



BOOMERANG EFFECTS OF GENDER BATTLES IN ANGLOPHONE AFRICAN LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

This study argues that gender battles in literary productions are often said to cause reforms and desired effects for the society to grow in harmony. However, radicalism in gender perspective causes unforeseen consequences that produce boomerang tragedy for both stakeholders and the others around. Through the lenses of linguistic and social semiotics, and the mediating voice of Womanism, the study has found that no matter how well intentioned gender-sensitive writers are, they are not always aware of the boomerang effects they bring in the readership through gendered productions. Mediation and partnership beyond gender prompts a better way to end the gender battles going on in literature and out here in society.

Keywords: Boomerang, gender battles, mediation, feminisms, harmony, development.

RESUME

La présente étude fait le constat que la guerre des genres dans la production littéraire est considérée comme moyen utilisé pour réaliser les réformes et les effets désirés dans une société qui vise à croître harmonieusement. Cependant, le radicalisme dans l'approche genre engendre des conséquences insoupçonnées et crée une tragédie à contre-courant contre les acteurs et ceux qui le sont moins dans nos sociétés. A travers les prismes de la sémiotique linguistique et sociale et la voix médiatrice du womanism, la présente étude a trouvé que quelle que soit la bonne intention des écrivain(e)s acquis(es) à la cause du genre, ils ou elles ne sont pas toujours au courant du revers ou effet boomerang qu'ils/elles créent chez le lectorat. La médiation et le partenariat au-delà du genre constituent le moyen idéal pour mettre fin au conflit du genre dans la fiction et dans la réalité.

Mots clés : Boomerang, guerre du genre, médiation, féminismes, harmonie, développement.

INTRODUCTION

Whether in creative literature or out here in human society, actions that people perform determine their future relations with those who undergo these actions. One important thing worth noting is the quality of the returns that people reap for their

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various actions. As a result, this calls for projections in anything human beings undertake. To do this is to anticipate over the quality of life one would want to secure in the future. In gender and cross-gender connections, the motive for actions should be examined to enrich individuals' living standards. The concept of boomerang is a catch-all word that unfolds the evil-comeback-home philosophy which many people consider to be a curse instead of relating it to the consequences of their biased actions. The boomerang effect traces the belief that one reaps the evil one sows. Thus, if the boomerang endeavor is positive, it gives the return of its own quality.

The history of gender studies is full of contradictions and conspiracies which, in real life, jeopardize humane relations and conducts. Whatever is radical turns to be exclusive and does not mediate for mutual understanding and peace. But radicalism, in itself, is not a problem; it is its biased foundation that dehumanizes the other and later on frustrates the relations between self and the other.

The purpose of this study is to trace the connection between gendered action and the reverse impact that befalls the action performer for the creative experience to shed light on the reader's potential actions and qualitative results. In the effort of reconstructing meaning governing the production of texts, Semiotics, as a dual approach to form and content in order to investigate how meaning is created and communicated, was deemed most appropriate to explore the dialectic use of texts to understand the constructions of sexual difference. Therefore, the theoretical framework and methodology fall on Semiotics regarding the two lenses, linguistic and social, this theory suggests. The complementarity between form and content in criticism is substantiated by Simon Gikandi as quoted by Anate (2012, 26): "The text is not mere content or mere form: it is the process of form recreating reality... by authorial consciousness, constituting a world which might resemble external reality, but it is also the novelist's own universe."

Besides, the mediating voice of Womanism is hereby used to discipline the radical gender conflicts. The meaning produced in the study focuses on the reciprocal lifestyle that questions every individual's biases for culturally constructed man and woman to seek a future free of inequality.

The study is an overview of gender conflicts in the African literary context, gender troubles and the hard knocks that follow the radical gender battles going on both in literature and the target society for the reader to take due actions.

