
Re-Enacting Nigerian History Through The Costume Designs in Kunle Afolayan's *October 1*

By

SHUAIB, Shadiat Olapeju

Department of Performing and Film Arts
Faculty of Arts,
University of Ilorin,
Kwara State, Nigeria
pejucos@unilorin.edu.ng

&

AJIBADE, Temitayo

Department of Performing and Film Arts
Faculty of Arts,
University of Ilorin,
Kwara State, Nigeria
pejucos@unilorin.edu.ng

Abstract

Costume plays a vital role in film making, it extends beyond visual appeal to communicate character, emotion, social status, and historical context. In historical films especially, costume has become a powerful storytelling tool that helps audiences connect with the cultural realities and lived experiences of a particular period. This study examines the significance of costume design in Nigerian cinema through the analysis of *October 1* directed by Kunle Afolayan. Set on the eve of Nigeria's independence, the film provides a rich visual reconstruction of life during the British colonial era, making it a compelling case for understanding how costume contributes to historical representation.

Using a qualitative research design that combines analytical, descriptive, and interview methods, the study explores specific costume elements that reinforce the film's historical credibility. Drawing on the theory of historicism as articulated by Paul Hamilton (1996), the research approaches costume as a historically coded text that reflects both documented realities and creative interpretation. The analysis focuses on period-appropriate garments, fabric choices, textile patterns, colour schemes, and accessories, examining how these elements collectively reconstruct the socio-political atmosphere of colonial Nigeria and visually narrate the tensions surrounding the transition to independence in 1960. The findings reveal that the costume design on *October 1* carefully balances authenticity and creativity. Through detailed attention to British colonial uniforms, Western-influenced elite fashion, and indigenous Nigerian attire, the film successfully evokes the cultural complexity of the era while supporting its broader historical narrative. The study concludes that rigorous historical research is essential for costume designers working on period films, particularly within the Nigerian context where visual representations contribute to shaping collective memory. It recommends that costume designers ground their creative decisions in thorough historical investigation to prevent misrepresentation and ensure accurate cultural storytelling.

Keywords: Re-enactment; History; Costume Design; Nigerian Film; *October 1*

Introduction

Costume design plays a far more significant role in film than mere decoration. In contemporary film scholarship, it is widely understood as a powerful storytelling device that helps shape how audiences perceive character, time, space, and social identity. Brizzi (2020) explains, costume contributes to performance itself, influencing how characters inhabit their roles and how viewers interpret their motivations and authority. Likewise, Street (2019) emphasizes that clothing in film operates as a visual language which communicates class, ideology, gender, and historical context without the need for dialogue. In historical films especially, costume becomes central to the recreation of the past. It shapes what audiences recognise as —authentic,—even though, Rosenstone (2021) reminds us, film does not reproduce history exactly as it happened but interprets it through creative and aesthetics choices of artistic and technical crew of the film.

In postcolonial societies, the meaning of costume on screen becomes even more layered. Representations of colonial and independence periods are not simply about showing what people wore; they are about remembering who people were, how power operated, and how identity was negotiated. Scholars in cultural and media studies argue that material culture including clothing serves a carrier of memory and lived experience (Garuba, 2019; Ukadike, 2020). Through dress, films can reveal tensions between tradition and modernity, indigenous identity and colonial influence, resistance and adaptation. At the same time, African cinema today operates within a global media environment

shaped by streaming platforms and transnational audiences (Haynes, 2018). This means that historical films must balance local cultural specificity with visual forms that resonate internationally (Higbee & Lim, 2018). Costume design, therefore, becomes a key site where authenticity, creativity, and global visibility intersect.

Interestingly, the Nigerian film industry, widely known as Nollywood, has undergone remarkable transformation over the past two decades. Once associated primarily with low-budget video productions, it now produces historically grounded and internationally distributed films that engage deeply with questions of national memory and identity (Krings & Okome, 2019; Haynes, 2018). One of such films, *October 1* directed by Kunle Afolayan. Set on the eve of Nigeria's independence in 1960, the film revisits the political anxieties and cultural complexities of the late colonial period. Through its careful reconstruction of British colonial uniforms, Western-influenced elite fashion, and indigenous Yoruba attire, the film uses costume to visually express hierarchy, authority, cultural affiliation, and shifting identities.

