LOCATING TRANSNATIONAL SPACES

Culture, Theatre and Cinema

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF

Professor Emmanuel Samu Dandaura

fsonta, fitin, MNAL, MNIPR



Sue Matheson, Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah and Prayer Elmo Raj

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Locating Transnational Spaces

Culture, Theatre and Cinema

A Special Publication of the International Association of Theatre Critics

And

Faculty of the Arts, Business and Science, University College of the North, The Pas, Manitoba, Canada

IN HONOUR OF

Professor Emmanuel Samu Dandaura,

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Edited by

Sue Matheson, Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah

And

Prayer Elmo Raj

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ISBN: 978-978-56857-7-0-X
email:okpadahstephen@gmail.com, smatheson@ucn.ca and pelmoraj@gmail.com

Dedication

This book is dedicated to Professor Emmanuel Samu Dandaura, fsonta, fitin, MNAL, MNIPR

Acknowledgements

The Editors would like to thank God Almighty for facilitating the publication of this edited volume. We are also grateful to the subject of this book, Professor Emmanuel Samu Dandaura, for giving us the permission to undertake this scholarly project. We are indebted to IATC for her unflinching support towards the realisation of this book project. Also, the book has benefitted from the support of the staff of Faculty of the Arts, Business and Science, University College of the North, the Pas, Manitoba, Canada. We immensely appreciate Professor Barclays Foubiri Ayakoroma, who despite his tight schedule, agreed to write the foreword for the book. We thank Professor AbdulRasheed Abiodun Adeoye, our father and mentor, on whose shoulders we stand to surf the terrain of theatre scholarship.

Sue Matheson, Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah and Prayer Elmo Raj
February, 2020

Biography of Contributors

AbdulRasheed A. Adeoye Ph.D is Professor of Theatre Directing and Criticism in the department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. He holds two master degrees and a Ph.D in Theatre Arts from the Prestigious University of Ibadan. He is a member of many social and academic-related organisations such as SONTA, NAPSAS, ANA and IFT. Professor Adeoye is currently the Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Kenneth Eni Efakponana Ph.D is a Professor of Theatre Design and Technology in the department of Theatre and Media Arts, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Samuel Ayedime Kafewo Ph.D until his death on 7th February 2014 was a Professor of Theatre and Media Studies with the department of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.

Shadiat Olapeju Shuaib Ph.D is a Senior Lecturer in the department of the Performing Arts, Universiy of Ilorin, Ilorin Nigeria.

Papiya Lahiri Ph.D is presently working as Assistant Professor in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Jaypee University of Information Technology, Himachal Pradesh, India. She is a poet and holds a Ph.D in Canadian Drama. She is also a theatre activist having directed Indian and European plays. She has presented papers and read poems in various national and international Conferences/Seminars/international poetry festivals in India and abroad. Lahiri has also worked as a Project Associate in the *Centre for Australian and New Zealand Studies*, HP University, Shimla.

AbdulMalik Adakole Amali Ph.D is a Lecturer in the department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Gabriel Ojakovo Oghenevwarho is a Ph.D Candidate in the Department of Music, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.

Taiwo Afolabi (BA University of Jos, MA University of Ilorin, Nigeria and Ph.D, University of Victoria, Canada) is a Research Associate, University of Johannesburg, South Africa and University of London, U.K. He has undertaken both artistic and research projects in China, Ireland, Burkina Faso, Denmark, Nigeria, Spain, Sri Lanka, Iran, Croatia and Sudan. He founded Theatre Emissary International and co-coordinates the Network of Emerging Arts Professionals of the UNESCO's International Theatre Institute (ITI/UNESCO). He is coeditor of *Committed Theatre in Nigeria: Perspectives on Teaching and Practice* (Lexington Books 2020).

Joseph Atoyebi Ph.D is a lecturer in the Faculty of Arts, Business and Science, University College of the North. He earned his Ph.D in Lingistic from University of Leipzig, Germany. His other areas of academic interest include documenting the language and cultures of indigenous people.

Olayinka Magbagbeola holds a B.A in Theatre Arts (First Class Honours) from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria and an M.A from the department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Giorgia Scribellito teaches in the English I institute, University of Warsaw, Poland.

Dawit Girma teaches English Literature at Debre Birhan University, Ethopia. He has an M.A in English Literature and a B.A in Language and Literature. He has published research articles in scholarly journal, proceedings and the print media. His research interest is on Ethopian Literature, philosophy and socio-political history.