1. An overview of Gender Battles in African Literature

African literature is characterized by conflicts of gender identities among other issues. The battle is sensitive right from individuals' appreciations of the concept of feminism and the different ways in which it branches from 'radical feminism' to

'power feminism' via culture feminism. Whatever approach is considered within qualitative research, feminism generates a lot of debate and nurtures different behaviors.

In a discussion between Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and her female academics, the story of the battle has been summed up. Adichie has been constantly varying on designations of feminism or adding new qualifiers to the concept feminism to derive her trend.

Adichie (2017: 21) opines that "Gender as it functions today is a grave injustice... We should all be angry." There is so much digression from social needs as a result of self-centeredness in the approach to the concept leading up to the denial of life in the name of freedom. The social salvaging, it is known, cannot come from a single person in isolation. Feminism that excludes men cannot make of men- women's partners- happy. This connotes separate life for individuals of female and male sexes, because if men and women cannot live together, cannot cooperate, it is a social chaos that results and can eventually cause harm to society.

Emecheta's feminism is nothing else than that which connects men and women as respectable partners in a win-win relationship. As Kolawole quotes her, we note that radicalism is not her choice:

I am a feminist with a small "f". I love men and good men are the salt of the earth. But to tell me that we should abolish marriage like the capital "F" (feminist) women who say women should live together and all that, I say, No. Personally I'd like to see the ideal, happy marriage. But if it doesn't work, for goodness sake, call it off (Kolawole, 1997: 15).

Emecheta withdraws from a kind of feminism spelled with the upper case 'F'. This type advocates rigidity or radicalism and so, she runs away from it. It is a trend that heavily depends on the revenge of women on men, which is, from her perspective, not the African type of feminism. For Emecheta, "African feminism is free of the shackles of Western romantic illusions and tends to be much more pragmatic." (Emecheta, 2013/2007:554)

Ogundipe-Leslie's "Feminism is not a choice between extreme patriarchy on the one hand or hateful separatism from men on the other." (Ogundipe-Leslie, 2013:547) It is rather a principle of social transformation including African women. For Ogundipe-Leslie, if patriarchy and feminism are two radical poles apart with no negotiation option, she has not such a choice to make between the two. Gender separatism is a disease that needs healing.

Adichie (2014/2012: 11) sheds lights on the "negative baggage" as a response to all such as hating men and African culture that feminism tends to be associated with. Adichie makes a different move as a way to raise awareness that women and men are all human beings and can collaborate without seeking to erase sexual differences. She does suggest a new meaning to people's perception of gender, a perception that

isolates men from women. In this respect, equity in gender perspective is a call for the implementation of human rights and not a gender battle as if gender politics had something valuable to offer other than justice. Feminism is therefore a system in which men and women participate and so a harm done to the man affects the woman and a harm done to the woman equally affects the man sooner or later. This connotes a contextual meaning associated with the boomerang effect.

Adichie (2014/2012: 10) draws a line between negative interpretations of feminism and the type that can be rewarding: "At some point I was a Happy African Feminist Who Does Not Hate Men And Who Likes to Wear Lip Gloss And High Heels For Herself And Not For Men." [sic] It is bad to like men and hate women as in the clan of Koku or to like women and hate men as in the case of Araba's people in *Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories*. The two spouses Araba and Koku are happy because they incidentally fit into the need of their cultural backgrounds. But they become sad when their children are faced with the hard fact of gender segregation in their mother's land. The children find it difficult to relate to their aunts in Ghana because the latter would like them to be females and bring wealth to their female ties.

Against the blatant gender segregation, Amadiume (1987) argues that African women had greater freedom to achieve economic freedom before colonization and that sex and gender were not confused in the precolonial society. It was possible to find some women in the roles of men and vice-versa. This explanation adds more meaning to the concept of patriarchy and its scope. Amadiume establishes that men were not the only stakeholders in the patriarchal system. Women played some roles that deny them the victim class they locate themselves in. The same goes for some men who might find themselves in the shoes of women associating their gender activism with the negation of men. Gender interpretations and role assignments on a radical basis poses a problem of objective appraisal of people and what they can really contribute to the society. The overview on gender opens vista on the analysis of all forms of impediment gender biases provoke to the protagonists.