Although scholarship on Nigerian cinema has grown considerably, much of the existing research focuses on themes such as genre development, narrative form, and postcolonial discourse. Less attention has been paid to the material and visual dimensions of historical storytelling in the film, particularly the role of costume design in constructing historical meaning. Yet studies of historical and heritage cinema show that costume is central to how authenticity is produced and perceived (Vidal, 2020; Landy, 2021). When applied to Nollywood's historical films, this

insight opens important questions: How does costume contribute to the re-enactment of Nigeria's colonial past—In what ways does clothing function as both historical evidence and creative interpretation—

Guided by the theory of historicism as articulated by Paul Hamilton (1996), this paper approaches costume as a historically embedded text that reflects documented realities while also shaping contemporary understandings of cultural memory. Using a qualitative methodology that combines analytical, descriptive, and interview approaches, this paper examines how garments, fabrics, colour schemes, and accessories in *October 1* support the film's claim to historical credibility. Ultimately, this study argues that thoughtful historical research and culturally grounded design practices are essential for avoiding misrepresentation in Nigerian historical films. Costume designers are not merely stylists; they are visual historians who contribute significantly to how national stories are imagined, remembered, and communicated to both local and global audiences.

Synopsis of *October 1*

October 1 is a 2014 historical Nigerian psychological thriller directed by Kunle Afolayan, set against the backdrop of Nigeria's imminent independence from British colonial rule. The film follows Inspector Danladi Waziri, a Northern Nigerian police officer dispatched to the remote town of Akote to investigate a string of gruesome murders involving young women. As he delves deeper into the case, Waziri uncovers dark secrets lurking beneath the town's surface. His investigation ultimately leads him to Prince Aderopo, a highly respected

and educated member of the community, who is revealed to be the killer. Aderopo's actions are rooted in deep psychological trauma stemming from childhood sexual abuse by a colonial priest, an abuse that symbolizes the broader exploitation and moral decay inflicted by colonialism. Beyond its gripping narrative, *October 1* is a layered exploration of Nigeria's complex historical and cultural landscape on the eve of independence. The film addresses themes such as colonial oppression, psychological scars, identity, moral conflict, and the struggles of a nation on the brink of self-governance. With strong performances, rich cinematography, rich costumes, and a haunting musical score, *October 1* combines historical fiction and crime drama to deliver a thought-provoking reflection on Nigeria's colonial past and the lingering consequences of cultural dislocation.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework of this study is Historicism. This theory focuses on the understanding of history as a springboard to interpreting cultural and sociocultural evolution in human development. It explored the importance of history as a lens through which human society is evaluated. It is a social and cultural phenomenon that is understood in relation to the historical circumstances in which they occur. The theory of historicism emerged in order to explore history as veritable tools for interrogating human experiences and cultural patterns. Hamilton, (1996 p.13) observed that

Historicism emerges in reaction to the practice of deducing from first principles truths about how people are obliged to

organize themselves socially and politically. The natural laws governing human behaviour at all times are formulated, and cultures evaluated by the degree to which they approximate to this ideal pattern.

The emergence of historicism was built on the foundation of understanding the different phases of human experience in relationship to the society. It further captured human past behavioral patterns as means of evaluating human organisation. Historicism explores the interplay of transposing the past historical occurrences into the contemporary realities without adulterating the historical essence. According to Hamilton (1996, p.4) —Historicism is the belief that the identity of something can only be understood by considering its history—With this submission, history becomes a defining factor in evaluating human cultural identity.

In the context of costume, historicism suggests that costumes are not just clothes; they are symbols that convey meaning and can influence how people perceive themselves and others through period and time. Thus, this theory explores the extent which costume serves as a historical symbol of interaction for the audience. This shows that, individuals interpret the meaning of costumes based on shared historical norms, values, and cultural symbols this makes the theory to be relevant in this discourse because in film, costumes play a crucial role in conveying character traits, social status, historical context, and cultural identity. The choice of costumes can influence how characters are perceived by the audience and can contribute to the meaning and

interpretation of the story. This substantiate (Knapp & Farley, 2023) submission that historicism investigates the time and period in which a film is written by investigating historical moments, political events, social structure and cultural moments embedded in the artifacts that reflect the cultural values norms and anxieties of that time.