Oklobia, Adakole John Ph.D is an Associate Professor of Performance Aesthetics and Film Art with the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Abuja, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria. He studied at the University of Jos, where he bagged a Bachelor of Arts (B. A.) degree, a Master of Arts (M. A.) degree, and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree from the University of Abuja. He has worked on and in Television and Film, Theatre Productions, Theatre for Development projects over the years. He has worked as a Script writer, Director, Stage and set Designer. He is also published widely in several peer reviewed Academic Journals. His areas of special interest are; Design and Technical Theatre, Film and Television Production; Scenography, Theatre for Development amongst others.

Edmund C. Onwuliri is a graduate of University of Jos, where he studied Theatre Arts. He is Deputy Director in charge of the Information Department of National Directorate of Employment. He has researched widely on issues of Documentary films. He has also produced and exhibited some documentary films. He is currently a Graduate Student with the University of Abuja. He is studying for a PhD in Media Arts. He has also published a number peer reviewed articles.

Blessing Adjeketa is a PhD Candidate in the department of Theatre and Media Arts, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. He holds a B.A (Hons) Degree in Theatre Arts and an M.A in Theatre Arts both from Delta State University Abraka, Nigeria.

Omolola Shukurat Adewale has a B.A and an M.A in Performing Arts from the Department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

Babalola Olusola Hakeem is a graduate of Theatre and Performing Arts, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. He bagged the Faculty of Arts Best Graduating Student Award (2017). He is currently on the M.A Degree programme at Nasarawa state University, Keffi. A budding writer, stage actor and director, Hakeem has directed a series of plays under the umbrella of *The Visage Theatre*, a performance troupe where he serves as the artistic director.

Effevotu Efetobor Stephanie is a graduate student at the Department of History, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from the University of Benin and a Master of Arts degree in History from the University of Ibadan. Her research interests lie in the areas of Popular Culture, Migration studies, Gender and Development studies. She also has interest in contemporary history and peacebuilding. In recent times, she noticed that youths are becoming largely influenced by what they consume, the latest of which is the Marlian fever. Her chapter is therefore driven by her desire to examine the impact that consuming celebrity culture can have on young people especially in this age of media globalisation.

Fanyam Joel Avangwa teaches in the department of Theatre Arts, College of Education, Katsina-Ala.

Elijah Tosin Oje is a faculty of Arts member of the University of Maiduguri. He is an ethno-musicologist who is currently on the Ph.D. programme. He specialises in African music. His area of research interests includes; African traditional music, church music, popular culture and music, religion and music, music education, music and advertisement, music and media, theatre music and scriptwriting.

Ayodele Obatomi is a Faculty of Arts member of the University of Ahmadu Bello, Zaria, Nigeria. He is a musicologist, ethno-musicologist, conductor and lectures music at the department of Theatre and Performing Arts. His area of research interest include: African music and culture, popular culture and music, sociology of music, Acoustics and sound, Band and Orchestra instrumentation, Music Entrepreneurship, Music and Media, Electronic music, Music Education, Religious Music, Agitational Music, and Theatre Music.

Oluwakemi Emmanuel Olowonubi is a lecturer in the department of Theatre and Film Arts, Federal University, Lokoja, Nigeria.

Basiru Adebisi lectures in the department of Visual and Performing Arts, Kwara state University, Malete, Kwara state, Nigeria.

Confidence Ozioyiza Daniel is a lecturer in the department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University, Lokoja, Nigeria.

Nwagbo Pat Obi, whose former surname is Nnenyelike is of National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO), where he lectures at the Abuja Study Centre. NICO, the apex Cultural Institute in Nigeria that harnesses culture for national development. He is an award winning playwright and has published well researched articles in reputable journals. Obi is currently pursuing his doctorate degree in the Department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. He belongs to many social and academic-related organisations such as IATC, SONTA, ANA, NUJ, and ASSITEJ (Editor, ASSITEJ-Nigeria, Newsletter).

Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah of the department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. He holds B.A (Hons) Degree in Theartre Arts from Delta State University Abraka, Nigeria, and a Masters Degree in Performing Arts from University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. He has published numerous articles in local and international journals which include journals housed by Routledge-Francis and Taylor Group and Intellect. Okpadah is a co-editor of Committed Theatre in Nigeria: Perspectives on Teaching and Practice (Lexington Books 2020). He is presently working on his Ph.D dissertation which focuses on Environmental Cinema. Okpadah is also a Senior Research Fellow, Theatre Emissary International, Nigeria.