2. A Context of Gender Impediment

In the novel of McBagonluri, gender politics is a source of wanton conflicts and wars. Outstanding female characters in the novel such as Tamara and Mbozi refuse to befriend men. To them and considering the way the novelist articulates the story, men are enemies that need capital punishment with Tamara as a well-equipped female character to carry out the sentence. The punishment is the castration of men.

When she changes a strategy, we find her exposing her private parts that lures men into her witty revenge tragedy. Tamara wants to rule not because she has a lot to offer to humanity, but it is mainly because she feels good, as a ruler, in emasculating men. Tamara uses the weak point of men to catch them. As the narrator raises the

“eyes”, the “large breasts”, “African buttocks” and the detailed description of the nakedness of the female protagonist as her points of admiration by men and the cause of failure of “any living man”, the reader is led into the core of the provocative style she uses to prey on men in view of satisfying her desire for revenge. The style is not one page of the novel only; it is spread throughout the novel. Here are few illustrations taken from different pages:

While some were busy admiring her large eyes that were in full shape as a full moon, others had their eyes fixed on her firm and rounded breasts. Her African buttocks and hips, which were partly covered with the beads, surely could not escape any living man.¹ (TOARG: 11)

Every description of the princess’s nakedness suggested that the sight of her in that state could cure an impotent man. (TOARG: 12)

Tamara paused and replied, ‘If men of Kumbungu can look me in the face and kill me, then I will swear they are all impotent [...]’ (TOARG: 26)

Every attractive aspect of Tamara has been the flavor the female novelist has put to use to win her ideological battle. The style goes in line with the argument that power is misappreciated and loaded on men while it is clear, as in this description that, men are silent victims of women who wag their erotic powers as sharpened weapons against them. In this textual environment where the interpretation takes into account MacBagonluri’s art of writing and her words in context, the Linguistic Semiotic proves its utility as no meaning can be created without form that suggests it.

Naba’s pronouncement was firm and to the point. ‘Beneath a woman’s clothes lies her dignity. And the unwanton display of that dignity is an insult to womanhood and it becomes more shameful when that woman is a royal creation whose words would soon be men’s command, whose presence would send every woman to her knees.[...]’ (TOARG: 15)

Chief Naba, does not appreciate the warlike mood between men and women. No matter who is likely to win the battle, the winner has to do it for the sake of society. If women win the battle, for whom do they win if men are not around to add their share to the celebration of the victory? If men win the battle, how can they enjoy the victory in an environment where it is established that both men and women need each other in the full enjoyment of life? “The time has come for the lion and the lamb to dwell together in peace.” (TOARG: 69)

Tamara is the symbol of destructive pride described in terms that conjure war:

Tamara, the lioness of Sasakawa was not pleased with the instant peace agreement. She wanted some resistance from the Python so that she could go to war but Naba her predecessor would not let her distract (p. 91) the peace treaty. Tamara had however

¹ Diana Bamford McBagonluri, *Tears of A Rain Goddess* (Accra: Excellent Publishing and Printing, 2003), p. 11. This title will henceforth be abbreviated as TOARG and integrated to the quotation.

booked an appointment of revenge in her heart. Jungo had to pay for their tyranny. (TOTRG: 92)

Tamara is the radical feminist protagonist who perfectly implements radicalism in the way she deals with men. "After her feet washed and dried she relaxed on her throne with the outcome of the war. 'Castrate all the men and cage them. After four days leave them to die in the forest', she commanded." (TOARG: 93)

The commander of the army who stands in the dialog as symbol of wisdom is frustrated by the warlike ruling of the woman and rhetorically restates the shocking orders of Tamara: "'Castrate them?' the commander stood up in protest. He knew the men were going to be punished and kept as slaves, but castration was nothing he would endorse." (ibid) Despite this rhetorical question which calls for change of mind, Tamara persists: "Are there commanders of the Sasakawa army of the Jungo? I said disarm those captives sexually and leave them to die.' She repeated firmly." [...] She never went back on her word. (TOARG: 94)

The mediating behavior of Nafisa, the first wife of Yiri Naa -the king and warrior of Kumbungu- is very efficient in crushing misunderstandings that crop in the story which, in the process, prevents the family from indulging into noisy quarrels. Nafisa's rejection of violence makes of her the symbol of unity among the female folk (See TOARG: 18, 41).

