

Secularism: African Literature in Relation to Religious Traditions

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Abstract

The issue of secularism in the African environment has been an age-long debate. This has attracted series of arguments and counter-arguments. Such controversies are expected given the religious and philosophical phenomenon and the African writers' portrayal of religious role in African society. This paper's goal is to assess the views of several African writers on the issue of secularism on the religious and philosophical themes of their writing. The major objective is to provide knowledge and tool to enable contributions of literature to African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam. The focus of the paper is on the African spiritual transformation which will constitute the main structure of the black race with its connection to general existence.

Index terms— secularism, religion, african literature, christianity, islam.

1 Introduction

Thinking about secularism in African literature, foremost African writers are confidently secular in the manner and presentation of the fictional works which might be seen as representative of much modern literary works. The novel contributes greatly towards a broad categorizing identification of secularism in Africa. Notable African writers whose religious themes capture attention in a secular state include Chinua Achebe, Ibrahim Tahir, Ngugi Wa Thiango, Ayi Kwei Armah, Zaynab Alkali, Mongo Beti, Chiekh Hamidou Kane, Ousmane Sembane amongst several others. This array of African writers provokes secularism perspective and expressly brings into lime light serious religious traditions for public identification.

African writers share broad historical phenomenon, literary secularism and religious generalization. Through careful reading and apparent firmness, the African fiction crosses national and religious boundaries and the continued influence and power of religious communities and institutions. The issue of secularism in literature is better understood by identifying what exactly is meant by the secular and religious which is fervently explained by having proper view of religious studies, sociology of religion and the good understanding of Max Weber's theory of sociology and Marx's political philosophy.

Reading the fictional works of Ngugi Wa Thiango, Chinua Achebe, Ibrahim Tahir, Cheikh Hamidou Kane and Ousmane Sembane as well as Ayi Kwei Armah one will discover the novelists' respective view of secularism. These are identified as mimetic; they represent the continued power of religious communities and institutions. They as well express deep coimbrications of modern, secular discourses such as nationalism and individualism with particular religious traditions and affiliations. Also their point of interaction between the secular and religious is thematic. It is quite notable in their works to discover religious scriptures, narratives and metaphors. They again establish their measure of power over religious scriptures, producing texts of human rather than divine provenance. Diana (2001) and Armstrong (2001), great theologian and anthropologist inquired the wisdom in modernity as a divisive, universal movement towards secularization as a historical event. In the works of African novelists, secular and religious exist in cultural life. In Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Moseley (2017) portrays Igbo society and the Christian Missionaries and their religion. In his novel, shows the importance of religion in Igbo society and how intertwined religion and community are with one another thus making it impossible to discuss one without also discussing the other. Kane (2011) in *Ambiguous Adventure* describes a conflict between culture and faith, a foreign invader and a conquered people, about the colonial accident conquering the country of the Diallobe. This was a conflict between what is of a religious nature and a secular nature. Ngugi Wa Thiango in

Petals of Blood dissects the opportunistic neo-colonial ruling clique in order to expose Christianity's role as a tool to parry the masses in capitalist exploitation.

The aim of the overall research of this study is to explore how African literary writers understand and enact cultural heritage in terms of tradition and religion in their fictional works. It examines the possibility of using creative literary works as illustrative material in the study of African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam. This confirms that the subject of the study is unique. The study is conducted within the theoretical framework of religious studies where religion is seen as a social institution which governs the beliefs and activities of its members.

The study adopts the qualitative descriptive and comparative methods in the analysis of data collected. The qualitative method enables the researcher to make counterfactual analysis of data sources as they relate to the African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam. The values and the ritual rites of the African traditions were analyzed side by side with Christianity and Islamic values and rites. In this research paper, sample of fictional writings of African writers were taken in order to find out how they pay attention to African cultural heritage and religion. In order to produce more lucid knowledge about the themes of their writings on African traditions and religion the African writers explored the African environment to capture missionary exploit through religion into the continent.

The researcher collected data from works of African fictional writers, journal articles and internet materials. Analysis was done illustrating certain views on religion, the religious and the secular.

