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Mimicry in Ted Elemeforo's *Fountain of Betrayal*

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Abstract- This paper examines mimicry as an opportunistic pattern of behavior where women or the oppressed copy or imitate the lifestyle, pattern, language, values, dress codes and food of people in power with the hope or desire to have access to that same power in the future in Ted Elemeforo's *Fountain of Betrayal*. Although the concept of mimicry has received significant attention, *Fountain of Betrayal* has not been examined along this axis. Furthermore, most of these earlier studies conceived mimicry only as an attempt by the colonized (black) to mimic the colonizer (white). The significance of this work is that it adopts the concept to mean, an attempt by the oppressed, especially women or any person in a disadvantaged position to mimic the behaviour of those in advantageous positions. Hence, it has added novelty to the corpus of Niger Delta literary scholarship. The essay adopts the qualitative research method for data collection, while the postcolonial theory was applied for analysis. Findings show that the actions of the women in the text are geared toward becoming relevant in the society they find themselves. The essay concludes that as pleasurable and desirable mimicry seems, it is also subversive. The study recommends a fair share of the oil boom in the Niger Delta across genders without discrimination. More so, further exploration of the concepts be done in recent Niger Deltan texts, to find out some other reasons for mimicry.

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MIMICRYINTEDELEMEFOROSFOUNTAINOFBETRAYAL

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I. Introduction

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

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

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

Author's Bio Data

Ted Tonbara Elemeforo hails from Okordia in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. He had formal education at St. Mathias Primary School Amarata, Bishop Dimieari Grammar School Yenagoa, and the University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, where he is rounding off a Graduate Programme in International Relations. He had a brief spell in politics in his early twenties when he was elected Councillor representing Ward 14 (Okordia-Zarama) in Yenagoa Local Government Area (between 1991 and 1993) and had afterward remained an advocate for good governance. His entrance novel, *Child of Destiny* published by Kraft Books, Ibadan in 2009 has been listed twice as an approved literature text for secondary schools in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. He is a Deacon in the Church of God Mission International, the current State house of Assembly member, representing the good characters of Yenagoa Constituency 3 in Bayelsa State house of Assembly and above all, married with children.

II. Review of Related Literature

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

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

Aligning with Becker on this view is Nasrullah Mambrol who avers that mimicry should be a channel for the subaltern to resist class oppression. This is because since mimicry is not far from mockery, it should be used to locate a crack in the postcolonial masters and attack with the intention of weakening the power it possesses. He puts it succinctly:

> … mimicry is never very far from mockery since it can appear to parody whatever it mimics. Mimicry, therefore, locates a crack in the certainty of colonial dominance, uncertainty in its control of the behavior of the colonized (Para. 1).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

More so, the Europeans, as vividly explored by Edward Said in his well-received work *Orientalism* (1978), established a belief that they were more sophisticated, refined, closely controlled, and conversant ones as compared to colonized people who were considered as instinctive, primordial, and ill-bred ones. Said argues […it is} the representations of the 'Orient' in European literary works, travelogues and other writings [that} contributed to the creation of a dichotomy between Europe and its 'others'" (43). This dichotomy was central to the creation of European culture as well as to the maintenance and extension of European supremacy over other lands (43).

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Writing on mimicry in *Things Fall Apart*, Monica Olsson observes, that Enoch mimics what he believes a faithful Catholic should be like and Okonkwo resents men who are weak; he feels they mimic their mothers. In Nwoye's case, it is his ambivalent efforts to become a man (10). Here, we see the character of Enoch who has just accepted the tenets of the new religion and is making serious attempts to become like them. Although he is not naturally violent, in a bid to be seen and addressed, as well as, respected by all, he goes as far as destroying the community's oracle. What about Nwoye, he is originally a calm person 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. He fails in his attempts to mimic his father. She writes:

