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Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria

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CALL FOR PAPERS

AMA ... is a journal of Theatre, Film, Humanities, and Cultural Studies. It is a peer-reviewed journal published by the Department of Theatre and Film Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Nigeria. The journal affords Academics opportunity to publish scholarly articles in the areas of Theatre, Film, Culture, other media and Humanities. Articles on Performance, Critical- theories, Literature, Culture, Film and Cinematic Art, Music, Religion Fine and Applied Arts, Book Reviews, Interviews and other areas are accepted for review and publication by the Editorial Board of *Ama ...* Manuscripts not more than twenty-five (25) pages, typed double line spacing in twelve points Times New Roman should be submitted electronically to: amajournalunizik@gmail.com or amajournalnau@gmail.com. No dead line for submission, articles are considered in order of submission

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

With emerging trends in theatre research and scholarship, *AMA: Journal of Theatre and Cultural Studies* has maintained its stand as a dependable and reliable resource material in inter-disciplinary scholarship.

This Volume: Vol.15, No. 1, of 2021 is an eloquent testimonial to the resilience of the editorial team in ensuring a continued history of astute research and scholarship in order to guarantee adequate learning and pedagogy.

Although the articles in this volume have individual trusts, they are inadvertently related in a collective call for the revitalization of the dramatic, performing and media arts. It is actually what can be termed an "awareness" volume as the essays bother on advocacy.

Awaritoma Agoma's discourse on Solo performance titled "Solo Performances and the Restructuring of the Theatre Curriculum: A Study of Tunji Sotimiri's Performance in Solo Africa" makes a case encouraging teachers and students of Theatre Arts to pay special attention to Solo acts. He traces that evolution of Solo performance and outlines the benefits to the individual actor, the institution and the society. Similarly, Emmanuel Iroh advocates for the use of dramatic techniques in the pedagogy of prose in secondary schools. His work, "Adaptation of Novel to Dramatic Drama for Classroom Teaching: The Efficient Secondary Commercial School, Uyo Experiment" explores the use of drama as an alternative way of teaching prose and as a means of ensuring better understanding.

Martina Omorodion in her essay "Good Governance in Nigeria: The Place of Women" equally calls on women to rise up to their responsibilities as co-equals with their male counterparts in the society. She advocates for the active participation of women in politics. As Martina recognizes the fact that women are beginning to make little impact in politics, Kelechi Ogbonna and Chisimdi Ihentuge call for the utilization of the ethnic identity as a unifying factor for the political and economic growth of the nation. In their essay, "Exploring Positivity in Ethnic Identity for National Re-Integration in Nigeria: A Multimedia

Perspective" is a call for policy makers to cash in on our seeming 'unity in diversity to galvanize a united nation.

Canice Nwosu takes the role of teachers of drama further in his "The Teacher of Teachers as Developer of Human Resources: A Re-appraisal of Dan Uwandu's 'Child Development through Drama'". Here he extols the virtues of a teacher and submits that teachers are nation builders because they are character molders as well as nation builders through the formation of persons they instruct. Likewise, Felix Gbenoba, shows how the medium of drama is an effective way for the interpretation of poetry in "Drama as Style for Enhanced Patronage of Modern Nigerian Poetry: A Reading of Selected Poems in Hope Eghagha's *The Governor's Lodge*". He draws semblances of drama in the poetry of Hope Eghagha and explores how these dramatic elements have helped in a better comprehension of the poems. Equally, in "Nigeria's Female Dramatic Creativity: An Analysis of Sofola's *Wedlock of the Gods* and Salami's *Sweet Revenge*", Rosemary Asen calls for an end to negative cultural practices against women. These practices, the author contends, hinder the growth and development of the womenfolk. It calls for the assertion of female rights and better collaboration amongst themselves. And Chibuike Abunike calls for a reduction in violent movies in his work "Examining Domestic Violence through the Film Medium in Nigeria: An Analysis of Selected Films". This lessening of violence in movies he believes can be achieved through proper censorship.

