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African Writers Have Reflected African Heritage Through Their Writings

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Abstract

This paper is entitled “African Writers Have Reflected African Heritage through Their Writings”, so it is a verification for this statement which implicates the idea of propagating and spreading the African heritage through creative writings. Having reviewed the literature of the field in question, the researcher found out that great efforts that have been made on the part of African writers since the first generation of writers in making their cultures, values, traditions, landscape, and all the features and properties of their nations well known throughout the world in rapid paces. Some African writers’ literary works were displayed in the below postulated points to reinforce and consolidate the core concept of the study. They were also analyzed and synthised in search of showing to what extent do they implicate the African heritage with its various components. African languages were also reviewed as they represent the linguistic component which is the effective medium that is used for cultural heritage transmission. The investigated points depicted how African writers manipulate language for this purpose as well as they elaborated showed the controversial issues in using foreign or colonial languages in writing African literature. On the basis of the analogy which was made in this study, the researcher put forward some important recommendations, some of which are: Africa is profoundly rich in cultural heritage which is deeply rooted in every single African country, so it should be conveyed to the rest of the world through the various types of writings, literary movements in Africa should encourage African writers to undertake the onus of representing their heritage perfectly in their writings as well as school plays would contribute positively to the process of reflecting the African heritage and familiarizing the students with their local cultures, values and traditions.

Keywords: heritage, values, ritualism, traditions, cultural pluralism, ancestors.

الكتاب الإفريقيون يعكسون التراث الإفريقي من خلال كتاباتهم

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المستخلص

هذه الورقة موسومة بـ "الكتاب الإفريقيون يعكسون التراث الإفريقي من خلال كتاباتهم"، لذا تعتبر تقصي في هذه العبارة التي تتضمن مفهوم نشر التراث الإفريقي من خلال الكتابة الإبداعية. بعد طرح الأدبيات المتعلقة بهذا الموضوع، عثر الباحث على جهود عظيمة مبذولة من قبل الكتاب الإفريقيين منذ الرعيل الأول والتي وُجّهت لإبراز الثقافات، القيم، التقاليد، الطبيعة وكل ملامح أهمهم لتكون معروفة لكل العالم. هنالك أعمال أدبية لبعض الكتاب الإفريقيين تم عرضها في النقاط السالفة في هذه الورقة لتعزيز المفهوم الجوهرى للدراسة. تم أيضا تحليل هذه الأعمال بغية توضيح إلى أي مدى استطاعت أن تنقل التراث الإفريقي بمكوناتها المختلفة. قام الباحث أيضا بتوضيح بعض النقاط المتعلقة باللغات الإفريقية التي تمثل الوسط الفعال في نقل التراث الثقافي كما شملت النقاط التي تم التقصي فيها كيف استغل الكتاب الإفريقيين اللغات لأجل هذا الغرض فضلا عن توضيح المسائل الجدلية التي تخص استخدام اللغات الأجنبية أو لغات المستعمر في كتابة الأدب الإفريقي. على أساس المقاربات التي تمت في هذه الدراسة، أسدى الباحث بعض التوصيات المهمة منها: إفريقيا زاخرة بالتراث الثقافي المتجذر في كل دولة إفريقية، لذا ينبغي أن ينقل هذا التراث إلى جميع دول العالم من خلال الأجناس الأدبية المختلفة، كما أوصى الباحث بأن تحض الحركات الأدبية الإفريقية الكتاب الإفريقيين على تكبد تمثيل إرثهم الثقافي بصورة مثلى في كتاباتهم الإبداعية وبين الدور الإيجابي الذي تلعبه المسرحيات المدرسية في عكس التراث الإفريقي وتزويد الطلاب بتقاليدهم، قيمهم وثقافتهم المحلية.

كلمات مفتاحية: التراث، القيم، الطقوسية، التقاليد، التعددية الثقافية، الأسلاف

Introduction

Africa is undoubtedly rich in cultural pluralism. It is the continent that is deplete with the savannah, tropical forests, equatorial lands, vast deserts and inspiring landscapes. As for the African people, they relatively lead a very cohesive life which is to a great extent based on the heritage conveyed to them by their ancestors across centuries.

