chief Bogos
162 who functions as her bailout options or sources of survival. Later, her relationship with Amatu goes sour with the
163 pressure from her parents to go for chief Bogo. She finds it hard to do so but has no choice due to the pressure
164 from them. Bodiere narrates her ordeals with men and how she has been deceived by many in the process of
165 making sense out of life. She talks about Owate who scams her of connecting her to the commissioner for a

166 romantic affair. Owate promises her, he will connect her to the commissioner but she discovers later it was all a
 167 scam. She further expresses her worry about carrying the burden of her family from her sex business, a lifestyle
 168 she is not familiar with. It also unveils the challenges of Papawey and his ordeal during the army, especially, his
 169 abrupt retirement from the army for lack of proper certification and his sexual relationship with Angelina, the
 170 bar owner many years back. It also brings to fore Angelina's readiness to align with Papawey and the need for
 171 him to pay for her pride price and of course Papawey's sudden death in the forest before the arrival of Amatu
 172 from Odi. It was at the point of going to meet Papawey at Mbiam bridge that, he was arrested and taken to
 173 Prison. The next section of the novel is concerned with the Odi massacre and how Amatu was wooed by Dr.
 174 Olokumo to join the struggle and his subsequent imprisonment and release. It also examines the fate of the Odi
 175 people and how they were betrayed by those at the corridors of power. It also talks about his encounter with
 176 Obiageli, Ovie, and his subsequent unsuccessful marriage to Ovie after losing Bodiere to another man, due to his
 177 incarceration for years. We are also informed that Bodiere after losing her parents to the Odi crisis looked for
 178 Amatu, and even visited him in the prison but did not see him. His decision to marry Ovie was informed by her
 179 effort to ensure his release as a prison warden. Ovie later becomes a prison warden with the help of her boyfriend
 180 in the North. She finds Amatu in one of the prisons through the effort of Dr. Olokumo. The marriage did not
 181 last because of her life of promiscuity as a mimic. She was caught severally frolicking with her boyfriend and boss
 182 in the office who helps her with the job. The story ends on a note of sorrow as Amatu is turned in between two
 183 options either to travel out or stay to take care of his daughter, Somkime, or to remarry again. Most painfully
 184 to him, is his younger sister's marriage to Dr. Olokumo. Amatu could not understand how Dr. Olokumo used
 185 his absence and his little support to his family, to take advantage of his younger sister Imomotimi. However, his
 186 reunion with nurse Obiageli, a nurse who treats, and was fond of him in prison during his illness, after many
 187 years at the end signals some glimmer of hope for Amatu.

188 V.

189 9 Manifestation of Mimicry in Ted

190 Elemeforo's Fountain of Betrayal In Elemeforo's Fountain of Betrayal, the author brings to manifest the
 191 complexities of life and the dilemma of human existence, especially those on the side of the Niger Delta with
 192 multifaceted problems begging for attention. The novel re-echoes the motif of neocolonial forces on the eve
 193 of a postcolonial society. He foregrounds issues of promiscuity orchestrated by environmental forces and the
 194 unwinding of those already caught in the web of neocolonial elites who prey on their host. Elemeforo brings to
 195 fore others issues such as the Odi massacre and the betrayal of the Izons by their own sons. Most importantly, the
 196 forceful plundering of the Odi people by agencies of federal powers. Although the plot of the story lacks cohesion
 197 and coherency, one could see the attempts by the author to give a vivid description of what life holds out for the
 198 people of the Nige Delta at the boom of oil activities. There is every reason to believe that what later led to the
 199 revolution of Odi, and her subsequent attack by agencies of federal powers is orchestrated by the absolute neglect
 200 of the people amidst the pool of oil wonders. One who sees through the eyes of the omniscient narrator that
 201 life is not pleased with the people of the Niger Delta. This we see in the characters Papawey, Mama, Bodiere,
 202 Ovie, Amatu, Imomotimi, and others. There is every reason to believe that most of these characters turned into
 203 mimics, that is imitating the lifestyle of others, especially, the females as a way of trying to find existence and
 204 acceptance in a bizarre society.