Again, if matrilineal principle sustains the preference for female children as compared to male children, it makes it unbelievable how one can cherish the female-born without the male contribution to the phenomenon. In fact, as the agrarian community in Africa had preference for male born for farming, matrilineal preference for women dwells on heritage as an exploitative approach to men. The conversation between Koku and his wife Araba clarifies the matrilineal project behind the identified philosophy. Araba explains the hidden agenda to her husband:

'Well, as you know, we are matrilineal people.

'Yes, so?'

'That means that entitlement to land and other clan properties depends entirely on what your female line is...'

'Meaning what?'

'Meaning, who your mother is and her mother is or your great-great-grandmother on your mother's side was?'

That sort of thing?... Araba responded.

'What?' Koku exclaimed again and again. (DPAOS²:40).

The excerpt above focuses on the material contribution of the children as indicated in the discussion. The secret is released on the incident that Araba has given birth to two male children while her aunts quite clearly "wouldn't know what to do with the boys. They think they should be girls. At least, one of them." DPAOS: 42 It pays less to have male children in the Akan matrilineal society.

² DPAOS stands for the title of Ama Ata Aidoo's *Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories*.

Araba, the Akan-born lady, is faced with the dissatisfaction of her people who prefer female children to the male children she has given birth to. While her own birth brought joy to her Akan people, the male children she has given birth to are “problems that demanded solutions; chaotic distractions that called for tight packaging”. Faced with this human injustice on gender, Araba cries and explains.

Yes, I am crying. But am not crying for you my husband who was born male in a place where boys are ‘cherished’. And I am not crying for me who was born female among a people who treasure girls. No, I am crying for all the girls who were ever born where they are despised. I am crying for my boys, our sons, and all the boys who were ever born where no one really wanted them. My dear, I am crying for our children. Koku, my dear; I am also crying for a world in which nothing ever makes sense. DPAOS: 44

Strictly speaking, evil must be seen as evil on the basis of what it does against humanity, not on the basis of whether we suffer from it or not. Paradoxically, the narrator reports something from Koku, the husband of Araba: “...Yes, where I come from, girls don’t matter. Nobody wants them. Only boys are desired, cherished” DPAOS: 42. Koku did not see it worth condemning until his own children got into trouble. While as a man, his people liked his birth, that of his children becomes a problem in his wife’s community: a reverse order. In a more detailed episode, Koku reports how he received a huge yelp from his people back home in Ghana, as an expression of great gratitude to God for the birth of the boys:

‘When I phoned home to tell them about our first baby, that it was a boy, my father gave a huge yelp: that ‘God is great’ and then he just left me on the line. Probably to run to tell my mother and the rest of the household. I could clearly hear my mother and the other women ululating and thanking God. It was the same the second time around... It the time I was very glad thinking they were just happy that I’d got children... But in retrospect, I think it was because the kids are boys. Rabs, I’m now certain that if we had had girls my father would have sworn under his breath, and then stayed on the line on both occasions to console me with something like ‘God will be kinder to us next time’. (DPAOS: 43)

The experience of Koku and Araba as a couple with two boys in *Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories* appeals to the reader’s imagination toward the matrilineal community of the creative world. That the Akan people have a tradition that treasures girls is one thing. That Araba has a husband whose people treasure boys is another thing. Indeed, the two communities have the rights on their own. However, Ama Ata Aidoo works out a new tradition where a couple is formed by Koku the man and Araba the woman who are equally treasured in their respective communities. She has the couple give birth to two boys and introduce them into the community of their mother, for the reader to see what it feels to have one’s own children despised because of the male genitals they have not chosen to host.