This paper is to elucidate and ravel out the eminent role played by the African writers in excreting the enormous heritage of the various countries of the continent. Writers mainly undertake the onus of propagating the materialistic and non-materialistic heritage of their countries. However, there are apparent points of intersection among the people of Africa in terms of their values, cultures, traditions and the way they lead their lives with proportionate discrepancies. African societies are in most cases multi-lingual as a result of having more than one race in every country of the continent. Although Africans speak many languages natively and non-natively, they write their literary work in several Western languages which were

passed down to them by colonizers. In spite of using those foreign languages, African writers could send out their own perspectives which are based on their very African cultural heritage to the whole world paving the way to their literary work for more significant denotation and exploration. But the task has been doubled in the presence of the technological breakthrough that the world has witnessed since the last decade of the twentieth century. Thus, writers have to take good care of their literary work as they can widely spread all over the globe.

The keyword of this paper is "heritage" which was succinctly defined as "the practices or characteristics that are passed down through the years, from one generation to the next" (Richards, 1987) This definition brings it home that the societies which are adherent to their heritage uphold the generational concatenation of their nations. African communities by nature are very nostalgic, so the memories of their ancestors are out there so long as they live. On the basis of this novelists, poets, short story writers, haikist, and dramatist throughout the continent play a major role in dealing with the heritage of the continent in an assortment of literary genres thereby, the upcoming sections of this paper will display a great deal of the investigated points that will be explicated here. The study will focus on the positive role of the African writers in making their culture familiar to the rest of the nations in the world. It will also pinpoint the considerable participation of the immigrant African writers in propagating the heritage of the continent moreover to showing the significance of school plays in familiarizing the Young African with values and traditions of their countries. The above mentioned points will be included and discussed in the upcoming sections of this paper.

The Statement of the problem:

This study revolves around the role of African writers in reflecting African heritage analysis and synthesis will be made to document the deep rooted connection between literary work and human heritage with its different aspects.

Objectives of The Study

1. Shading light on some outstanding figures in African literature.
2. To interpreting relationship in African writers and African heritage.
3. Reflecting the African heritage shown in African literature.
4. Stressing the role of literature in conniving human culture.

Features of the African Heritage

The previously stated definition elaborates that the term heritage includes: the practices and characteristics that are passed down through the years from one generation to the next. According to this definition, heritage is intangible, yet heritage does not incorporate a set of abstract values and cultural issues only; it

rather integrates all these with the sense of the place and contexts where people receive those values and cultural aspects. An emerging view of the nature of heritage, and in particular the distinctions between tangible and intangible heritage, is articulated by Smith and Waterton (2009) who stipulate that heritage cannot, and should not, be defined by its materiality or non-materiality alone. Rather it is what is done with heritage that creates the scope for differentiation. These authors suggest that regardless of the specific context of heritage, be it tangible or not, the essence is the same, i.e. "...what heritage is - is the performance and negotiation of identity, values and a sense of place..." (Smith and Waterton, 2009: 292). This supports a call for heritage to be understood as a process (Howard, 2003) and as a 'set of values and meanings' (Smith, 2006: 11)

Africa is composed of so many countries with different races and geographical features. Those racial and geographical differences could cause the presence of cultural pluralism which has made the continent a melting pot for homogeneous set of, rituals, values, traditions and multi-cultural mobility. Hence, the African heritage swings in a mixture of various black ethnicities, Afro-Arab, Afro-European, Arab, and other races. The interaction of those people have enriched the continent in terms of cultural, social, and political heritage. That might seem complicated and problematic, but it is culturally aesthetic, thought-provoking and reflective.

Concerning cultural pluralism in Africa, the continent can be divided into several cultural groups whose features are unique and peculiar. The Arabic speaking countries which include (Sudan, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania) have also varieties of cultural heritage which is related to the Islamic and ancient Arab traditions. But, it is obvious that Sudan has an assortment of Nilotic races with black ethnicities and pure African traditions and cultures whereas, the Afro-Arab races in Northern and Central Sudan are culturally Afro-Arab, and they are profoundly influenced by the Islamic heritage which was originated in the Arab Peninsula. Sudan is full of dialects and vernaculars. Geographically, it is also very rich as it has the longest river in the world, many rivers, forests, deserts and beautiful landscapes. The Eastern part of Sudan is close to Ethiopia and Eritrea in their life style and cultural heritage, but they still have lots of things in common with the rest parts of the country. The inhabitants of this part are mostly of Beja tribes.