205 Mimicry manifests in the text at various levels of relationships. The women in the novel are mimics. Like
 206 Nwoye in Things Fall Apart who tries to mimic the hard nature of his father Okonkwo even though he acts
 207 feminine in nature. He does this to gain respect and approval from his father, however, he feels ambivalent and
 208 lost to the other religion. This is exactly the case of Bodiere and other female characters in the novel. A critical
 209 study of the novel will reveal that Bodiere does not like her lifestyle of hopping from one man to the other. More
 210 so, it is not in her gene as an Izon girl, to be wobbly for any Dick and Harry but society has constructed her
 211 to mimic this kind of life pattern that is weird to the Izons. She becomes a mimic and aspires to live like those
 212 in positions of authority. This, she only achieves by becoming a ready meal for any man that can foot her bills
 213 so she can also belong to the class of big girls in the city. Bodiere has to measure up by living the life of those
 214 big girls in big cities who frolic around their sugar Daddies. Another reason she mimics the lifestyle of those big
 215 people is the pressure from her parents. It is clear from the text that Bodiere is the pillar of the family. She
 216 provides for every need of her immediate family from food, clothing, and shelter. We see her resentment toward
 217 the kind of life she lives and more angrily, her parents' docile moral position on it. Don't tell me that, Bodiere's
 218 voice rose like tiny chimes of bells strung on Ogboin wester. How could you say they love me? Is not for the
 219 food I put on the table and clothes I put on their backs to hide their nakedness that triggers as seeming parental
 220 affection? How else do you think they can coax me to continue carrying such heavy loads on my fragile shoulder?
 221 (Fountain of Betrayal, 11).

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224 Bodiere is angry that a little girl of her age could be coaxed by her parents to mimic such life of waywardness
 225 that she doesn't want to toe. She vents her anger on her lazy parents: Papawey and Mama for stressing her

226 beyond her boundaries at her age. It is evident from the text that Bodiere does not have any serious job she
227 does expect to search for sugar Daddies who can pay. This is the reason she does not like the initial idea of her
228 parents, parting with Amatu for chief Bogos because according to her, Amatu pays more. More so, he is more
229 generous than chief Bogos: "Chief Bogos is like a pit in my stomach. I don't have an ounce of feeling for him. I
230 can't bear the thought of hanging out forever with a croaking frog" (FOB, 12).

231 From the above, it is obvious she does not really cherish the idea of double-dating but she has to mimic such
232 a lifestyle to get approval from her parents like Oduche and Nwoye in Arrow of God and Things Fall Apart.
233 Bodiere's parents want her to continue in her life of promiscuity so far as it is putting food on their table. They
234 are ready to hand her over to any man that has the cash to pay for their bills. The ambivalence in her case is
235 her occasional venting of anger. She really wants to imitate such a bogus lifestyle but is obvious it is not part
236 of her. The more she tries to be like her objects of mimic, she only becomes a blurred copy that is 'almost the
237 same but not quite in the words of Bhabha (86). She writes:

238 "My pain is that they are only concerned about stepping up their comfort at my expense. Unfortunately, I
239 seem to be their only bailout option. I constantly, hear unspoken words—go ye into the world of men and make
240 money for us. 'Nothing else matters to them. They make me feel like a prize monkey? Amatu is just fond of me
241 and he does not bore me. He's at my beck and call and doesn't assume the air of importance of typical men of
242 his age, who pick up your bill?" (13).