The experience of the male hate is quite amazing and disheartening for Araba’s husband to feel he is not welcome in his wife’s community that is the neighboring community to the Akan’s of Aidoo’s creative world. Being of the same gender as his sons, Koku is disheartened by the tragedy that is awaiting them in this Ghanaian

society. Ama Ata Aidoo has brought the two extremes in the two gender tropes for their shortcomings to spring up as shameful philosophical trends. She causes biased interests and concerns to cause equally valued appraisal of gender, equal consideration of both men and women. She struggles for a rationale that dwells on mutual enrichment and shared gains sustained by the feeling of same humanity.

3. Unexpected Beatings of Gender Segregation

Segregation on all grounds beats both those who segregate and those who are segregated against. The way Ama Ata Aidoo has created the ideologically complex mismatch of gender hierarchy and preference in two Ghanaian community groups, the Akan on the one hand, and the other communities around Akan, makes it essential for readers to understand the irrational and unnecessary battles of gender, at least, in Africa. Araba, the female character in the book belongs to a matrilineal Akan community while her husband Koku belongs to a patrilineal group. The couple has given birth to two boys and has introduced them into the created matrilineal community of the mother for the readers to feel for themselves the mishaps of restrictive gender line.

Aidoo has devised a mourning situation and a dilemma for the couple, and through them the peoples involved in the cultural conflict, so that readers can see the futility of gender radicalism and its mismatch with social growth and harmony. The matrilineal community of Araba and the patrilineal community of Koku have to negotiate and save the future of their children and the communities at large.

The idea of boomerang effect is a reverse tragedy an offender receives in return. In terms of gender affiliation, the evil that men plan for women unexpectedly beats them hard in reverse order. Similarly, the radicalism that characterizes some waves of feminism turns against the advocates of the said radicalism. Phallogentrism and Matriarchy use the same methods of denial of the other in equal hate. Phallogentrism, derived from the radical "phallus" or penis centers human experience and power on the genital organ representative of the man. The same spiritual blindness hovers when the stakeholders of this theory fail to understand that they too can give birth to female children they symbolically reject or exploit in their creative strategy.

Boomerang effect is felt when Anawi (2007) argues that poverty that befalls young rural people who go to the city, will cause to the new dwelling place the most disastrous moral decay because these people turn against the society that has failed to give them their dignity and self-worth. There is a boomerang trend because society has not predicted sharing in the deviant attitudes and their impacts.

Alice Walker's wholeness and the fight for gender equity contribute to the settlement of the problem posed by boomerang effect because class prejudice and gender segregation are anti-social habits. The rejection and exploitation within patriarchal

institutions weaken the females while denying their importance as humans in the making of decisions. The power is less with the physical function of the “phallus” than it is with its abstract function. It is the signification associated with the penis that matters. It is the mapping of power, the metonymy or representation that naturalizes the power order created through cultural manipulation associated with the organ. The “phallus” or penis is a biological organ but when articulated as the center for meaning worth making and actions worth taking, it performs a psychological defense on behalf of men. In literature studies, the presence of the phallus or its representational value in a corpus loads on its owner every importance and advantage.

Erica West sees radical feminism as a blinded critical orientation. In her own words, “Plagued by a narrow understanding of gendered oppression and a misguided strategy for change, radical feminism ultimately fails to offer women a clear path to liberation”. West,

Erica West, “The Pitfalls of Radical Feminism” retrieved from <https://jacobinmag.com/2017/07/radical-feminism-second-wave-class> , on 7/7/2020

The idea of blindness carries its full meaning in the intellectual short-sightedness, failing to note that the choice aiming at the achievement of women alone is not enough to transform the society that hosts them. In other words, the pandemic interpretation of male-female relations is a sheer perpetuation of hierarchy and predatory logic between men and women.