Sue Matheson Ph.D is an Associate Professor at the University College of the North, Canada. She teaches in the areas of American Film and popular culture, Canadian literature, and Children's literature. Western film is one of her research specialisations. Her interests in film, culture, and literature may be found in more than forty essays published in a wide range of books and scholarly journals. She is the editor of *Love in Western Film and Television: Lonely Hearts and Happy Trails* (Palgrave 2013) and has co-edited volumes of essays regarding Canadian literature, culture, and the North: The Fictional North: Ten Discussions of Icons and Stereotypes Above the 53rd Parallel (Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2012) and *Horizons North: Contact, Culture and Education in Canada* (2014). Matheson is the book review editor for *The Journal of Popular Film and Television* (Taylor & Francis). She is also the editor of *The Quint: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly from the North*. She received her doctoral degree from The University of Manitoba in English Literature, focusing on cultural failure and counterculture literature in Canada, the United States, and Britain.

Prayer Elmo Raj Ph.D is Assistant Professor of English, PG & Research Department of English, Pachaiyappa's College, Chennai-30. He is the author of *Theology of Religions in the Context of Fundamentalism* (2013) and *Book of Job: A Literary Response* (2014), *Postcolonial Theory and Literary Imagination* (2018) and editor of *Religion, Politics and Secularism in India* (2016), and *Literature and Society* (2016). His research interests include literary/critical theory, alternative epistemologies and postcolonial literatures

Oluwafemi Daniel Adebisi is a Doctoral Candidate and a Research Assistant in the College of Community and Public Affairs, Department of Community Research and Action at Binghamton University in Binghamton, New York, USA. Daniel's research focus is on the developmental role of musical arts and culture in Nigerian communities. The goal is to make Nigerian communities more sustainable and attempt to institute a bottom-up approach to development in Nigeria.

Biola O. Adumati is a Lecturer in department of the Performing Arts, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State. She is currently rounding up her Ph.D in Theatre Directing in the department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

Dr. Nkiruka Jacinta Akaenyi is of the Department of Performing Arts, Akwa Ibom State University, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. She obtained her Bachelor's degree, Masters and Doctorate degree from three prestigious Nigerian Universities; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, University of Lagos, and University of Port Harcourt respectively. She is currently the Acting Head, Department of Performing Arts.

Foreword

I am so elated to write the **Foreword** for this special publication of the International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC) and Faculty of the Arts, Business and Science, University College of the North, the Pas, Manitoba, Canada, in honour of Professor Emmanuel Samu Dandaura (fsonta, fitin, MNAL, MNIPR), Festival Director and Professor of Participatory Communication and Performance Aesthetics.

When the editors contacted me to write the **Foreword** to this book, I was really humbled. First, I have had a very close working relationship with Professor Emmanuel Samu Dandaura. After my appointment as Executive Secretary/CEO of National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO) in 2009, he was one of the professors I contacted to reposition the Training School of the Institute. NICO Training School eventually had the rare privilege of having Professor Dandaura and Professor Mabel Evwierhoma to mentor cultural officers in the Institute and sister ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). Second, Professor Dandaura made me not to be too comfortable in office as CEO by convincing me to teach in the Department of Theatre and Cultural Studies, Nasarawa State University, Keffi (NSUK), where he was the pioneer head of department. The rest is now history.

I can aver that Dandaura is one of the few Nigerian Professors in the Humanities, whose critical works are insightful. His *Mada People and Culture* (1997), *Development Entertainment: From Indigenous Aesthetics to Endogenous Development* (2010), *Culture, Identity and Leadership in Nigeria* (2010) (coedited with Professor AbdulRasheed Adeoye), *Harmful Traditional Practice in Nigeria* (2013), *National Language Newspapers and Development in Nigeria* (2019) (coedited with Barclays F. Ayakoroma) and his plays: *Drumbeats of Death and Other Plays* (2009) and *Venom for Venom* (2010), attest to his scholarstic acumen.

Of course, the honouree is a personage whose academic oeuvre transcends that of Nigeria and Africa. He is President of the Nigerian Section of the International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC) and Member of the International Executive Committee of IATC. He also belongs to the International Theatre Institute (ITI-Nigerian Centre, as President). He had been honoured by these bodies at home and abroad. Dandaura also belongs to the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR, as a Member and an Appointed Member of the Governing Council, where he also handles the Institute's workshop and training programmes); and Society of Nigeria Theatre Artists (SONTA), as a former President, Fellow and current Secretary of the Board of Trustees. Dandaura is the pioneer Executive Director, Institute of Strategic and Development Communication (ISDEVCOM), Nasarawa State University, Keffi (NSUK), Nigeria. He has

over 86 published articles in highly rated international academic journals and currently serves as the Editor of *Nzeh Magazine*, Nigeria's flagship magazine dedicated to promoting Africa's Culture and Tourism potentials.