Historically, Sudan's name comes from the Arab world, which is called land of the blacks. Sudan known as the kingdom of Kush that was first ruled by the kingdom of Napatia which attained global historical significance (Beshir, 1986). Sudan represents the south part of the Nile Valley, where Egypt is the Northern part whose culture emerged from the pharaohs, Arab world, and Western colonizers who ruled Egypt over many decades. Egyptian and Sudanese literature are Afro-Arab representative works. They portray the varieties of cultural heritage of their regions.

In this context, the rich heritage of south Africa should be reviewed. South Africa is the country of black and white people who are leading a rich varieties of cultural heritage. Heywood (2004: 1) stated the following about the literary history of South Africa: "Amidst confusion, violence, and conflict, South African literature has arisen out of a long tradition of resistance and protest. In order of their arrival, four main communities have emerged in the course of settlement over the past millennia. These are: (a) the ancient hunter-gatherer and early pastoralist Khoisan (Khoi and San) and their modern descendants, the Coloured community of the Cape; (b) the pastoralist and agricultural Nguni and Sotho (Nguni–Sotho), arriving from around the eleventh century ce; (c) the maritime, market-oriented and industrialized Anglo Afrikaner settlers, arriving since the seventeenth century; and (d) the Indian community, arriving in conditions of servitude in the nineteenth century.

All these and their sub-communities are interwoven through creolization, the result of daily contacts varying from genocide to love-making. The result of the interweaving is a creolized society and an abundance of oral and written literatures. Super-communities have been formed by women, gays or male and female homosexuals, and religious and political groups.

Distinctive literary movements have grown around all these community Divisions"

Ritualism as an African heritage

Ritual culture is a genuine part of the heritage of a particular nation. Human beings mostly tend to perform some actions ritually and that emerged from the religious cultures where people of a particular religion are required to do some worships or religious practical deeds in ritual methods as they were divinely revealed to them. In the biblical culture people are required to go to the church and recite the biblical verses in a certain way or they enchant the hymns of the church in a prescribed manner that they would not deal with offhandedly. Those things would influence the peoples' course of life, so they might have a tendency of doing things ritually.

Readers of African literature would not imagine that a literary African texts can be free from the daily routine or seasonal festivals where feasts, music and dance are rapturously and ecstatically presented. Those ritual routines are morbidly practiced to entice as well as they are a compliance to the heritage which have been passed down to them from their ancestors. The following excerpt is taken from Achebe's "Things Fall Apart". It portrays how a meeting was held in a marketplace to discuss some issues related to Umuofia and how things are run ritually.

In the morning the marketplace was full. There must have been about ten thousand men there, all talking in low voices. At last Ogbuefi Ezeugo stood up in the middle of them and bellowed four times, "Umuofia Kwenu," and in each occasion he faced a different direction and seemed to push

the air with a clenched fist. And ten thousand men answered, "yaa" each time. Then there was perfect silence. Ogbuefi Ezeugo was a powerful orator and was always chosen to speak on such occasions. He moved his hand over his white head and stroke his white beard. He then adjusted his cloth which was passed under his arm-pit and tied above his left shoulder (Achebe, 1959: 15).

The severe struggle between colonizers and the African people was quite obvious in Achebe's things fall apart in which the white man made tremendous effort to transit people of Uomofia from paganism to Christianity and change their identity to hold the ground for more stable Western sovereignty in Africa and make the Christian rituals prevail all around instead of the African rituals practiced by the inhabitants as pagan and social practice. (Middleton, 2002: 5) clarified that when Christian missionaries began arriving in Africa in greater numbers in the early 1800s, they made a serious effort to educate local populations. The goal of the early missionary schools was to produce literate individuals to take over minor positions in local churches and become functioning church members. Hence, that was regarded as a threshold for the colonizers in metamorphosing the African identity to control the Africans smoothly and conveniently because the rituals the Africans inherited from their forefathers would fortify them and encourage them to hold together and would also agitate them against Whiteman.