2 II.

3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the research study is to create a situation whereby the novelists and the readers come to equilibrium create meaning in a literary text. The African novels will provide these layers of theory of the discourse world, the text world and the sub-world in which the novelist and reader come together to create and build a world in their mind to negotiate the theme. Through the text world the novelist creates mental constructions. The sub-world involve a number of switches temporarily and/or spatially from the text world into the sub-worlds.

4 Concept of Religion

Religion constitutes an inextricable part of African society. According to Herold Koeing (2009), religion constitutes of belief, practices and rituals that are related to the sacred to God, to the mystrial or to the supernatural. It constitutes the root from which the different branches and life sprout, grow and flourish.

Religion is a concept widely discussed about in the world presently, talking about it, people focus on its expression, or manifestations instead of its relevance. In defining it, institutions, societies, peoples and disciplines state their views depending on area of specialization. Philosophers, historians, theologians, psychologists and sociologists amongst others attribute religion to mean different things. This means that there is no universally accepted definition of religion.

Ogolla (2014) citing Rahner (1981) states the possible root of the term religion to the Latin word "religio" with different forms such as "relegere", "religari" and "reeligere". According to him, "Relegere" means to constantly turn to or conscientiously observe. "Relign" means binding oneself to one's origin and goal. "Reeligere" means choosing again to live religiously by one's origin and goal. These three suggests that there is an object connected with the goal and origin of life that people constantly turn to through religion.

Also citing a psychologist, Sigmund Freud (1907) Ogolla (2014) observes that religion is a universal obsession, a neurosis and an attempt to control the oedipal complex. His observation links religion with some complexes in a person's psyche which is truly narrow.

Paul Tillich a known philosopher notes that Religion is the "ultimate concern" which appears to be vague since it doesn't clarify what this ultimate concern is as human beings have so many ultimate concerns. A theologian, Edward Taylor observes that religion is belief in spiritual beings. The explanations above show that Religion is not easily defined. In Africa, no community has one religion in their language.

Ogolla (2014) quoting Mbiti (1975) describes Religion in an African's understanding as that which sums up beliefs, values and morals, places and objects and officials and leaders considered to be religious. Shuurman (2011) states that religion constitutes the main fabric of African societies and is intertwined with their general existence. According to Kalu (2010) despite the myriads of subcultures, there are common denominators and cultural signifiers that under score shares identity and denote the deep level of assumption that format the varied cultural ingredients and provide larger meaning.

5 IV.

6 Religions in Africa

Africa is characterized with almost all the religions of the world such as African Religion, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and others. The most common religions in the African environment are African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam.

The Traditional African Religion is practiced by all indigenous African people. This form of religion is regarded as ethnic by many philosophers, theologians and students of comparative religion. This is why African Traditional Religions is seen as magic and fetish. It has no known founder, not written in scriptures, has no converts or missionaries. It organizes the lives of Africans very well like other religions. The adherents of African religion do not exhibit dear distinction of secular or sacred religion in practice. This is because religion and culture are intertwined. According to Kirwen (2008), African Religion is rooted in the people's culture, politics, economics, aesthetics, ethics, artifacts and belief system. He further observes that Africans depend on elders and their wise counsel for the leadership of the community. Ogolla (2014) notes that to the Africans, the Supreme Being is the most powerful followed by the spirits, ancestors, human beings, animals, plants and inorganic matter in that order. Africans believe that some evil exists in the world in the form of people who are antilife like witches, sorcerers, the evil eye and eve night runners. The ancestors are the African saints. These are people who conducted themselves well and attained a full life by going through all the rites of passage, dying a good death and acquiring a decent burial.

Another predominant religion in Africa is Christianity. This religion was brought to Africa by missionaries. The missionaries as evangelizers converted many Africans to Christianity. According to ??uganei (2002), the Africans because of their notoriety in religion made it easy to be absorbed into Christianity. Other reasons for their easy conversions included the transition of the Bible and the view that Christianity would make people assess education, good health, good food amongst others. It was also viewed as religion of the civilized.