In another wake-up call, Josephine Odunze proffers solutions towards the revitalization of the Abuja carnival. Her essay, "The Defunct Abuja National Carnival: Towards a Rekindling of the Dying Embers" seeks avenues towards the renaissance of the Abuja Carnival. She contends that the carnival is a veritable source of revenue and great tourism potential. As Josephine is calling on cultural administrators to bring forth resources towards the rebirth of the Abuja carnival, Onyeka Ebekue and Somtoo Arinze-Umobi in "Between the Nollywood Classroom and Nollywood Practice: Absence of Synergy or Synergy of Absence" are advocating that there should be a synergy between the Nollywood film practitioners and the Nollywood academia for quality assurance in Nollywood video films.

The use of signs and symbols in dances as expressed in some war dances is explored in Tochukwu Okeke and Judith Ume's

discourse in “The Significance of Cultural Symbols in *Ogbo* traditional War Dance”. The authors use this work to underscore the importance of symbols in traditional dances and explain how such signs aid the audience’s understanding of the performance. Charles Nwadiuwe and Ebuka Ilukwe make a call for an overhaul of the Nigerian Creative Industry in order to create a level playing ground for performers through a review of the Copyright law. The article "Copyright Law and the Challenge of Piracy in Nollywood Business" advocates for stricter penalties for defaulters in the creative business. And, Ver-Or Kachii sums up these calls for a better society in his article "Theatre and Revolution in Esiaba Irobi's *Hangmen Also Die*". Here the author calls for continued use of the theatre as means of sensitization and mass orientation. It is believed that through revolutionary plays like *Hangmen Also Die* that the cries of the masses will be heard and a better society will emerge from the ashes of the old.

We look forward to receiving more articles on this advocacy for the revitalization of the performing arts and similar discourses especially works that encourage interdisciplinary research.

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EXPLORING POSITIVITY IN ETHNIC IDENTITY FOR NATIONAL RE-INTEGRATION IN NIGERIA: A MULTI MEDIA PERSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The quality of leadership, policies, social and economic developments that have hitherto hindered sustainable developments at the local levels and consequently at the centre call for restructuring. If the central point of convergence which in this case is Nigeria fulfills the essence of the state and does not promote the common good of the citizenry, then national re-integration could be the option. The peculiarities of a people become the building blocks for progress as they harness their material conditions and differing social relations, they are injured by the collective communal ideals to achieve greatness for themselves and for the people. Hence, a montage of various ethnic identities glocalized at the centre will foster sustainable development. This paper adopts a multimedia perspective to x-ray the Nigerian identities versus ethnic identity through the stage, film and radio to examine foundation formation, values, character and ambition as catholicon and conditions for national reintegration using the concept of glocalization. The dramatizations analyzed here point to the notion of “I am” before “we are”. The findings reveal that if the local conditions (that is the ‘I’) are in order, the ethnic groups will collaborate at the centre point to design structures and policies that will suit the Nigerian peculiarities (the ‘we’). The paper therefore concludes that

restructuring is still the basis for our reintegration and this has to be looked at along ethnic nationalities.

Introduction

Ethnicity refers to a social identity formation that rests upon culturally specific practices and a unique set of symbols and cosmology (Fatile and Adejuwon, 320). Ethnic identity comes with different, and oftentimes political connotations. The components of ethnic identity consist of ethnic self-identification, ethnic attitudes, ethnic behavior and ethnic awareness. However, every individual is a member of a family and by extension of a community which membership identifies the individual with a social, cultural and ethnic group. Oftentimes, the identity or biological ancestors of individuals wittingly and unwittingly influence their lives and actions. That is why today, many make efforts to search out their biological identity or to discover records that will point to their social history. Scholarly arguments support the notion that:

Every person is born into an existing culture, which must be learned and which shapes his or her life. This explains why the social scientist sees culture as the entire way of life within a society. In other words, the way people think about problems of living- the tools, houses, and customs they have adopted as their own are part of the culture of a people. Man as a social being cannot live outside his society and the order governing the conduct of affairs (Ugiri, 121).

An individual's identity includes gender, age, language and religion, cosmological beliefs, social and cultural background. Hence, ethnic identity is the expression of one's sense of belonging: feelings, perceptions, behavior, thinking, and the collective dream of an ethnic group. An Individual's identity, though separate from ethnic identity, is like the Siamese twins that are forced to share the same organs. In explicit terms, you must be Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, Ijaw, Igala, Tiv or other ethnic nationalities before being a Nigerian. Accordingly, Henri Tajfel's theory of social identity (1982) basically maintains that one's social identity strongly influences self-perception and consequently should be the central locus of evaluation. The strength and weakness of the self is largely determined from our status with our reference groups and how we assess out-group members. When ethnicity and race form the nexus of an in group, then self-identity will be correspondingly influenced (para.8).