While in the Western context, the argument of phallocentrism introduced by Freud (1965 [1933]) associates the female child’s attraction felt for the father with her search for masculine power symbolized by the phallus she cannot find with the mother. The phallus appears as a proof of castration of the female child and her move into sexuality as a search for the potential baby. The clitoris becomes a diminutive of the penis. In this regard, Butler (1993) felt offended and argued that “phallus”, and not the penis, is symbolic and could not belong to men alone given that it could be attributed to any body organ. Women could thus share in what seems to be appropriated by men through the guided reflection.

Irigaray (1985 [1977]: 222) exposes the phallocentric bias, “The masculine as the standard of value, in relation to which the feminine acquires significance and worth”. Irigaray lays emphasis on the biased perception of the biological organ as a culturally defined reality thereby subjecting every created social hierarchy as natural and eternal decree of God.

Butler (1993:5) deconstructs the use of the phallus as a culturally constructed stereotype and explains that gender is constructed and sustained by words of power

the writer uses. The difference is blatant and points to fantasy versus reality, argument versus biological organ. While 'fantasy' points to imagination or fiction, reality speaks to hard facts. In the same vein, 'argument' addresses capability to produce reasoned thoughts while 'biological organs' are mute:

If gender is the social construction of sex, and if there is no access to this 'sex' except by means of its construction, it appears not only that sex is absorbed by gender, but that sex becomes something like fiction, perhaps a fantasy, retroactively installed at a prelinguistic site to which there is no direct access. P.5

The argument from the foregoing quotation stresses the importance attached to the body in the appreciation of gender in the masochistic critical stances reaching out to equating the body – the materiality of the phallus- to gender which is culturally determined.

Against this background information on gender delineation in the Western tradition, Ama Ata Aidoo's narrative argument draws on the existential implications of gender biases in her African setting. If the two boys were girls, they could inherit the accumulated wealth of their female line in her Ghanaian community. The contextual explanation is provided by Araba, Koku's wife, as a cultural background information on her matrilineal community of Aidoo's making. Through the exposition of the excesses of masculine tradition and that of the feminine feedback in revenge tradition, Ama Ata Aidoo suggests that no single gender identity can erase injustice and bring harmony in the society. Koku and Araba in the new setting of the married couple are free from the cultural prejudices of their respective peoples in Ghana. But when in contact with the peoples, they are faced with the hard truth of incompatibility in world view between the two peoples they have left behind.

The problem is not with differences but rather with hierarchy and appropriation either patriarchy or matriarchy raises. It is our contention that gender battles can never end until new aesthetics of appreciation of texts and appraisal of people in society acknowledge differences without fostering hierarchy and appropriation modes. In this perspective, Abiola Irele (1981: 40) puts Linguistic Semiotic and Social Semiotic into one continuum when he opines that "the impact of our writers' efforts will only come across if we, as critics, can relate their works to the whole state and condition of our people's existence, draw out their meaning for them by demonstrating not only their excellence at least where the best ones are concerned but also their relevance and significance."

Gender exclusion and battle aesthetics need documenting in order to prove how potential readers and lovers of these life options cause harm through their life choices. This will surely infuse the understanding in them that there is no merit planning evil against other people whether it is measured by gender barometer or any other in society. A man is a brother, a partner, a father, an uncle, a human being and when he is beaten or cheated, it is part of humanity that suffers. In the cause-

effect bond of womanism where evil gets back home by the principle of “the womanist vision of interrelatedness and of wholeness”, sooner or later, the caused suffering gets home and unexpectedly affects its causer through the social networking or human connectivity the world entertains (Pewissi, 2017, 237).