Another major missionary religion that has good number of followers in Africa is Islam. Mvumbi (2008) notes that Muslims take their religion as the last revealed religions. Its beginning goes back to the years between 610 and 613 AD when Prophet Mohammed began to receive revelations in caves around Mecca. He further describes Islam as a religion of peace acquired through the voluntary self surrender of God. According to Ogolla (2014) citing Stamer (1995), this religion has been distorted by fundamentalists. He further says that true Muslims are never violent.

V.

7 Challenges Facing Religion

Since the focus of this paper is on true secularism of African literature: relationship to religious traditions. It is important to identify some of the challenges facing religion in Africa.

African Religion faces great challenge as a result of introduction of Christianity. Christianity is presented by the missionaries in a western culture. Ogolla (2014) citing Mbiti (1991) observes that Christianity pits two cultures against each other and goes ahead to prove that one is better than the other. This challenge are clearly seen in the areas of African rituals, initiations, marriage customs, methods of dealing with diseases, misfortune and suffering and the place of sorcery, evil, magic and witch craft in an Africa's life. The missionaries who came to Africa branded these as uncivilized and fetish. He further notes that Africans respect their forefathers as ancestors yet in Christianity, they are referred to as lost souls. Mugambi (2002) notes that despite the challenges of African Religion, that there is a process going on known as the Africanisation of Christianity. The idea of this is indigenization of Christianity through enculturation. The major challenge of Christianity in Africa is secularism. Most Africans practice only a percentage of Christianity and percentage of African Religion. They are Christians by day and African Traditional Religions at night. They carry out Christian activities during the day and in most cases involve in certain rituals or consultations with diviners at night. Ogolla (2014) also citing Baur (1994) notes that this was a mistake created by the missionaries who dismissed African Religion and culture and referred it to fetish, pagan and native.

Another major challenge to Christianity in Africa is the multiplicity of churches whose agenda and mission are out rightly different. They use the same Bible, believe in the same God, the same saviour and Holy Spirit but still attend different Christian groupings. One would now ask whether all these churches serve the same God or different ones. The question is this "is there really a true Christian church? The differences and divisions still persist.

Christianity is greatly challenged by immorality among the adherents. This act has discouraged a lot of people. There have been cases where pastors are discovered with other men's wives in bed. Some have intimate relationship and desire with other ladies. In a case like this, what would be the views of such husbands on the said pastors and their churches? People are becoming very secular today. People tend to withdraw and never value church attendance, prayers or Christian activities.

Islam is also adopted as a religion of evangelization in Africa. The Islamic evangelizers did not insist on Africans abandoning their cultural practices totally. The greatest challenge to Islam is Islamic and fundamentalism. Such fundamentalists include al Shabaab, Boko Haram, Hamas, al Qaeda and other Islamic-militant groups. These groups are not authentic Muslims as was noted by the prophet. Ogolla (2014) quoting ??lein (1971)

8 Secularism in Africa

The concept of secularism was developed in relation to its sibling concept of secularization. According to Demerath, (2000), the way it points to how the image of the nation intersects with specific conceptions of religion is akin to the concepts of civil religion. Dobbeleare (2002) notes secularization as a sociological concept pointing

to situations where religion as institutions, practices and philosophers have lost power and influences over politics, governance and individuals. According to Asad (2009), secularism differs from this in that it does not only signify that religions institutions and practices have lost power in relation between state and religion. Taylor (2007) secularism is a hand when specific form of nationalism, which privileges particular western protestant notions of religion and religiosity has become hegemonic. Brown (2013) argues that although secularism claims not to take a stand in matters of religion, it is inherently generative and suffused with religious contact. Secularism is a situation where religion not only has lost power over society and individuals but where it has been replaced by the absence or incomprehensibility of everything religious as the obsolete dangerous other. According to Brown, Western secularism is signified by the following claims (a)secularism generates religious neutrality (b)secularism is equally available to all religious (c)secularism generates tolerance as mutual respect among religions and (d)secularism generates gender equality and freedom for women.