Etymologically, ethnicity has its bearing from Latin and Greek origins—*ethnicus* and *ethnikas* respectively which convey the same meaning as nation. It pertains to, “or characteristic of a people, especially a group (ethnic group) sharing a common and distinctive culture, religion, language, or the like.” (www.dictionary.com/browse/ethnic) *Ethos*, in Greek, means custom, disposition or trait. It is “the characteristic spirit of a culture, era, or community as manifested in its attitudes and aspirations.” (Wikipedia, para 1) Hence, *Ethnikas* and/or *ethos* refer to a group of people that live together or share the same norms and values. The second part of the construct, identity, has Latin origins and is derived from the word *identitas*; the word is formed from *idem* meaning same (Joseph Trimble, para. 1). Thus, identity may be interpreted as consistent sameness. Scholars have proffered varied definitions for ethnic identity. But one thing is clear in the definitions, and that is the fact that

Definitions of ethnic identity vary according to the underlying theory embraced by researchers’ and scholars’ intent on resolving its conceptual meanings. ... Typically, ethnic identity is an affiliative construct, where an individual is viewed by themselves and by others as belonging to a particular ethnic or cultural group. An individual can choose to associate with a group especially if other choices are available (i.e., the person is of mixed ethnic or racial heritage). Affiliation can be influenced by racial, natal, symbolic, and cultural factors (Cheung, 1993). Racial factors involve the use of physiognomic and physical characteristics, natal factors refer to "homeland" (ancestral home)... (Cited in Trimble & Dickson, Para, 15).

However, ethnic identity defines the individual, his or her beliefs, endowments, dreams and collective ideals. It upholds Fredrik Barth’s (1969) argument that “ethnic identity was a means to create boundaries that enabled a group to distance themselves from one another. Barth was quite forceful about his position as he strongly maintains that ethnic boundaries define a group and not the “cultural stuff that encloses it” (Sollars, xxii as cited in Trimble & Dickson, Para, 17). Again, back in the 20th century, the first reference to ethnic identity is found within the rubrics of anthropological and sociological literature where the terms “ethnic groups and ethnicity, were first used in anthropology to refer to a people presumed to affiliate with the same cultural group and who shared the same custom, language and traditions” (para. 28). Be that as it

may, this research disagrees with Fredrik Barth's statement because with the recent events of marginalization, reckless killings and maiming in Nigeria, it is obvious that it is not only the boundary that defines ethnic group but "cultural stuff that encloses it", as it is, the cosmological leanings of a particular ethnic group that gives the individual the identity, the dream and the collective responsibility.

Ethnic Identity versus Ethnicity in Nigeria

Ethnicity in Nigeria has become a recurring decimal especially in politics, schools, employment considerations, appointments, promotion and even church administration. The ethnic diversity of the components that make up Nigeria and its looming presence in Nigeria's politics has maintained a connubial relationship; for hardly can politics be discussed without reference to ethnic considerations. Thus, ethnicity and national integration are two variables that are immutable. Ethnicity is the interactions or characteristics of a group of people having common national, religious, cultural or racial origins. Ethnic groups are a social phenomenon, a formation that is marked by relevant communal factors such as the elements of culture and language. Scholars have argued that colonialists ushered in ethnic consciousness and tribalism in Nigeria. It has also been argued that the British Policy of Association in Nigeria was designed to favour Her Majesty the Queen whose interest was primarily commerce. Also, with a mission statement geared towards investing minimal resources in order to harvest maximum profits, the British created a conducive environment guaranteed by establishing defined channels of communication with traditional political institutions of the Yoruba, Igbo and the traditional political order of the North. Consequently, the colonialists dis-unified the coexistence that has hitherto existed between Southern and Northern migrants in Northern cities, and began to classify the people along the lines of language superiority and inferiority thereby distorting and disfiguring the people and their culture. Having been encroached upon and devalued, discriminatory traits set in, survival instincts got the best of the people as they became conscious of who they are and began to organize themselves along communal lines, especially as the stark reality of scarce and unequal distribution of resources confronted them.