Other African writers also base their literary work on various ritualistic scenes to showcase the cultural aspects of their societies and that can be a self-evident to their endeavor in reflecting appropriately the African heritage with its different forms and components through their creative writings. Western waters who wrote about the African cultures like Sir Henry Rider portrayed a great deal of the African ritualism through their literary products and narrative works. (Jeyifo, 2004: 120) reviewing Soyinka's play "A Dance in the Forest" stated that:

A Dance of the Forests was written and produced as part of the Nigerian independence celebrations in 1960; appropriate to the historic task of forging a nation out of diverse peoples and communities that the celebrations symbolically entailed, the central action of the play revolves around a "gathering of the tribes" at which the festivities intended to celebrate the glorious past
Dramatic parables: ritual, anti-ritual, celebrate the glorious past and hopeful future of the assembled "tribes" turns into an unanticipated encounter with monstrous evils in the past and present life of the community.

African Writers Effort in Reflecting African Heritage

As it was stated above, Africa has eminent cultural and social values which comes out as a result of the many factors that get together to form the heritage of the continent. Writers find it patriotic to convey the cultural

aspects of their nations to the rest of the world. African folklore has remarkably been visualized and implicated in writings by African writers. That includes: folktales, proverbs, myths and legends, and all parts of the rich African folklore are very much alive and they infuse modern African literature with motifs, themes, characters, and techniques. Ngugi draws a lot from Gikuyu folklore in the “River Between, Weep not Child and the Petals of Blood.” Jack Mapanje the Malawian poet, draws much from the native folklore in “Of Chameleons and Gods”. He used mythical characteristics to criticize contemporary societies. He admits that “Glory be to Chingwe’s Hole” has an obscure reference to Chewa myth:

Do you remember Frog the carver carving Ebony Beauty? Do you remember Fog’s pin on Ebony Beauty’s head? That brought Ebony to life? And when the Chief Heard of a beauty betrothed to Frog whose dogs Beat up the bushes to claim Ebony for the Chief? Even when Fly alarmed Frog of the impending hounds Who cracked Fly’s bones? Chigwe’s Hole wood peckers Once poised for vermillion strawberries merely Watched fellow squirrels bundled up in sacks Alive as your jaws gnawed at their brittle bones (1981: 44).

This myth is used to portray the selfishness and meanness of modern African rulers. Many of animals and plants in African evoke characteristics emanating from folklore. This cultural trait is reflected in characters which are more symbols (pejoratively called “types” in Western critical parlance) than just themselves. Ngugi’s Matigari is a good example of the representational character common in African literature. The representational dimension derives from folktales. African dramatist in particular have exploited trickster’s motif in their plays. As animals such as the tortoise and the hyena are not just animals but human representation, so are characters modeled on them representatives. Zulu Sofola’s “Wizard of Law” and Wole Soyinka’s “The Trial of Brother Jero” are examples. Some of the most impressive anecdotes in Achebe’s works are derived from Igbo folklore. The tortoise who suffers from his greed and cunning recurs in many African novels and plays.

Though allusions to folklore maybe obscure to outsiders, they give a certain profundity to literature. Tala (1984: 95-6) observed that new writers incorporate oral literature in their writing to give a flavor of authenticity to their works and to show as modern Africans they are conscious of a rich source of literary inspiration. They include oral traditions to link their past with their present experience to localize the content of their works, to educate fellow Africans and give them confidence in their cultural and to enlighten outsiders and help them get rid of the false impression about African cultures acquired from the time of cultural misrepresentation.

Traditional African literary forms and techniques have been adopted by modern writers. In drama the storyteller features in plays by Soyinka, Ola Rotimi, and Femi Osofisan. Ngugi’s “Devil on the Cross” is

told by a Gicaandi player. African poetry has distinctly traditional African rhythms. In many cases the poets superimpose European words on an existing musical composition.