The title of this book, *Locating Transnational Spaces: Culture, Theatre and Cinema* caught my attention. I realised that there ought to be more scholarly books on Transnationalism and the Arts on the shelves of the global library. It is well known that transnationalism has its roots in transnational flows, connections and crossborder transactions. The upsurge of environmental awareness and socio-political crisis which has culminated into the rise in the number of forced migrants globally makes it needful to expound the frontiers of transnational studies. While the term, transnationalism, is not new in the lexicon, it still remains a budding concept in the academia. This edited volume is therefore timely. Also, a book on transnationalism for a Professor, whose scholastic foray transcends Nigeria and Africa, is not a coincidence. It is imperative that a book of this nature is published for an erudite scholar as Professor Emmanuel Samu Dandaura. Thus, the chapters written by Professors Ken Efakponana Eni, AbdulRasheed A. Adeoye and Samuel Ayedime Kafewo; Associate Professors Sue Matheson, Adakole John Oklobia and Prayer Elmo Raj; Drs. Shadiat Olapeju Shuaib, Joseph Atoyebi, Papiya Lahiri, AbdulMalik Adakole Amali, Taiwo Afolabi and Nkiruka Jacinta Akaenyi; as well as Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah, Ayodele Obatomi, Blessing Adjeketa, Edmund Onwuliri, Gabriel Ojakovo Oghenevwarho, Oluwafemi Daniel Adebisi, Ayodele Obatomi, Dawit Girma, Nwagbo Pat Obi, Giorgia Scribellito, Babalola Olusola Hakeem, Fanyam Joel Avangwa, Olayinka Magbagbeola, Elijah Tosin Oje, Ayodele Obatomi, Oluwakemi Emmanuel Olowonubi, Basiru Adebisi, Confidence Ozioyiza Daniel, Effevotu Stephanie Efetobor, and Omolola Adewale Shukurat, reveal transnational dimensions in various cultural, social, theatrical and cinema spaces. The multinationality of the articles and the transnationality of the contributors which cut across Nigeria, Canada, Poland, Ethiopia, India and the United States of America, makes this book invaluable within European, Asian, African and American academe. The book is a worthy addition to the libraries of academics all over the world.

Professor Barclays Foubiri Ayakoroma (BFA)
(Fsonta, fta, fimc, cmc, mnipr, mnim, DGN)
Head, Department of Theatre Arts
University of Africa, Toru-Orua (UAT)
Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

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Third World Cinema and the Committed Art of Sembene Ousmane

AbdulRasheed A. Adeoye Ph.D
And
Stephen Ogheneruro Okpadah

Introduction

The quest for cultural renaissance, the search for national identity, and the struggle against racial segregation and colonial dominance in colonial and postcolonial societies is the thrust of third world cinema. Among cineates whose films reflect this struggle, are Gillo Pontecorvo, Argentines Solanas, Raul Ruiz, and the pope of African cinema, Sembene Ousmane. Sembene's films such as *Borrom Sarret, Xala, Mandabi,Ceddo, Black Girl* and *Emitai* are critical explorations of economic, cultural and socio-political condition of colonial and postcolonial third world nations. His depiction of the postcolonial condition fully captures his commitment to societal reconstruction. This chapter examines selected films of Sembene as socio-cultural, economic and political constructs. It also investigates the commitment of Sembene to cultural revival, socio-political reconstructions and explores dialectical materialism in his cinema. The study engages in a historical survey of third world cinema and critically interrogates selected films of Sembene Ousmane which include *Xala, Borrom Sarret, Moolade* among others.

Theoretical Framework

This study is foregrounded on Sembene Ousmane's art theory of *Functional Aesthetics*. "As a proponent of functional aesthetics, Sembene embraced his vocation as a writer with a social and political agenda" (Tekpetey, 2010, p. 1). *Functional Aesthetics* posits that every work of art has a role to play in societal development. Therefore, cultural studies ought to examine all works of art to understand various cultures. "No work of art can turn its back on the society" (Vasquez, 1974, p. 113). Good art constructs, deconstructs and reconstructs the society. Any art that falls short of the above functions, is not worthy of existence. Good art is that art that appeal to emotional response of mass audience. It is one that has a wide appeal. Consequently, our analysis is rooted on Sembene's 'Functional Aesthetics' vis-à-vis his commitment to cultural revival.

Third World Cinema and the Poetics of Liberation

> Wherever there is a filmmaker prepared to stand up against commercialism, exploitation, pornography and the tyranny of technique, there is to be found the living spirit of *New Cinema.*

> Wherever there is a filmmaker, of any age or background, ready to place his cinema and his profession at the service of the great causes of his time, there will be the living spirit of *New Cinema.* This is the correct definition which sets *New Cinema* apart from the commercial industry because the commitment of industrial cinema is to untruth and exploitation (Teshome, 2016, p. 1).

The above statement is an excerpt from Glauber Rocha's book, titled *The Aesthetics of Hunger.* It is a reflection of the African cinema otherwise known as the cinema of the third world. Teshome refers to third world cinema, as *New Cinema.* To fully understand third world cinema, it is imperative to locate it within the larger framework of the concept of third world.