The same goes for a woman who is a sister, a mother, a partner, an aunt, a grandmother. Her sufferings appeal to humanity that is in the sister, partner, aunt or grandmother around. By bringing confusion between Yiri Naa and his other wives in *Tears of A Rain Goddess*, Tamara seeks revenge for its own sake or that of her family forgetting that her co-wives are sisters to her since they all are women. Yet, the old Naaba has not liked the idea of going to war against Kubungu. But since she has booked revenge against this village, she finds her other ways to achieve her goal: castrating the men of that village.

Regarding Aidoo’s *Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories*, it is not obvious to us how much offended Araba and Koku felt about the gender selective philosophy on which their communities dwelt until they felt much concerned because of the rejection their own children suffer in the land of their aunts. Araba, the mother of the two male children, testifies to this when the narrator introduces the reader into her mind for the revelation:

Araba had been aware, especially since secondary school days – rather vaguely(41) though –that outside the boundaries of Akan lands were all these other people for whom girls were not only not worth much but, in fact, were often regarded as problems that demanded solutions ; chaotic distractions that called for tight packaging and were ultimately, expressive non-luxuries. DPAOS: 41-42

The penis as the biological marker of male identity is the only thing that gives men the pass to admiration, celebrity and prospective authority. In other words, the identification and the difference between men and women in this Akan community and beyond constitute a barometer that structures and classifies privileges in the society.

On more challenging issues, society cannot develop when its gender diplomacy is not balanced. If Tamara sees castration of men as a punishment of men alone, she shows lack of intellectual capability. Making men frigid is not a problem of men alone, since biologically, women need men for their sexual envy and reproduction. Though technologies today have a remedy, the understanding is the male symbolic present in the toys that are created to perform the role of the man. Again, the man can be ostracized but his symbolic presence makes him live around among the lesbians.

Roof and Wiegman (1995: 4) question the authority of men to speak feminism in the American society, which matches with the same reality in Africa where there is still a long way to go because of the ambiguity that mars scholars’ understanding and orientation of gender criticisms. “So, who has the authority to speak? How far does

that authority extend—to what classes of addressees? What does it mean to speak from authority?”

Stratton (1994) had her African answer to the question of authority a year before. In her address to Chinua Achebe about his well-known novel, *Things Fall Apart*, she affirms that things could not fall apart for women because the said things were never together for African women in Achebe’s creative world. Stratton denies Achebe the authority to speak for African women because they are not given enough room in *Things Fall Apart*.

A woman cannot be reasonably denied a place and role in her community. When men are impotent because of the castration they undergo the problem of the living together persists. Women alone cannot produce children to ensure continuity in human race. To create two poles of values, each belonging to either sex is to misread the dynamism of life and the interaction between men and women as conditions that contribute to peace and the quality of life.

CONCLUSION

This study in which Semiotics, linguistic and social, is used ‘male’ and ‘female’ are proved to be signs that needed decoding to trace the boomerang effect of gender battles going on, in the imagined world of McBagonluri and ours in our respective communities. Thus the mediating voice of Womanism calls humanity back to a sound partnership, complementarity and wholeness in the making of our world. The study has found that no matter how well intentioned gender-sensitive writers are, they may not always be aware of the boomerang effects they call to action through radical gendered productions. Offenses they produce are boomerangs that yield other forms of hit backs. Social and political conspiracies have “boomerang” returns because they unexpectedly harm their producers though at the very time actions are triggered, no such reverse affliction is foreseen. The study therefore suggests that, any offense in life, one that advocates gender segregation will suffer from the lack of socializing with the other. Indeed, the world is like a mask dancing and each face of the mask will sooner or later be exposed to the evil one causes.

If patriarchy and matriarchy are two social options tailored on radicalism, their initiators and the followers cannot claim security and peace of mind into thinking that the conflicts they have triggered will not reach their homes one day. The world is changing and human connections as well as those of cultures mutate interest and partners beyond human control. Thus, mediation and partnership beyond gender seem to be a better way to end gender divisions and forms of conspiracies going on in creative literature and articulated in human life styles as they transpire in society.

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