African writers are the students of their folklore. Soyinka reached into Yoruba oral drama between 1959 to 1961. Kofi Awoonor collected and translated Ewe Dirges in a book titled "Guardians of the Sacred world. Clark worked on the Ozidi Saga of the Ijo people.

Universalizing African heritage in African Literature

Most of the African writers who could procure the international recognition have made successful attempts in universalizing African literature as it conveys their heritage in its different components and perspectives. That can be seen obviously in their literary works locally and internationally. Soyinka (1976: Xii) sees Yoruba Gods as having Greek parallels. Ogun is likened to both Apollo and Dionysus, registering the Yoruba's god's duality as creator and destroyer. In "Season of Anomy" Ofeyi is modeled in Orpheus while Iridise is modeled on Euridise and both characters in the novel are involved in a quest as their Greek counterparts were in classical literature.

Some writers have overcome the concept of conveying the traditional heritage of their countries to ask some metaphysical questions in their literary works. The Nigerian poet Gabriel Okara was one of the African writers whose literary work went beyond the very African traditional aspects to reflect more complicated ideas. That could be seen clearly and apparently in his poem "The Spirits of the Wind" where he might leave so complicated questions in the reader's mind and that would be a call for metaphysical thinking.

Reflecting African Heritage through Non-African Languages

Language issue has been considered as a major problem to Africa. The continent has so many distinct languages as well as distinct ethnic groups. It is the introduction of the colonial languages that enable Africans to communicate with each other intelligibly: otherwise, Africa has no one central language. Among the colonial languages are English, French, Arabic and Portuguese which today serve as lingua franca in the mix of multiple African languages. Based on that, there is a serious argument among African critics about which language(s) would be authentic in writing African literature: colonial languages which serve as lingua franca, or the native indigenous languages. (Menang, 2001) explained that many African writers have chosen to write and/or express their opinions by adopting most of the colonial languages, whereas other creative writers argue that African experience, belief and identity should only be better expressed by indigenous African languages, irrespective of the language barrier found in Africa. For instance, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a Kenyan prolific writer, and many others such as Obiajunwa Wali as well as Abiola Irele, to

mention a few, have all continued to argue that a literature created and documented in languages other than African languages is not qualified to be regarded as an African literature.

Great debates were held to discuss the issue of using Western languages in African literature. Some authors see that this issue should be handled positively on the basis of the potential that those European languages have. Colonization made those languages widely well-known and powerful. They have the capacity to brighten any literary work. They are the languages of many famous Western writers whose writings have been read throughout the world. The juxtaposing perspective endorsed the idea of universalizing some African national languages to be used in writing the literary products of Africa.

Outstanding African Novels That Brought the International Recognition to The African Heritage. It is taken for grant that the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe was the most eminent African writer who undertook the onus of revealing the African cultural heritage through his writings. The publication of "Things Fall Apart" was a real breakthrough to African literature. It was based on showing the things which were regulating the societies of Africa during the pre-colonial times. The novel could shrewdly depict the local heritage of the Umuofia people materialistically and non-materialistically. It was a proof to the world that Africans are not the way they expect and it could also defy and rule out the claims of the colonizers in distorting the reputation of the African people. African writers have in various ways attempted to explain the African concept of order as opposed to the Western/colonial, which is equated with obeying man-made laws. Achebe, Ngugi, and Soyinka have all dealt with this theme. The colonialists in Achebe's Things Fall Apart and Arrow of God impose their laws on Africans, introduce Western courts and police and forcibly jail those opposed to them. According to these foreigners, they are trying to maintain law and order. In traditional Africa there are no jails. Justice is done for the reconciliation of the affected parties, not to set them on parallel paths the rest of their lives. In traditional courts, reparations, restitutions, and settlements are made to the offended party, but the community or family makes sure that the two parties are reconciled. The justices of Umuofia-masquerades-in Things Fall Apart are good examples of traditional African dispensation of justice. Order to Africans is perceived as natural and ritualistic to ensure harmony, the absence of which will bring calamity to the whole group. For this reason, an individual could be sacrificed to avoid a war, a plague, or any anticipated communal disaster. In other words, the individual can be sacrificed for the well-being of the community (Mbiti, 1969: 206).