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

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

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

III. Theoretical Framework: Postcolonialism

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

IV. Synopsis of the Novel

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

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

V. Manifestation of Mimicry in Ted Elemeforo's *Fountain of Betrayal*

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

Mimicry manifests in the text at various levels of relationships. The women in the novel are mimics. Like Nwoye in *Things Fall Apart* who tries to mimic the hard nature of his father Okonkwo even though he acts feminine in nature. He does this to gain respect and approval from his father, however, he feels ambivalent and lost to the other religion. This is exactly the case of Bodiere and other female characters in the novel. A critical study of the novel will reveal that Bodiere does not like her lifestyle of hopping from one man to the other. More so, it is not in her gene as an Izon girl, to be wobbly for any Dick and Harry but society has constructed her to mimic this kind of life pattern that is weird to the Izons. She becomes a mimic and aspires to live like those in positions of authority. This, she only achieves by becoming a ready meal for any man that can foot her bills 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 big girls in big cities who frolic around their sugar Daddies. Another reason she mimics the lifestyle of those big people is the pressure from her parents. It is clear from the text that Bodiere is the pillar of the family. She provides for every need of her immediate family from food, clothing, and shelter. We see her resentment toward the kind of life she lives and more angrily, her parents' docile moral position on it.

> Don't tell me that, Bodiere's voice rose like tiny chimes of bells strung on *Ogboin wrester*. How could you say they love me? Is not for the food I put on the table and clothes I put on their backs to hide their nakedness that triggers as seeming parental affection… How else do you think they can coax me to continue carrying such heavy loads on my fragile shoulder? (*Fountain of Betrayal,* 11).

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Bodiere is angry that a little girl of her age could be coaxed by her parents to mimic such life of waywardness that she doesn't want to toe. She vents her anger on her lazy parents: Papawey and Mama for stressing her beyond her boundaries at her age. It is evident from the text that Bodiere does not have any serious job she does expect to search for sugar Daddies who can pay. This is the reason she does not like the initial idea of her parents, parting with Amatu for chief Bogos because according to her, Amatu pays more. More so, he is more generous than chief Bogos: "Chief Bogos is like a pit in my stomach. I don't have an ounce of feeling for him. I can't bear the thought of hanging out forever with a croaking frog" (*FOB*, 12).

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

> "My pain is that they are only concerned about stepping up their comfort at my expense. Unfortunately, I seem to be their only bailout option. I constantly, hear unspoken words---go ye into the world of men and make money for us. 'Nothing else matters to them. They make me feel like a prize monkey…Amatu is just fond of me 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 his age, who pick up your bill…" (13).

Like Pauline in Louise Erdrich's *Tracks* who made a serious effort to look like the colonial masters by becoming a Nun. Pauline tries hard to get salvation and she feels she needs to try harder than the other Nuns. She wants to suffer like Christ; therefore, she decides to wear her "shoes on the wrong feet" (Olsson 9). The psychological pressure, the family of Bodiere, puts on her to become like others makes her feel she needs to prove to them that she can be like them, and the only way to do this is to exaggerate her ways. Her struggle to become like them places her in situations where her efforts to reach her goals are impossible. She will never become like them. Bodiere's efforts become ridiculous as she is trying to mimic someone or something else without success as Bhabha puts it: "a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite (Bhabha, 122). In another instance, she reveals her disappointment in trying to please her parents, especially Mama:

> "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).

Bodiere is a mimic by all spheres. She is only doing whatever she does to measure up to her family's expectations. Although, it does not flow down with her feelings but the constant pressure from her family leaves her with no option. She acts big to impress people around her. In summary, she wants to be another person. And of course, it landed her in serious trouble. There are indications that the disease she contracted is Hiv/Aids. The narrators say this about her:

> Binara (sister), you would not believe who I saw today at the hospital" …Who? Bodiere! She looks like Bonga fish. I almost missed her face...she is very sick…but suspect Hiv/Aids… what else can emaciate a person that quickly? *Her big eye has put her in trouble* (*FOB*195).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

VI. Conclusion

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

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