The term *third world countries* is a construct of Western imperialism and colonialism. Shobat and Stam (1994, p. 25) submits that "third world comes logically out of the discussion of colonialism. The term also refers to the neocolonised, or decolonised nations and minorities whose structural disadvantages have been shaped by colonial process and by the unequal division of international labour". Suffice to state that the existence of the term *third world*, stems from the binary (or binaries) of *first* and *second* world countries. First world countries include the imperialist and colonial masters such as Britain, France, Germany among others, whose colonial action and processes, energised their development from their looting of their colonies, or what Wa Thiong'o (1981, p.11) calls "the devastation of a continent and the brutal exploitation of millions, with great consequences on the economic, political cultural and literary spheres" One colonial heritage of note in postcolonial countries, is capitalism which has culminated into an imbalance in the socio-political system in third world countries. Capitalist processes which is alien to the third world, has further graduated into a class divide-which Karl Marx calls the *Bourgeoisie* and *Proletariat.*

As an economic tradition imported into the third world (especially into Africa) by colonialism, there were been numerous calls by literary artists and critics from the geographical orbit of the colonised, amongst Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Sembene Ousmane, Ayi Kwei Armah, Aminata Sow Fall, Obi Wali, Athol Fugard, and much later, Femi Osofisan and Festus Iyayi to facilitate a return to the indigenous economic process of the third world. Thus, various literary and critical outputs of the aforementioned literatis, deconstruct western capitalism and political cultures and reconstruct or advocate a more friendly socio-political system that would elevate the status of the common man and also expunge economic, sociopolitical, racial oppression and marginalisation of all kinds

from postcolonial societies. The literatures of the above artists are also committed to cultural revivalism.

Third world cinema is also committed to socio-political reconstruction, against racial construction and for cultural revivalism. In their manifesto which was preceded by the screening of the film *La hora de los hornos-Hour of the Furnaces*, Fernado Solanas and Octavio Getinoarticulate that third cinema is a cinema of liberation in the third world. The term third world on the other hand, means "the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America" (Chanan, 1997, p. 6). The term has its origin in the Bandung conference of 1955, "the founding conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, when China promulgated the theory of the three worlds. The first world consisted in the advanced capitalist countries of the West, including North America and Australasia, the second world comprised of the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, the countries of the remaining continents were thus the third countries to which China declared its allegiance" (Chanan, 1997, p. 8).

Wa Thiong'o (1981, p. 102) in *Writers in Politics*, avers that the story of the third world, is the "African story, the Asian story and any cursory glance at the history of China, Indo-China, India, the West Indies and Afro-Americans". Ngugi's position on the third world intersects with Shobat and Stam's position. The poorest countries are found in the African continent, in Asia and the West indies. Wa Thiong'o (1981, p.104) notes that third world literatures are "literatures of struggle: the struggle of ordinary people, who against great odds have nevertheless changed and are continuing to change oppressive social systems and hence the power map of the twentieth century".

Most of the literary outputs in third world nations were aimed at rewriting and deconstructing the racial constructions of the colonial masters about their colonies. Critical texts such as Edward Said's *Orientalism*, Bill Ashcroft et al's *The Empire Writes Back* and Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, serve as evidence on the fight against colonial and neocolonial oppression and the search for identity. From the foregoing, it is explicit that the term third world cinema emerged from the appropriation of the term third world. They are body of films made by African, Latin American and Asian filmmakers who sought to fight against Western imperialism, noecolonialism and also to rewrite the misrepresented Africa, Latin American and Asian text. Third world films capture the travails of imperial hegemony and cultural subjugation in third world countries. This film culture has "the variable of decolonisation as a factor. As Adesanya (1997, p. 13) contends that "cinema is the most dangerous form of colonialism and the only way to stop it is to encourage indigenous African filmmakers. We must put into images the African against underdevelopment created by colonialism". Herein lies the core of third world cinema. Many third world countries, namely, India,

China, Brazil and Senegal, has been able to achieve this goal of decolonisation" (Shehu, 1992, p. 20).