243 Like Pauline in Louise Erdrich's Tracks who made a serious effort to look like the colonial masters by becoming
244 a Nun. Pauline tries hard to get salvation and she feels she needs to try harder than the other Nuns. She wants
245 to suffer like Christ; therefore, she decides to wear her "shoes on the wrong feet" (Olsson 9). The psychological
246 pressure, the family of Bodiere, puts on her to become like others makes her feel she needs to prove to them
247 that she can be like them, and the only way to do this is to exaggerate her ways. Her struggle to become like
248 them places her in situations where her efforts to reach her goals are impossible. She will never become like
249 them. Bodiere's efforts become ridiculous as she is trying to mimic someone or something else without success as
250 Bhabha puts it: "a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite ??Bhabha, ??22). In another
251 instance, she reveals her disappointment in trying to please her parents, especially Mama:

252 Bodiere is a mimic by all spheres. She is only doing whatever she does to measure up to her family's
253 expectations. Although, it does not flow down with her feelings but the constant pressure from her family
254 leaves her with no option. She acts big to impress people around her. In summary, she wants to be another
255 person. And of course, it landed her in serious trouble. There are indications that the disease she contracted
256 is Hiv/Aids. The narrators say this about her: Binara (sister), you would not believe who I saw today at the
257 hospital" ?Who? Bodiere! She looks like Bonga fish. I almost missed her face...she is very sick?but suspect
258 Hiv/Aids? what else can emaciate a person that quickly? Her big eye has put her in trouble (FOB195).

259 It is true that Bodiere has a big eye. She is not satisfied and more importantly, wants to be like others. Thus,
260 she mimics their behavior and pattern of life so she can be counted among the comity of big girls (upper class).

261 Another female character that is a mimic is Ovie. Ovie is an intimate friend of Bodiere. She is also a product
262 of her environment. Like Bodiere, she also mimics the life of others to appear good and please a similar pressure
263 to meet up her challenges. Ovie was driven out by her mother because she vehemently advised her mother against
264 an immoral affair with Tuowei. There are clear indications that she too, like Bodiere has been responsible for
265 the upkeep of her own nuclear family. She finds succor in the hands of Bodiere who gives her shelter. Ovie has
266 also had countless relationships with men. She expresses her regret for dating guys who cannot pay her bills.
267 She laments the treatment from Tolumoye, one of her boyfriends she has always washed clothes for and even
268 iron. She expects him to take up her responsibility as a girlfriend but it seems Tolumoye does not cherish her
269 oval butts and gives her the needed attention like other men do when they see butts. She also complained about
270 Kunle, who seems to give her the needed attention but does not pay her bills. The narrator writes this about
271 her:

272 Life had not been fair to her at all, she thought. She had always been a pawn in the hands of people who
273 claimed to love her?The other day, Tolumoye whose clothes she always washed and ironed—the one from whom
274 she had, at least expected some form of reciprocation in love, snubbed her before a skinny, busty Yoruba girl
275 named Toyin". A girl she was sure, was not half as beautiful as she was?Why were people so blind to her good
276 side, she wondered. Many men praised her for round butt—an asset some girls would kill to have, but for her, it
277 seemed slow in yielding the desired dividends (FOB, 32).

278 It is clear from the above that Ovie too wants to be like other girls and become socially relevant in the dating
279 game. She wants to belong to the class of girls rolling with big names in town. So, to actualize that dream
280 of becoming another, she offers herself to any man ready to pay the bills, so she can step up. She mimics the
281 character of other big girls in cities like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt who run into senators, ministers, and
282 other government functionaries. In one of her outings with Bodiere she tells Bodiere that they should leave the
283 restaurant early because of the remote nature of the place. According to her, it is not the kind of place big boys
284 show up to pay bills because the environment is not clean. This implies, Ovie wants to belong to the class of big
285 girls and have big boys, foot her bills. The writer puts it: "Pay the bills land let's get out of here before flies eat
286 up your flesh jare. There is no need to waste time here. This is not the kind of restaurant where big boys show
287 to pick your bills with pleasure. The ones that visit here job you instead" (FOB 13).