Thus, ethnic consciousness in Nigeria is synonymous with political consciousness because back in the 1920s when colonial flavor gave rise to ethnic politics, and with regards to the deliberate and careful schemes

enshrined in pre-independence constitutions in favour of a part of the country in policies, unequal distribution of resources has become more alarming and frustrating too. Hence, ethnic identity and ethnic groups have emerged and increasingly too, their formation is aimed at protecting the integrity and aspirations of their people. Groups such as Northern Elders' Forum, the Odua People's Congress, the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People, Arewa People's Congress, Ohaneze Ndi Igbo, and Ijaw National Congress are but a few of ethnic group associations whose aim is to foster peace among the people and protect its people from marginalization at the centre and above all, foster ethnic nationalism. The consequences of ethnic consciousness in Nigeria may have reaped a blood bath, monumental loss of properties, conflict, violence, and promotion of discord and insecurity. Above all, it is said that 'ethnicity has threatened the corporate existence of Nigeria.

Nigeria as the centre where all ethnic groups converge is bound to witness diverse norms and values, and as a result, it would be normal to experience disagreements. However, it is unfortunate that we continue to attribute the continued Nigerian crisis to ethnicity. For instance, Jacob Odeyemi states thus "the ensuing complications of ethnicity have grossly impinged on the development of the country" (87). This statement misplaces the components of ethnic identity which are ethnic self-identification, ethnic attitudes, ethnic behavior and ethnic awareness, and its inherent advantages. This is because; agitations from interest groups may be for ethnic interest or group interest since the arm of the law has failed them. However, if the Nigerian strength lies in the diversity of the people and their culture, why then would ethnicity be a barrier to its peaceful co-existence? Shouldn't their diversity make them stronger if their uniqueness, resources and differences are proportionately harnessed and rewarded? Are we sure the story would have been different if Nigeria was a mono-ethnic state? Many writers do not think a yes would be the answer to the last question. Put in other words, "If Nigeria had consisted of one tribe...the problems of the nation would have persisted" (Ihentuge & Utoh-Ojemudia, 412). This view has the support of Oyibo Eze who further avers that "this is demonstrated by the recent Aguleri-Umuleri and the Ife-Modakeke clashes among others" (96). Hence, this paper believes and vehemently argues that ethnic consciousness cannot be all negative. It is based on the strength of this argument that this work explores the positive side of ethnicity in Nigeria through a multi media analysis.

Theoretical Backing

In order to have a better focus, this work relies on postmodernism for its theoretical backing. Postmodernism has remained an embattled and controversial theory in modern scholarship. Raymond Saner captures this in these words:

Postmodern remains a vague term and does not enjoy full approval by many scholars and experts of the fields of art and social science. Spirited attacks on the term have been written by many... (Saner, 2).

Yet, postmodernism has not ceased to be an unavoidable theory in the contemporary scholarly world. Put in other words:

In summary, postmodernism is seen as a general and wide – ranging term which could be applied to literature, art, philosophy, architecture, fiction, and cultural/literary criticism, among others. Postmodernism is largely a reaction to the assumed certainty of scientific knowledge or objective or any other effort deployed to explain reality (Ola– Koyi & Ban Kola, 2).

It should be recalled that postmodernism was a movement started in the field of architecture and became embraced in arts and humanity over time. The emphasis of this movement, it is said, was on rejection of the modernist theory, avant-garde concept or the passion for the new (Ola– Koyi & Ban Kola, 2).

In the exact words of Alexandra Bandac:

Postmodernism... announces a series of changes in the second half of the XXth century in philosophy, art, architecture, and culture, in general... Rationally analysing the phenomenon of this new concept, postmodernism becomes a natural continuation of modernism, assuming and improving the characteristics of the latter (Bandac, 299),

In it, existing ways of perceiving the world and one-self are disbanded. Therefore, postmodernism is a concept where everything is seen as possible and nothing is seen as certain (Nwabueze, 135).