Third world cinema, predominantly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are committed to a particular political, socio-economic and or cultural cause. Solana and Getino (1976, p.44) notes that "it is that cinema that recognises the anti-imperialist struggle in the third world and its equivalent within the imperialist countries. It is a guerilla cinema". Third cinema therefore, is politically motivated as it is part of the larger body of postcolonial discourse. Thus, this cinema aims to rewrite, reconstruct, reconfigure and redefine the place of the colonised and underdeveloped nations in the face of colonial and neocolonial processes. But to what extent should the third world film valourise the culture of the oppressed? Teshome Gabriel in *Towards a Critical Theory of Third World Films* criticises exaltation of all traditional African values in third world cinema. He states that only indigenous African traditions that elevates and contributes to the condition of man should be valourised, and cultures that constitute underdevelopment and are detrimental to people of the third world should be abhorred and expunged. For instance, it would be unfair to reinstate the *Abobaku* tradition (a practice in which a man willingly kills himself to escort the late king to the land of the dead) of the Yoruba people of Western Nigeria, or to advocate for the killing of twins in some Nigerian cultures, and even to campaign for the *Osu* caste system (a group of people who are considered outcasts, and do not mingle with other people in the society. Those considered Osu, do not enjoy fundamental right as other citizens. In fact, they are totally segregated.) of the Igbo people in Eastern Nigeria. Teshome (2016, p.4) states further that:

> It needs to be stressed that there is a danger of falling into the trap of exalting traditional virtues and racialising culture without at the same time condemning faults. To accept totally the values of Third World traditional cultures without simultaneously stamping out the regressive elements can only lead to 'a blind alley,' as Fanon puts it, and falsification of the true nature of culture as an act or agent of liberation.

Beyond the unique and dynamic nature of every culture, there is no culture without faults and limitations. Third world cinema must thus, also depict the limitations, the weaknesses and demerits of indigenous traditions. "A living culture must necessarily welcome accretions from other cultures" (Osuntokun, 2011, p.12). African cinema, which is part of the larger body of third world cinema, must therefore be careful and meticulous in its treatment of culture. Oyebade and Owoola (2016, p.177) submit that third world cinema "include the major film industries in India, China, Egypt, Mexico as

well as post revolution or post-independence film industries in Senegal, Cuba, Indonesia and many more. It also includes now, the Ghana and Nigeria video film industries that have no contribution to third cinema for more than fifty years". However, Oyebade and Owoola must note that the first Nigerian feature film, Ossie Davies's *Kongi's Harvest* (1970), has the attributes of third world cinema. "In the souvenir programme of Oladele's *Kongi's Harvest* is the declaration: Africa is no longer simply a location for big Game and adventure films but a film producing and originating continent" (Adesanya, 1997, pp.13-14).

As an art that evolved from third world countries, the political impetus in films made in Francophone third world countries in Africa such as Senegal, predates films in countries such as Nigeria and Ghana. For instance, Sembene Ousmane, a renowned Senegalese novelist, socio-political activist and filmmaker, with his films, proved that "third world cinema will remain useful for a politically inflected cultural practice if they are not taken as essential preconstituted entities but rather as collective projects to be forged" (Shobat and Stam, 1994, p.28). The commitment of Sembene to the political landscape of Senegal, is reflected in his films. His approach and import in filmmaking with the incorporation of indigenous cultural and nationalist ideologies such as Negritude and Ujaama, are geared towards a Socialist Africa and Cultural revivalism.

Sembene Ousmane and the Cinema of Commitment

A study of Sembene Ousmane, the renowned socio-political activist, novelist and filmmaker, is a study of a committed artist. His films reflect cultural revivalism and socio-political activism. The commitment of his films to societal reconstruction led his being popularly known as the pope of African cinema. Sembene also doubles as one of the most renowned novelists of African descent, especially of the revolutionary tradition. Literary scholars and critics such as Udenta O. Udenta attest to the above statement in his seminal study on Sembene. Udenta (1993, p.17) submits that "Sembene's works are not only committed to the emancipation of the underpriviledged, his ideological stand on revolution as a medium for positive change, is also explicit" He is not only the first African filmmaker (feature filmmaker in particular), Sembene also doubles as a disciple of Karl Marx who placed his film art in the service of liberation from the shackles of colonialism, neocolonialism and corruption of political leaders in Africa.

The sociological import of his films correlates with that of Segei Eisenstein, the Russian filmmaker. His dedication of film to the service of liberation, cultural resuscitation and the close affinity of his art to Eisenstein's cinema, perhaps, was because of his (Sembene) educational training in Moscow, Russia, where propaganda filmmaking held sway in the middle of the twentieth century. However, while Sergei Eisenstein fought against class disparity (the Bourgeoisie and Proletariat), Sembene goes

further to kick against Western imperialism and colonialism and revive the cultural aesthetics of the third world.