According to Aylward (2007) citing Mbiti (1969) describes Africans as notoriously religious. This he asserts that African religiosity corresponds to most ideas of African people's reality as one of ancient religious traditions, Islam dominating huge swathes of the African continent and Christians in their first favour, new religious movements proliferating.

Aylward describes secularism as a datum of modern society. According to him, secularism stems from explicit unbelief, the denial of the existence of God or of any religious dimension to human life. This unbelief results from a formal, atheistic, rational philosophy. Secularism shaves allegiance with popular myth in science as the ultimate theory of everything, a conviction that the only truth is accessible to scientific observation and experiment. Aylward (2007) further citing Bertsch (1994) asserts that it is a faith in unlimited human progress. According to him, the faith is disturbed by the current ecological crisis, and the realization that the maintenance of material standards in Europe and North America depends on the collapse and possible elimination of vital resources.

Ademowo (2014) describes secularism as positive philosophy which reflects the essence of human life. This he explains improves human condition treated as material question, not spiritual, and is best achieved through human efforts instead of suffocations before deities. Diala (2019) citing Kenney and Smith (2011) notes secularism as a historical process through which society and culture are delivered from tutelage of religious control and closed metaphysical world view.

Secularism espouses a major challenge in Africa. In several of Africa's society there is a separation of shrine and state, of priests and kingship, of slave and earthly affairs. Secularism faces unique challenges in Africa because of the complex interplay between indigenous and colonial cultures, religion and politics. Culture has impacted religion in Africa. Secularism is necessary as the rise of sectarian violence and religion extremism threatens peace on the continent. It provides accountability in Africa.

9 VII. Emergence of Literary Secularism in African

Reality of African literature draws its force from the reality of the world outlook. According to Amardeep (2006), fictional tradition demands improbable occurrences of magic, ghosts, coincidences that dismantle belief, forced miracles and great magical tales. African literature moves the shadow of doubt. The belief in African fiction is in itself metaphorical. It resembles actual belief. Accepting this strong claim, the emergence of Chinua Achebe's novel, *Things Fall Apart* marks a period of transition from dominance of absolute Biblical narratives to the much more contingent world of fiction. Fiction as a kind of storytelling invented by African writers like Cheikh Hamidou Kane, Ngugi Wa Thiang'o, Ibrahim Tahir and Ayi Kwei Armah presents belief in the worlds created in their write ups are quite notorial. Amardeep (2006) notes that literature as an engine of secularism expresses philosophical and political subject matters. The secular nature of African literary stories displays philosophical, cultural, religious and political themes.

The religious outlook of secularism in literature is accounted for in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* which shares some of the problems of material and spiritual self-sufficiency. Achebe provides example of the production of food in *Things Fall Apart*. The animals also contribute to the village self-sufficiently, namely the spiritual fulfillment. The animals are used for sacrifice. This enables and facilitates the village religious traditions. The works of Ibrahim Tahir -*The Last Imam* and *Ambiguous Adventure* of Cheikh Hamid Kane distinguishes the idea of secularization. The story in the *Last Imam* takes place in a typical Hausa-Fulani cultural setting in Bauchi, Nigeria. The Fulani came to the lands of Hausa bringing in their Islamic influences. Ochonu (2008) notes that among the Islamic influences of the Fulani on the Hausa community was the establishment of Islamic caliphate. Bangura (2000) explains that the novel *The Last Imam* revolves around the life of Alhaji Usman, the central figure in this story, as he undergoes life conflicts and dilemmas. Bangura (2000) further expresses the intense conflicts between unIslamic cultural practices with Islamic practices. Cheikh Hamidou Kane in his novel *Ambiguous Adventure* describes a conflict between culture and faith. According to Kane (2011), the conflict between what is of a religious nature and a secular nature is, without doubt, the most structuring element of the book. In *Ambiguous Adventure*, the country of Diallobe is entirely ruled by a culture of faith, a mystical faith which is turned towards darkness and gives the afterlife a supremacy that the West has subjugated by force. This goes to explain that the Western world has since Renaissance been engaged in a process of secularization that first began, timidly, by putting God in parentheses.