African Writers and Immigration

This point revolves around the major role played by some African writers who have been staying overseas. Those writers might have become morbid with the culture and heritage of the foreign countries where they

live, but their homelands would remain haunting them for so long. They practice writing in a sense deeply rooted in homesickness to their mother lands and nostalgia. On the basis of that they would proudly involve their native countries values, cultural heritage. Local traditions and issues of identity in their literary works. Writers like Wole Soyinka, Tayeb Salih, Salah Ahmed Ibrahim, and those whose forefathers lived in Europe because they fell as victims to slavery, could convey their cultures to the people of the countries where they stay. Salih's "Season of Migration to the North" is one of the African literary works which were composed outside Africa yet, it portrays the coming of the black man who has been schooling overseas. Mr. Saeed – the round character of the novel could appropriately reveal some of the aspects of the African heritage to the European people through the course of the events and the implications of the well based narrative. He could nostalgically reveal some values and traditions of his homeland. In return the writer tended to portray the cultural heritage of his country in most of the events displaying the way his people lead their lives. Ngugi has made the relationship and their land the major focus in many of his works, especially in "Weep not Child and Petals of Blood" Land is the source of inspiration, so for him any man who had land was considered rich. If a man had plenty of money, many motor cars, but no land, he could never be counted as rich. A man who went with tattered clothes but had at least an acre of red earth was better off than the man with money (Ngugi, 1964: 22).

Similarly, Salah Ahmed Ibrahim held a comparison between his people and the people of the country where he lived as an expatriate. In this regard, his poem "In a Strange Land" implicated a great deal of the African cultural issues such as racism which African suffer from when they immigrate to white races' countries. Hence, racism is one of the significant reasons that would render those writers defend their cultural heritage and identity through their creative writings.

Slavery and colonization played a major part in bringing cultural misconception to Africans in such a way that the international communities developed a thought that African are inferiors to the rest of the world population and thereby the issue of struggle for identity is always out there.

African writers, in asserting their cultural identity, condemn Western intervention as disruptive of the growth and development of African culture through colonialism. Cultural habits and practices change and the writers generally feel that there were and still are sufficient mechanisms and ample latitude for internal changes in African cultural life. After all, culture is dynamic. At the dawn of the twentieth century, men of light and leading both in Europe and in America had not yet made up their minds as to what place to assign to the spiritual aspirations of the black man; and the Nations were casting about for an answer to the wail which went up from the heart of the oppressed race for opportunity. And yet it was at best but an impotent cry. For there has never lived a people worth writing about who have not shaped out a destiny for

themselves, or carved out their own opportunity. Before this time, however, it had been discovered that the black man was not necessarily the missing link between man and ape. It had even been granted that for intellectual endowments he had nothing to be ashamed of in an open competition with the Aryan or any other type. Here was a being anatomically perfect, adaptive and adaptable to any and every sphere of the struggle for life. Sociologically, he had succeeded in recording upon the pages of contemporary history a conception of family life unknown to Western ideas. Moreover, he was the scion of a spiritual sphere peculiar to himself; for when Western Nations would have exhausted their energy in the vain struggle for the things which satisfy not, it was felt that it would be to these people whom the world would turn for inspiration, seeing that in them only would be found those elements which make for pure altruism, the leaven of all human experience (Casely-Hayford, 1911: 1-2)

The Role of School Plays in reflecting African Cultural Heritage

Culture is defined as “an integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting and roles, relationship and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group, and the ability to transmit the above to succeeding generations” (Goode, *et al.*, 2000)

This means that language is not only a part of how we define culture, it also reflects culture.

Thus, the culture associated with a language cannot be learned in a few lessons about celebrations, folk songs, or costumes of the area in which the language is spoken. Culture is a much broader concept that is inherently tied to many of the linguistic concepts taught in second language classes. Through initiative such as the national standards for foreign language learning, language educators in the United States have made it a priority to incorporate the study of culture into their classroom curricula. Cultural knowledge is one of the five goal areas of the national standards.