As "a proponent of functional aesthetics, Sembene Ousmane embraced his vocation as a writer with a social and political agenda (Tekpetey, 2010, p.1). He believes that an artist must be committed to a particular cause. An artist (a poet, a novelist, a dramatist, a filmmaker, a sculptor, a musician among others) is an ideologue who uses the medium of art to preach his beliefs and make humanity critically conscious of the need to adopt his ideology, with a view to making the world a better place to live in. To Sembene, every work of art must be functional. All art is ideological. Any attempt to separate art from ideology will serve nobody. Even Absurdism, one of the most militant and banal of all philosophical and humanistic movements, has its root in a particular ideologic. The ideo-aesthetic function of art cannot be overemphasised. Sembene's militant approach to filmmaking stems from the culture of racial segregation in colonial Senegal, and corruption of the emergent political class in the third world in the wake of independence.

Sembene also captures the challenges posed by capitalism. An economic process imported into the third world by colonialism. His first short film, *Borom Sarret*, presents a character who labours all day without anything tangible to show for it. Borom Sarret, the eponymous character, leaves his wife to earn money from his trade of conveying people with his cart from one place to another, but he returns home poorer than he was. Set in the Muslim country of Senegal, Borrom Sarret is seen in the first sequence of the film, praying, before leaving home to seek for daily bread. In fact, the film begins with the voice of a clergy, being heard, praying in a mosque, with emphasis on the word, *Allah*. Despite his prayer to *Allah*, the Muslim terminology for God, before going in search of daily bread, he still returns home, even poorer. The filmmaker seems to posit that societies are not determined by religion. Rather, societies are products of economic structure. The problems of colonised nations must be tackled realistically. This is because, in most societies today, most people believe that only prayers to God would solve the socio-economic and political problems. Clergymen initiate unending prayers sessions on national growth and development in government houses, without cautioning politicians against their appropriation of public funds. In fact, the goal of some of these clergies is to take their share of the national cake from government by means of cash rewards or contracts. Despite the fact that Borrom Sarret prays before going to seek daily bread, he still finds nothing to give his wife to prepare food for the family at the end of the day.

Borom Sarret is a marxist film narrative, which mirrors the travails of the proletariat in a bourgeoisie dominated society. The film portrays the suffering and travail of the common man. The bourgeoisie does depend on

the man power of the proletariat to survive. The rich build hospitals in which they charge the poor exorbitant medical bills. Borom Sarret conveys a rich man and his pregnant wife in his cart. Immediately the couple mount the cart, the pregnant wife rests her head and heavy figure on Borom Sarret. A close up shot of the camera depicts that he does not complain, rather, his expression shows that it is a usual occurrence as he continues to drive the cart. This is a metaphor that the exploitation of the poor by the rich reoccurs in third world countries.

With this film, Sembene advocates for a change in the socio-economic systems prevalent in third world countries. "Sembene, a committed artist, concentrates on liberation from various forms of oppression as the dominant theme in his works" (Tekpetey, 2010, p.1). He addresses fellow exploited and oppressed, and make them critically conscious of all forms of exploitation, oppression and subjugation. He "is a speaker who reveals a situation to himself and to others with his very intention of changing it" (Tekpetey, 2010, p.1). *Borom Sarret* was Sembene's first short film. "Only a period of four years intervened between his first short film, *Borom Sarret* and *Mandabi* which confirmed his talent and incontestable authority as a filmmaker, after the popular success, *La Noir de* (Black Girl), the first full length African film" (Samuel, 2012, p.3). *Mandabi* explores religious contestations while *Black Girl* examines the place of the black woman in the French society. The woman is placed at the margin and looked at in the lens of the (o)ther. The other in this context is the subjugated, the exploited and the maginalised. *Black Girl* is a discourse on feminist advocacy.

Sembene's humanistic ideas are sidelined in his later film, *Xala*. The film is an adaptation of his novel of the same title which sees the political leaders in Senegal, take the white portraits out of the government house, and dump them outside in all ferociousness. This scene is a metaphor for liberation from colonial dominance and Western imperialism. In this film, the belief in the transcendental holds sway as Haynes (2015, p.10) expatiates that in *Xala*, "a threat from a magical dimension is deployed to represent communal norms and to generate steady irony, deadpan humor, and the acute discomfort of the representative of a corrupt elite." The corrupt bourgeoisie-ruling class is revealed in *Xala*. In *Xala*, El Hadji Abou Kader Beye, a businessman marries a third wife, N'Gone. However, El Hadji has the *Xala* (impotence), hence, he is unable to consummate the marriage. His challenges are compounded with the failure of his business. His newly wedded and second wife, Oumi N'Doye leaves him. He discovers that the curse of impotence was placed on him by a beggar whom he humiliated. The beggar tells El Hadji that the only cure for his impotence is for him (El Hadji) to strip himself naked and be spat upon by a group of lame and blind beggars, lepers, legless cripples, men women and children.