Ngugi Wa Thiang'o in his writing and cultural activism uses history of colonization to throw light on the

African past and in the process, creates awareness and consciousness of African history. This is illustrated in the themes of his novels with recurring central message of Christianity. This is specifically noticeable in novels like *The Black Hermit* (1968), *A Grain of Wheat* (1967) *Weep not Child* (1964) and *Devil on the Cross* (1982). In these literary works, Ngugi uses history of colonization to create a theological narrative. Ngugi's writing is that, between Christianity and African religion. The relative importance of religion in Ngugi's novels suggests not in sincerity but the profound secularization of his outlook, a secularization which was a marked feature of his time. In the *Petals of Blood*, Ngugi's hero Karega meditates on the ebbing of the Christian religion throughout the world; it is a worrisome divided minority force in a largely pagan world, and God's final intervention seems remoter than ever.

The African writers wreak havoc on the categories of the secular and the religious. As a result of deep inter-closeness of the ideas of the secular and the concept of religion, the differences in religious culture become necessary. The role of religion in society Islamic, Christianity and Traditional are embodied in faith. The differences in these religion changes are the possible parameters of secularism and secularization. The major differences in the history and structure of religion in the African continent are as a result of intrareligious sectarian wars. According to Amardeep (2006), the imposition of foreign religious authority was an important aspect of colonial establishment. This religious identity marked a necessary component of the nationalist struggle.

Political and religious complexities were responsible for differences in responses within Africa by literacy writers. Historical emergence of literary secularism in Africa as no simple progress from secular to religious. Early African writers like Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thiango, Ibrahim Tahir, Ousmane Sembane, Yambo Ouologume, Cheikh Hamidou Kane, Ayi Kwei Armah, Nawal EC Sadawi, Aminata Sow Fall, Mongo Beti, Camara Laye, Cyprian Ewensi amongst others show the strong influence of traditional religious myths in their narrative strategies. These writers have shown quite number of responses to religion in their literary works. Wole Soyinka, Nuruddin Farah, Meja Nwangi display spiritual inclination and determined secular with intense religion as a social and intellectual problem in Africa society.

In Ngugi's novels he relentlessly criticizes Christianity in his novels and essays. Ngugi's critique of religious orthodoxy extends to Marxism which he observes as a terrible substitute to religion in modern Africa. According to Ngugi Wa Thiango the basic doctrine of Christianity is love and equality between men, while colonialism which is an integral part, was built on the inequality and hatred between men and subjugation ritualistically imitating European ways of life, and outright rejection of all African customs. He states further that the church had denounced the primitive rights of Africans, condemned African beautiful dances, images of African Gods, thus robbing the people their soul.

According to Banik (2016) Ngugi believes that the church could return to the primitive communism of the early Christian Church of Peter and also the communism of the traditional African society. With this he further says and working in alliance with socialist aspirations of the African masses, they might build a new society to create a new man freed from greed and competitive hatred, and ready to realize his full potential in humble cooperation with other men in a just socialist society. He maintains that cultural alienation must work for cultural integration. Africa must go back to the roots of the broken civilization. The church must examine the traditional African forms of marriage, traditional African forms of sacrifice. Banik further describes Ngugi as a religious writer whose religious faith concerns the inner lives of his people.

Ngugi Wa Thiango's novels are rich with biblical allusions and set with a spiritual quest motif through appropriate use of captions and quotes from the Book of Revelations. In his novel, *Petals of Blood*, Ngugi explores three categories of Christian representatives -Ezekiel, Rev Jerrod and Lillian. These people were used to explore corruption and alienation of the religious leaders. Ezekiel, an elderly man and one of the earliest converts is shown through a photograph as a worldly man who regained all the lands lost by his forefathers to the colonizers and accumulated immense wealth and estates out of the advantage to being a Christian. Rev Jerrod another generation of neo-colonial Christian leader refuses to help a group of hungry, tired, thirsty villagers from Ilmorog on their way to Nairobi. He believes the Bible is against a life of wandering and begging. Rather than providing them with food and water, he offers a diet of prayers to each and every one of them to cure their spiritual debility. The third generation of religious leader is Lillian who is prostitute turned reformer, leads a charismatic religious movement for preparation of a new kingdom of God. This movement speaks of no difference between the rich and the poor, the employer and the employed and prescribes avoidance of strife and struggle in this world because the next world is close at hand and it is through love and acceptance of Christ that one can reach the other world.