In essence, it stems from a recognition that reality is not simply mirrored in human understanding of it, but rather, is constructed as the mind tries to understand its own particular and personal reality. For this reason, postmodernism is highly skeptical of explanations which claim to be valid for all groups, cultures, traditions, or races,

and instead focuses on the relative truths of each person. In the postmodern understanding, interpretation is everything; reality only comes into being through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually. Postmodernism relies on concrete experience over abstract principles, knowing always that the outcome of one's own experience will necessarily be fallible and relative, rather than certain and universal. (Faith and Reason, para. 1)

In the field of Theatre Arts, postmodernism has had a great impact. According to Alexandra Bandac:

Postmodernism is still a landmark for theatre creators worldwide. Hard to define, it proposes, as Umberto Eco also acknowledged, a critical view of the past, filled with wit and irony, when referring to a disbalanced present, lacking value or perspective (299).

Raymond Saner (2) sees the goal of postmodern theatre as being the dissolution of existing ways of perceiving the world and one-self. Herein precisely lies the *raison d'être* for the adoption of the postmodern theory here this paper attempts to dissolve our old ways of perceiving ethnicity in Nigeria and proposes a new radical way of perceiving, interpreting and adopting ethnicity to solve Nigeria's nagging problems.

Multi Media Perspective Analysis of Positive Ethnic Identity in Nigeria

The evils of tribalism may abound, but one cannot deny the values, virtues and the bonds that unite the people. No matter one's tribe (be it Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa/Fulani, Kanuri, Ibibio, Efik, Izon or any other ethnicity), one cannot deny who one is because one finds oneself in Nigeria. Nigeria is the uniting factor, which is why the coat of arms read 'Unity in Diversity'. Within the shores of Nigeria, the other ethnic groups remain the outer-group before the in-group and so it goes even within political administration of the country's affairs. Why then do we have representations at the upper and lower houses? The identity of a people is rooted in their culture. Through their material and non-material cultures, people assert themselves, define themselves and aspire for greater heights.

Positive use of ethnicity has always existed in Africa and Nigeria particularly but not always properly noted. For instance, some ethnic nationalities that did not have adequate government presence to provide

basic infrastructures needed for meaningful living have continued to rely on ethnicity for self help. In such places:

...the peoples (sic) have taken their own development initiatives in furtherance of their constitutive interests. The famous [ethnic] unions arose in this milieu, as parallel structures to provide public goods. They awarded scholarships, built schools and churches, town halls and hospitals and provided, within their limits, loans to small-scale traders and artisans and engaged in other self-help projects. (Osaghae, 11)

This has continued in such a way that the people take pride in recounting their ethnic allegiance. The Igbo tribe ranks here in this regard. In his work titled “Contemporary Igbo Nationalism and the Crisis of Self-Determination in the Nigerian Public Sphere,” Godwin Onuoha opines that “the major thrust of Igbo nationalism has been shaped by the need to pursue its own ‘advancement’ and ‘modernisation’ within a plural society” (2 – 3). Continuing, Onuoha insists that “the formal establishment of colonial rule in the East spawned an enterprising tendency among the Igbos (sic) as they became more mobile, receptive and nationally oriented than other ethnic nationalities in Nigeria” (11). The truth is that:

Confronted with internal challenges occasioned by land hunger, impoverished soil and population pressures, the Igbos (sic) in search of economic and educational advancement migrated massively to urban areas within their own region and in the North and the West... By the end of World War II the Igbos (sic) had constituted a considerable minority group in every urban area in the country and had amounted to ‘more than one-third of the non-indigenous population of the urban centres in the Northern and Western regions’... (Onuoha, 12).

At this time, says Onuoha (12), the positive use of ethnicity was shown as the Igbo in Diaspora “formed mutual benefit associations, credit societies and ‘improvement’ organizations which maintained ties with their rural home lands (12) (added emphasis). Onuoha concludes that the positive use of ethnicity for self help by the Igbo ethnic nationality is:

in response to the famous axiom ‘What else is development other than helping your hometown’ (Southall 1998), diaspora Igbo organisations, unions and community development associations in urban centres throughout the country began to mobilize capital

through self-help efforts to provide social services and amenities for their constituencies (23).