El Hadji is from the ruling class. In fact, he is not only a businessman, he is also in government. He lives a flambouyant live style, which is also characterised of the expensive wedding he throws for his third wife, N'Gone. El Hadji prides himself in getting whatever he wants. He does not only get a new beautiful wife, he also uses his elitist position to deals unjustly with a beggar who positions himself in El Hadji's street. He uses the police to harass him. This is characterised of the ruling class, especially politicians in third world countries who are fond of oppressing the poor. After rigging themselves into political offices, they see themselves as tin gods. They appropriate and hijack monies meant for the development of the societies and the execution of projects.

Xala is a metaphor that the wealth of the rich is made possible by the struggles of the poor. The elites must therefore acknowledge the capacity and importance of the common man. The attempt of a *marabout* to heal El Hadji is futile. A beggar who El Hadji despised in the past, and who place the curse of impotence on himsays thathe has the capability to cure him. This reveals the essence and importance of the common man in a bourgeoisie controlled society. Post-independence third world countries were characterised with corruption in the political system. The politicians make the masses vote them into various elective positions with empty promises on making the wants and challenge of the citizens their priority in office. However, when they get into such positions, they become tin gods. They turn their backs on the electorate. They cruise in exotic cars with heavy security operatives. The promises they make become a pipedream. At the end of this film, the poor has the last laugh and El Hadji, despite his affluence, wealth and influence, is at the mercy of the beggar. This film "serves as an effective means of awakening consciousness, and be used as a formidable weapon in the struggle against underdevelopment as well as postcolonial oppression and injustice (Samuel, 2012, p.2).

*Moolaade*is a discourse on the ills and foibles of the ruling class. In this film, "Sembène highlights the *hypocrisy* of the local governing institutions" (Winston, 2014, p.70). Thefilmuses collective and mass action to solve the issue of Female Genital Mutilation, mostly supported by the governing institutions. Although this narrative is critical of Female Genital Mutilation which is perceived to be a product of chauvinism, "the artistic vision and aesthetics of *Moolaadé* echo Leopold Senghor's Negritude" (Rogert Ebert in Winston, 2014, p.3). This implies that as an advocate of negritude, Sembene also advocates for traditionalism and a return to the African past. The ideologies of Leopold Senghor, Leon Damas and Aime Cesaire come to play in this film. As a supporter of Negritude, animist metaphysics, and traditionalism, Sembene's creative and artistic ingenuity comes to play in almost all his films. Like Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a believer in

African cultural renaissance, Sembene's cinema glorifies African traditional ideals.

The commitment of Sembene's cinema to the liberation of the common man from marginalisation by the upper class, led to censorship laws which stood hard on his films. Armes (1987, p.92) submits that "Sembene had a running battle with the censors in his native Senegal where *Xala* had to go through eleven different cuts before it was finally released, and *Ceddo* was banned for eight years before it was finally released". In his film, *Emitai*, the colonised are in the net of the colonisers. The colonised are continually suppressed by the imperialists. In this film, "there are English subtitles for drum messages, and silence serves as an important element of the audio track of the film. It is 'a cinema of silence that speaks." (Teshome, 2016, p.20). Sembene's cinema is a paradigm of third world cinema which Haynes (2015) highlights as "the radical theories of *Third Cinema* are, third cinema shall be a militant cinema. It shall be first and foremost a cultural action with social and political value, or it will be nothing. It can also become an economic action that will only be a by-product" (p. 12).

All the attributes of third world cinema are replete in Sembene's films. Apart from being expressions of African cultures his films are also political constructs. Some of his films encountered the stridgent axe of the censor board. This did not deter his cinematic engagements. His philosophy is likened to that of the late Biafran soldier, Major Alale whose watchword was "revolutionaries must never despair" (Ademoyega, 1981, p.157). This spirit of revolution also manifest in his literary enterprise. *God's Bits of Wood,* a novel Sembene published in 1960 "deals mainly with the resistance of the railway workers in Dakar-Bamako line, from October 1947 to March 1948, against the exploitation of labour and oppressive conditions of service" (Udenta, 1993, p.16). Apart from preaching cultural revival and campaigning against capitalist culture imported by colonialism with the medium of film, Sembene also utilises the prose genre in preaching against class exploitation.

Conclusion

Third world cinema began in the spirit of the commitment for liberation from colonialism, neocolonialism and the corruption of political leaders in third world countries. The films in thie repertoire speak for the common man and they are narratives especially on class divide and the creation of space that would engineer positive change, mutual cooperation and development in third world countries. The cinema of Sembene Ousmane is a radical construction which conforms to the manifestoes of third world cinemas. Furthermore, he uses film as an ideological weapon.As a political and revolutionary filmmaker, the themes of the films of Sembene are relevant to the present economic and political situation in developing countries, and as such, have the capacity to reconstruct the social and political landscape of developing countries.

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