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10 VIII. Selection of African Literary Texts

The adoption of appropriate African literary text in this research is important to readers of African literary texts. Mohammadzadeh (2015) explains that linguistically, difficult literary texts eliminate readers' motivation and creates problems in the understanding of the texts. The selected literary texts for this research are interesting and attract the attention of readers in terms of themes. It helps to demonstrate that the literary texts have engaged affectively, challenged cognitively, promoted language awareness, and assisted readers to involve critically and respond imaginatively to literary understanding of a people's culture and religion.

The readers react appropriately towards the interesting themes these kinds of texts provide in relation to

them to the actual life and socio-cultural environment. The African novels express the appropriate use of language. Most of these literary texts are not current and non-contemporary but covers many difficult and archive vocabularies, proverbs and transliteration. The language application of these literary texts is neither too difficult nor too easy to understand. There are challenges but too many vocabulary gains.

11 IX. African Writers Challenge in Secular and Religious Functions of Fiction

According to Asamoah-Gyadu (2010) citing Kwesi A. Dickson, an African theologian says a society is in equilibrium when its customs are maintained, its goals attained and the spirit powers given regular and adequate recognition. He further states that members of society are expected to live and act in such a way as to promote society's well being; to do otherwise is to court disaster not only for the actor but also for society as a whole. Any act that detracts from the soundness of society is looked upon with disfavour, and society takes remedial measures to reverse the evil consequences set in motion.

Secularism is complicated by the religious impositions associated with colonialism in Africa. The effect was to suppress the dominant African religious tradition. The goal of imperialism was in direct alignment with the exploitation of economic and cultural interest of the colonizers. Mphande (2003) states that one of the dominant features of Ngugi's writing is attempt to draw correlations between African traditions and Christianity is his writings. The style of short sentences and paragraphs in his first three novels are very similar to the Bible, as is the prophesying and genealogy that delve into the ancestor of his characters. The tendency to mark events by seasons, to speak in proverbs, parables and riddles, all mark a common oral background between the Bible and African oral tradition. Mphande citing *The River Between* shows that Ngugi wants to connect the reader to the biblical creation myth with phrases like, "people saw this and were happy" describing how life began, as compared to Genesis; "God saw it and it was good". Thus, the fundamental beliefs of the Africans are described in a typical Christian manner with Murungu being fashioned on the Christian God, and Gikugu and Mumbi on Adam and Eve. In the novel, *The River Between*, Ngugi presents Gikuyu wise men of old as the biblical prophets.

Ali-Agan (2010) acknowledges cultural secularism in *The Last Imam* by saying the development of laws pertaining rights of individuals in the light of the religious beliefs. The character Alhaji Usman covers up his loss of God consciousness in him by pretending to show zealous acts of worship in front of everyone. For instance, to allay the suspicion of his father and other men he felt compelled to make vigorous demonstrations of his enthusiasm in prayer at the mosque and in the lessons at school. He has strong inclination towards impressing the people of Bauchi in order to make them realize his authority as the Imam. Bangura (2000) in addition presents the issue of concubine practice and their belief in superstition. The ugliness of events in the novel portrays unIslamic practices. Tahir likens the victim of the Gwauro to the pagan mask gods. He also describes the grim circle of women sitting there like ritual carvings in juju shrine.

12 X.

13 Theoretical Framework

The present research examines the way stylistic aspects of Text World Theory (TWT) is used in Literature and Language Teaching so as to assist readers to improve their critical thinking, knowledge and interpretation. The stylistic employment of this theory enhances readers language awareness, creative reading skills and their reader-response skills and improve the interaction between readers and texts.