288 She thinks flaunting her butts before men will attract them to pay the bills for her, hence her regret. Like

289 the character of Naomi in Tanizaki. Jun'ichiro. Naomi mimics the English language and finally decides to study
290 English just so she can marry Jojo. Ovie has to mimic the life of immorality and flaunt her butts around the big
291 boys and sugar Daddys so she can measure up with the current trend of her society. No wonder, she deceives
292 Kunle, another of boyfriends that she is pregnant, to see how he will react and take her seriously. However,
293 when she discovers he does not accept the news of her pregnancy, she forced him to give her enough money for
294 an abortion. Ovie wants a serious man who can foot her bills. She wanted to test if Kunle can finally be at her
295 beck and call if she informs him about her pregnancy. On the contrary, he rejected the news. According to her,
296 Kunle is insensitive her to needs, her wants and luxuries: "He was so stingy, proud, self-centered, unfaithful and
297 arrogant?she later discovered to her chagrin that he did not want to be bothered with her toiletries, her clothes
298 or welfare" (FOB, 32). Her desire to be like others did not end with Kunle and others but took her to the North
299 and the man helps her with a job as a warden. Even as a prison warden, she still desires to be like her big bosses
300 in her office, which is the reason she commits adultery with her boss and was caught by Amatu her husband.
301 Ovie's pant for promotion, so he could be like others in society, pushes her to commit adultery. Hear this:

302 And while he thought it abominable for her to cheat on him even once, her sharp resorts when she lost control
303 of herself did not only hint at her indifference to possible past infidelity; the act seemed not sacrilegious enough
304 for her to recant it or foreclose recurrent. He found it difficult to comprehend the idea of his wife contemplating
305 romance with another man. What troubled him was that?appear accidental; it was premeditated? she subtly
306 justified her action, asking how else could she have got all the favours and promotions in an establishment such as
307 the Nigerian Prisons, if she did not flirt with the authorities in order to give her family the comfort they deserve?
308 And could she solely provide for the family if she didn't overlook moral and ethical standards (FOB, 324).

309 It is vivid from the above that Ovie wants to like her others (her bosses) and gain the respect they have and
310 earn the kind of money they earn. According to her, she is ready to do anything that will place her in the skim
311 of things with others in her society. She is not bothered about marital ethics and moral standards because it will
312 not put food on her table. This implies, that what motivates her actions, is to be like them someday. This is the
313 view of Amardeep Singh when he said "mimicry in colonial and postcolonial literature is most commonly seen
314 when members of a colonized society (say, Indians or Africans) imitate the language, dress, politics, or cultural
315 attitude of their colonizers (say, the British or the French) ? ("Mimicry and Hybridity in Plain English" para.
316 3). In other words, mimicry is seen as an opportunistic pattern of behavior where one copies the person in power
317 because one hopes to have access to that same power oneself someday. This is the driving force behind Ovie's
318 actions throughout the novel.

319 12 VI.

320 13 Conclusion

321 The paper has so far examined mimicry in the characters of Bodiere and Ovie, the two major female characters
322 in the selected text. The essay has also demonstrated with textual shreds of evidence the how two characters
323 mimic the behavior of others in an attempt to be like them. It is also clear from the text that both characters are
324 representative of other female characters. This is because the life of promiscuity that runs in their veins could
325 is not different from the other women in the text. They all were at one point of the other mimic women. From
326 Angelina to Mama, Imomotimi, Iniyi, Alaere, and the rest. They all demonstrated activities of double-standard.
327 And the reason for such was to mimic a better life out; to become like another person. No wonder, they all
328 demonstrated the big eye syndrome, running after luxury under poor foundations. The paper submits that what
329 Elemele has achieved in this novel is to question the ill motivations behind the mimicry of the neocolonialists'
330 behaviours, values, and lifestyle by the oppressed or colonized (women).

331 14 Works Cited

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¹Mimicry in Ted Elemele's Fountain of Betrayal

²"I don't find this funny mama", Bodiere said?Just a week ago, I gave you three thousand nairas for the fish
because we have foodstuffs and ingredients. Now you're telling me you have nothing left to cook today". And to
make things worse, you are supporting your son for squandering the money I gave him" (FOB, 25).

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