The multi-ethnic reality of Nigeria is daily reckoned with in the country. Since society provides the artist materials for his/her work, our artists have borrowed materials from this to enrich their works. Hence, many performance media in Nigeria have positively explored the ethnic diversity of Nigeria. Let us start with the medium of the stage. Dramatists in their creative output have made attempts at demystifying ethnicity or tribal consciousness. While some condemn it in strong terms, many try to present a detribalized society and others enforce the consciousness through culture. Elechi Amadi's *The Woman of Calabar* presents two opposing forces waging the weapons of tribalism; each refusing their child to marry the other. The families of Akirika and Ekpenyong resolved their differences as they united Eme and Adia. Also, Ola Rotimi in *IF...Tragedy of the Ruled*, symbolized Nigeria through the characterization of Papa who accommodates all tribes as his tenants; thus, preaching for a detribalized society. More so, Juliana Okoh's *Aisha* hints on inter-tribal marriage between Ehimare from Edo and Aisha who is Hausa. In *King Jaja*, Bell-Gam Henry engineers' nationalism by displaying that the eponymous hero, a slave from Nkwerre, is allowed to become king in a land that is not his own. From Bayelsa (Izon), Barclays Ayakoroma presents *Castles in the Air*, another inter-tribal saga "a marriage with condition (s)"; where Stella and Aminu's love results in a tribal quagmire over a ten-million-naira gift. Since Aminu is Hausa and Stella is from the Izon tribe, two friends; Chief Emotari and Alhaji disagree except for death which serves as a form of Deus ex machina.

Still in the stage medium, ethnicity has given good coloration to playwriting in Nigeria. Play texts from various ethnic backgrounds abound to make the playwriting scene more richly colorful. Few instances will suffice here. Iyorwuese Harry Hagher, Esiaba Irobi, Elechi Amadi, Kelechi Stellamaris Ogbonna, Ifeyinwa Iyke Uzundu, Catherine Achilonu, Alex Asigbo, Emeka Nwabueze, Tracie Utoh-Ezeajugh, Charles Nwadiuwe, ABC Duruaku, Tess Onwueme, Sunny Oti, Chukwuma Anyanwu, John Iwu, Canice Nwosu and many others have all written plays on Igbo cultural setting and issues. Femi Osofiasn, Wole Soyinka, Tunde Fatunde, Bode Sowande, Ojo Bakare Rasaki, Ola Rotimi, Wale Ogunyemi, Duro Ladipo, Niyi Osundere, Olu Obafemi, and Rasheed Gbadamosi among others have adored the Nigerian playwriting scene with plays bothering on Yoruba cultural setting and

issues. J. P. Clarke Bakaderemo, Barclays Ayakoroma, Henry Bell-Gam, Minimal Miesonma, Richard Iloma have in their plays treated issues about the Ijaw (Izon) and other ethnic nationalities within the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Ahmed Yerima, Don Pedro Obaseki and Osedebamen Oamen have published plays bothering on Bini/Edo culture. Austin Asagba has written plays on Urhobo cultural issues and settings. Tor Iourapu, and Desen Mbachaga have treated Tiv cultural issues and settings in the plays. Plays on cultural issues and settings are not left out as Idoma James Alachi, and Gabriel Oche Ukah among others have done justice to that. Plays by Emmy Idegue, Musa Salifu and Amade Abdul have dealt with Igala cultural issues and settings. There are other playwrights who have traversed ethnic nationalities in Nigeria in their playwriting expeditions. Ahmed Yerima rightly comes to mind here as he has written about cultural issues and settings in many ethnic groups in Nigeria. Such include *Ajegunmale*, *Yemoja*, *Erelu-Ketu* (Yoruba), *Otaelo*, *Idemili* (Igbo), *Attahiru*, *Aetu*, (Hausa), *Ameh Oboni The Great* (Igala), *The Trials of Oba Ovonramwen* (Bini) and *Hard Ground* (Ijaw/Izon/Niger Delta). Other playwrights such as Ola Rotimi, Julie Okoh, Emmy Idegue, These forms of positive exploration of ethnicity have added variety, which is said to be the spice of life, to the playwriting scene in Nigeria.

The music industry is not left out in the act of positively exploring ethnicity. Nigerian musicians have at various times crafted their arts around their cities of birth, origin or residence and the ethnic and cultural uniqueness they represent. Few instances include Ruffcoin (Emelogu Muruako Fortune) with his *Nwa Aba* hit. Ruffcoin has devoted most of his musical career in promoting the city of Aba popularly known as Enyimba City. His *Made in Aba* (MIA) album is saturated with instances of this. Timaya (Enitimi Alfred Odom) used his *Bayelsa Otu* hit to pass critical positive comments on Bayelsa State. There is also Duncan Mighty (Duncan Wene Mighty Okechukwu) whose *I am a Port Harcourt Boy* is one of his hit tracks. A part of this song asks Nigerians to treat him as an individual and not generalize on his origin. It reads in part thus: "If I do you wrong before, sorry ooo I no dey perfect." We also have Humblesmith (Ekeledirichukwu Ijemba) who, though an Igbo by origin, used his song *Beautiful Lagos* to as an exposé of the transformation in contemporary Lagos State. There abound musicians in every ethnic group singing in their local dialects and chanting the courses of such ethnic groups. This is a situation that has really added