Text World Theory propounded by Worth is one of the theories which this paper adopts to offer some pedagogical models. Pedagogical stylistics as a subdiscipline of stylistics intends to provide some practical tools for readers who teach literary texts.

The research is initially based on the effective use of short stories for Literature and Language and, then, adapts a sample short story African literary artist according to the three layers of the Text World Theory which are "discourse world", "text world", and "subworld".

The researcher offers readers stylistic applications through a) What are the building blocks of the story which can be identified by the Text World Theory? and b) How do these building blocks enable students to make connections with the text?

own. The results of the bases of show that using this theory in enhancement language awareness, creative reading skills and reader-response skills in readers. This research brings in focus a reading model through the use of Text World Theory which Worth (1999) posits that it assist in to understanding literature for readers. This explains that readers will use English in the understanding of literary text with excitement.

According to Short (1996) Theoretical Framework Stylistics as an academic discipline is method of linking linguistic form through the reader inference to the interpretation of detailed work and hence the provision of desired evidence of particular texts interpretations. Stylistics application provides readers with necessary tools for encouragement, negotiation and interpretation of the themes of literary texts.

14 XI.

15 Methodology

The research publication employed the text centered methodology which evolved out of textual analysis of African literary works as reflected in some African novels. The understanding of a African literary text whether written or spoken involves several characteristics. The type of text read determines its characteristics according to a collection of variables. Some of these characteristics are: ? Checking some sample themes of the literary text as the reflect African traditions, culture and religion ? Hymes's linguistic model and discourse analysis ? Application of African language systems blended with proverbs and transliteration.

These also include topics, means of communication and mode. A reader believes that through the text centered methodology a writer gives recognition to meaning to a field of thought in the expression of his/her work. The writer arranges his/her arguments logically so that his/her objectives clearly understood based on opinion the academic community to whom he/she is addressing his/her piece of writing. The work of thought, focal idea of the writer expresses the practice to perform in order to provide the answer to the reader's question about the themes, settings and diction of the text. The text centred methodology provides the development of texts that are influenced by the principles of influence and accurateness of a typology of texts function that provides correlation of shelter typologies in a discourse and the accurateness of the important content type to its setting.

16 XII.

17 Discussion and Results

The finding of the study assists in the understanding and interpretation the novels improved reading and speaking skills. The methodology helped in focusing on detailed themes. This assisted in expressing subject matters on themes.

The study improved the knowledge and skills of the readers about learning African literary texts. It helped to increase level of confidence and improve reading and speaking skills. The study helped to improve critical reading and thinking skill with identification of all characters.

18 XIII.

19 Conclusion

There is interdisciplinary relationship between African literature and religion. African society revolves round secular culture. The paper establishes the existence of interdisciplinary relationship between African creative literature and religious study.

This paper took into account the religions in Africa with a special focus on African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam. It explains the important teachings by the above religions and the challenges facing them. The paper established that all the three religious organizations face challenges which require urgent attention.

The present study applied the Text World Theory as a sub-discipline of cognitive stylistics to literary work. The study provides readers with the necessary tools for analysis of a literary text in order to improve readers' language and literary awareness. The improvement of language and literary awareness helps to stimulate sensitization of the reader to the effect of linguistic patterns and their contextualization.

XIV.

20 Recommendation

The paper recommends that African countries must develop positively and the secularization of the society will remain limited by the following: i. Creation of knowledge driven and generating evidence regarding the negative impact of religious extremism. ii. All Christians, Muslims and African Traditional Religious leaders should work assiduously to see that these religions are not totally interfered with by those who do not value the practice of pure religion. iii. Religion should be directed to foster a more relevant transformation agenda in Africa. iv. Capacity building with allies which will foster effective counter religious extremism should be introduced. v. Personal and individual greed of religious leaders should not be allowed to freely infiltrate into these religions. Every adherent to the religious groups should be well informed and reminded to practice true repentance and have a strict faith in God. vi. Research should be carried out on more African literature to assess their contributions as illustrative materials to religious students. vii. The study should also be extended to examine possible interdisciplinary relation between Religion and other disciplines.

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VI.

Figure 1:

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