Through the study of other languages, students gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language; in fact, students cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs. (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1996, p. 27)

School plays in Africa have been taking a great part in shedding light on the African cultural and identity issues since the advent of the twentieth century. School plays can familiarize the young people with their local cultural heritage and draw considerable comparisons and contrasts between the students’ native cultures and the international or non-local ones. Schools are appropriate places for fostering patriotism in students’ minds gradually as well as they can instill affectively the love of the national heritage in learners’ insides. In Africa the British system of education, which encouraged the use of indigenous languages at the

early stages, led to the production of plays in those languages first. The church-sponsored schools frequently organized social, educational, and religious celebrations and activities where plays in African languages were performed, interspersed with music, dance, and recitations, most of which drew their creative origins from indigenous art forms. Biblical stories were dramatized and presented in programs containing dramatized local tales, selected local dances, and songs. (Owomoyela, 1993). This medley of theatrical presentation, often known as concerts, offered inspiration for further dramatic creativity, which blossomed into the Yoruba operas in Nigeria and the concert party groups in Ghana. The organizers of the church and school concerts frequently kept the performances indoors- in the assembly or social halls, which may or may not have raised stage areas, but which in terms of spatial and conventional standards constituted direct borrowings from the presentation techniques of Europe. Many church and government school assembly halls were therefore furnished with raised platform stages, house curtains, and backdrops, which became standard equipment for all kinds of performances, no matter how inappropriate the halls were for the materials being presented in them. Thus with school concerts and plays the proscenium stage became the model for all performances and occasions. It became a legacy that the universities would later adopt, and as such the spatial point of reference for African playwrights and producers. Popular European playwrights such as Shakespeare, Molière, George Bernard Shaw, and Henrik Ibsen were featured in the school productions by literature students, who constituted the backbone of the dramatic societies and participated in the productions, because doing so they had the opportunity to memorize the lines of the relevant plays on which they were to be tested in their literature examinations. The performances were duly reported in the local papers as well as in the teachers' educational journals, such as the *Native Teacher's Journal* in South Africa and the *Nigerian Teacher* in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This paper revolved around the contribution of African writers in reflecting their heritage to outsiders who might have a misconception about the African heritage across centuries. Writers are the only ones who possess a mechanism that can be used effectively in propagating the cultural heritage of the continent eminently. The paper is conveniently depleting with names of some African troubadours who have a considerable contribution regarding the issue in question. Cultural pluralism and social variations could be a rich milieu for those writers which would render their literary works distinctive and valuable.

The researcher also explicate the language varieties found in Africa as result of environmental discrepancies and how African writers make use of the European languages in universalizing their literary projects for sake of shedding light on their rich local heritage of the continent taking into account the other perspective of the writers who never encourage the use of foreign languages rather than using the central

lingua franca languages that are used locally in the continent in hope of universalizing them as they convey the African heritage appropriately.

The study could shed light on the role of African school plays on familiarizing African junior learners with the African heritage profoundly as well as they can contribute considerably to maintaining African cultural and linguistic heritage.

Finally, the African writers who live in different foreign countries, should make use of their being there to spread their cultural heritage as much as they can and keep exploiting their African values and traditions in their literary works. Having done that they can correct the misconception of the world towards African people. Hence, expatriation is not something that would change.

Recommendations

- Africa is profoundly rich in cultural heritage which is deeply rooted in every single African country, so it should be conveyed to the rest of the world through the various types of writings.
- Literary movements in Africa should encourage African writers to undertake the onus of representing their heritage perfectly in their writings.
- African authors should conduct lots of linguistic researches on their local main languages to universalize them as they convey the African heritage authentically.
- New writers should be learnt how to maintain their local values and cultural heritage and reflect them positively to the other nations.
- Further studies can be conducted on the cultural and social values of African societies in African literature.
- The African writers who have been staying in foreign countries should be encouraged to propagate their heritage and values throughout the globe through their writings.
- African countries should encourage writers to print their literary works and make them eminent as they reflect the values of their nations.
- School plays would contribute positively to the process of reflecting the African heritage and familiarizing the students with their local cultures, values and traditions.

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