varieties of flavor to the industry and made it much more interesting than it would have been if Nigeria was a mono-ethnic Nation. Apart from positively exploring ethnicity by singing in local languages in Afro beats, contemporary Hip Hop singers in Nigeria take pride in code switching between English and local dialects. These are but a few instances of positive exploration of ethnicity in the Nigerian music industry.

Positive exploration of ethnicity is not left out in the broadcasting scene in Nigeria. Even though there has been a wider acceptance of foreign languages over indigenous languages as language of the media, ethnicity has been rightly employed to spice up the broadcasting scene in Nigeria. Many of the early indigenous television dramas and soap operas benefited from this, spreading their character to cover the multi-ethnic spread of the country to some extent. A good example of this is *The New Masquerade*. Virtually all broadcast media houses in Nigeria in contemporary times have developed programmes anchored in the local languages of the host communities.

In recent times, many broadcast media houses in Nigeria strive to mount programmes that bring together the major ethnic groups in the country. One of such is the radio programme *Ngwongwo Parliament*- a Nigerian drama talk show aired by Dream 92.5 FM Enugu between the hours of 2pm to 4pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The radio drama first hit the airwaves in 2015. It started as an experiment to literally lampoon the Nigerian national polity. It also aimed at addressing some societal vices, their effects on the society and possible remedies. Some of the societal vices the programme has looked at include drug abuse and addiction, child trafficking, sexual harassment, prostitution and cohabitation. It is a comic show set out to educate people on pressing national issues. This is approached from the perspective of the three (3) main ethnic nationalities in Nigeria namely Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba.

Ngwongwo Parliament is totally an improvisational drama programme which is topical as it relies on daily news headlines, important news stories and current affairs as play making materials. The drama programme can be said to be a comedy of characters as the characters are based on eccentricities and stereotypical mannerisms that surround the Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba (Wazobia) major Nigerian tribes. The actors are also chosen from the tribes they represent for truthful depiction and portrayal. The major characters in the drama are Chief Ogbuefi (aka

Gburugburu), Alhaji Tanko (aka Dan Buram Kano), Otumba Shonekan (aka Otumba Funky Yaw), and Madam Secretary (aka Madam Sekem). Known ethnic mannerisms of ethnic groups are employed as materials for humour in the radio drama.

Now to Nollywood, the video film culture in Nigeria. It will not be fallacious to say that Nollywood have gained so greatly from the ethnic plurality of Nigeria. The industry is endowed with creative talents from virtually all the ethnic nationalities of the country. This assortment of talents has made our film entertainment industry in Nigeria very unique. The ethnic plurality has also enriched the industry and engendered some syncretization of styles that has made the Nollywood industry more interesting than it would have been if Nigeria did not have her diverse cultural differences. In recent times, the exploration of local linguistic flavor has turned the industry around. Our stars (especially comic actors) now take pride in their ethnic peculiarities to add comic dimensions to their craft through their accent and/or mannerisms. Many instances of this abound even though only a few will be glossed over here: Bishop Imeh who is more popular in the industry as Okon with his ‘Calabarness’; Ayodeji Richard Makun, who has adopted the stage name AY, though an Itsekiri by origin, prefers ‘Warriness/Wafiiness’ portrayed in the ‘Akpos’ character he plays; Funke Akindele who plays the local Yoruba girl character popularly known as Jenifa; Chiwetelu Agu and his various Igbo interjections and Idiosyncrasies; and Nnenna Rachael Okonkwo (who is more popular in the industry with Nkoli Nwa Nsukka) with her ‘Wawanness/Nsukkaness.’

The positive exploration of ethnicity in Nollywood is further seen in the existence of the sub-industries in Nollywood- the various ‘woods.’ Kannywood is the Hausa-Language film industry with its base in Kano; Yoriwood is the Yoruba-Language film industry with its base in Ibadan; and the Igbo language film industry with its base in Onitsha/Asaba and Enugu. In his work “Nollywood Unbound: Benin Language Video-Films as Paradigm,” Osakue Stevenson Omoera is of the view even though the Nollywood film industry is “often addressed within animated spectra of Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo” indigenous languages, there are “new frontiers of the glocalised order such as Benin, Nupe, Afemai, Ibibio language films” (19). The author goes ahead to give specific examples saying:

Prolens Movies Limited has produced *Ukpebuluku* (2009), an Urhobo film. Supreme Movies Limited has produced another Urhobo video-film, *Urhievuwe* (2010). Steve Amedu is already producing films in Esan language. Tony Boye produced *Inaghomi* (2008), an Itsekiri video-film; Alex Eyengho also made *Omatsentsenand Suaro La* in Itsekiri language. Uncle City has produced *Igbabo-Eva* (2009), *Ifiobodon Se Eraman* (2010), *EmoIsagbo* (2010), *Okpor-Ogie* (2010), among others, in Afemai language. EmemIsong premiered an Ibibio language movie, *Mfinalbaghain* 2006; and many others have been produced in other Nigerian languages such as Fulfulde, Kanuri, Tiv, Efik, Ijaw and, of course, Benin...(25).

The Comedy industry in Nigeria is not left out in the positive exploration of ethnicity. The exploration of local linguistic flavor of different ethnic nationalities in Nigeria has added much variety to the Stand Up Comedy industry. For instance, Mr. Chinedu Emmanuel Ani (Nedu) is of Igbo origin but takes pride in Hausa culture. He has been plying his stand up comedy in Hausa language, culture and mannerism. This has earned him the stage name "Alhaji Musa." Similarly, since entering the Stand Up Comedy scene in Nigeria, Olufemi Micheal, has carved a niche for himself. He prefers to perform in the Hausa culture and mannerism where he has become very popular with the stage name Aboki 4 Christ. Jephthah Bowoto is of IlajeOndo State origin but had his early life in Warri Delta State and prefers to perform in Warri/Wafii culture which has made him to be popularly known and referred to as Akpororo (or simply Akpors). These few instances are comedians who ply their trade using English Language or variants of it. There are many more others who employ purely indigenous languages or their various ethnic backgrounds.

Conclusion

Oftentimes, it is the ethnic identity that promotes the individual's ability, capabilities and aspirations at the national level. As many Nigerians are to be patriotic and work towards the betterment of the country, it is equally necessary to develop the regions from where you originate. One cannot abandon his or her ethnic region in order to make Nigeria great but one can make his people great and at the same time make Nigeria great. Where one comes from is of utmost importance since we consider things like: state of origin and quota system.

This paper is not canvassing for regional supremacy but encourages that people take pride in who they are, be known for who they are, and bring that uniqueness to the point of convergence for national and sustainable development. The prevalence of ethnic consciousness in Nigerian politics stems from the fact that not because we hate each other, we despise each other's culture, religion, and wishes to dominate or annihilate others, but because we lack respect for each other and have failed to listen to each other. We have so far insisted on hearing ourselves as Nigerians but not listen to each other's diversity which is where the strength of our unity lies. It is only when we have respect for other people's values, culture, religion and human dignity that we can pay attention to their dream. In the exact words of Seyoum Hameso:

Positive ethnicity could in fact allay fears of ethnic groups; support mechanisms of conflict resolution; serve as means of taming the untamed post-colonial state and guide the system of social and economic resource mobilization. (3)

Doornoboshad earlier advised that "recognizing positive sides to ethnicity and associated cultural pluraliformity would contribute to what some would call 'the regeneration of society'" (193). If this is achieved in our quest for re-integration (or restructuring), our country Nigeria

...will only emerge from its current difficulties, if it can progressively remodel its institutions to be more in tune with the traditions, beliefs, and structure of our component societies... In this process of remodeling, the role of ethnicity is vital. That is, since social division based on ethnicity remains important in shaping attitudes, values and people's roles, ethnicity is a sound principle and a mirror to study Africa's socio-economic and political reality (Hameso 16).

Hence, the cliché that variety is the spice of life will make more meaning in the multi-ethnic configuration of Nigeria when Nigerians begin to positively explore ethnic identity for national reintegration.

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