Historicism thus provides a valuable lens through which to examine costume design in historical films because Costumes are not merely aesthetic enhancements but act as historically constructed symbols that convey meaning. As Charon (2009) explains that —human being acts toward things on the basis of the meanings those things have for him—. In a historical film, costume carries specific cultural and temporal meanings that audiences interpret through shared historical understanding of the society. Historical costumes in film help viewers emotionally and cognitively connect to the era being portrayed, allowing them to interpret characters' experiences through familiar visual cues. Hence, Costume design in historical films is not merely functional or decorative, it is symbolic, interpretive, and deeply rooted in the cultural construction of meaning. The exploration of costume in historical films cannot be over emphasised because it serves as pointer that gives information about certain historical occurrences. This indicates that costume plays significant roles in projecting history because it has the ability to support the historical demands of film's narrative.

Historicisation of Colonial Rule and Nigerian Independence

The historicisation of Nigerian independence involves analyzing the complex processes and sociopolitical dynamics that led to the country's

freedom from British colonial rule on October 1, 1960. Rather than viewing independence as a single event, historians emphasize its gradual evolution, shaped by local, regional, and global forces. One of the most critical drivers of independence was the rise of Nigerian nationalism in the early 20th century, particularly after World War II. The emergence of educated elites and nationalist leaders such as Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo, Ahmadu Bello and female voices like Fumilayo Ransome Kuti amongst others also played pivotal roles in mobilizing the masses and forming political parties that challenged colonial authority (Coleman, 1958, pp. 37-45). Constitutional developments also marked important milestones in the path to independence. The Richards Constitution (1946), Macpherson Constitution (1951), and Lyttleton Constitution (1954) each incrementally increased Nigerian participation in governance (Falola, 2009, pp. 41-55). These reforms created a federal structure and prepared the ground for democratic elections and self-rule.

The global context, especially the decline of British imperial power after World War II and the broader wave of decolonization across Africa and Asia, also influenced Britain's decision to grant independence (Iqbal, 2018, pp. 30-57). Britain pursued a relatively diplomatic transition in Nigeria, unlike in some other colonies, due to both political pragmatism and Nigerian elites' willingness to negotiate. Ethnic and regional diversity added complexity to the independence movement. While the South pushed aggressively for self-government, Northern leaders were more cautious, fearing Southern dominance (Sklar, 1963, pp. 32-45).

This tension later shaped post-independence politics. By historicising independence, this paper highlights the interplay between colonial legacies, nationalist resistance, and political compromise in shaping Nigeria's emergence as a sovereign nation.

Historical Reenactment of Colonial Period in *October* Through Costume

The film *October 8th* is set in Nigeria to reveal the experience of the Nigerian people under colonial rule before its independence in 1960. This is reflective in the tension and oppression that was associated with colonialism and enthusiasm that surrounded the notion of independence among Nigerians. In order to project this important phase in Nigeria history in the film, the costume designs are carefully deployed to recreate the mood and atmosphere of this period. The British colonial influence and hegemony of the period are showcased in the colonial outfits worn by Nigerians. The costume designer used costume as a visual tool to reflect the strong colonial presence on the Nigerian soil and their influence on the way of life of the people of Nigeria, by using costume to reveal the psychological, social and cultural transformation that happened during colonial era due to assimilation of British cultural and political values by Nigerians.



Fig 1: Akote primary school setting in the film where Teachers and Students are dressed Western style.

From the picture above, colonial influence in Nigeria in the late 1950s is glaringly depicted through the costume of Akote primary school headmaster. He is costumed in shirt and trouser with a suspender belt typical of the Western dressing style while the female teacher and students are equally dressed in Western gown and school uniforms. Their costume designs significantly articulate the colonial educationists whose dressing represents their professions after their western education training. Thus, the costume design is able to showcase the colonial fashion sense of the era which easily communicates the epoch of the film. Viewed this way, the colonial influence in the costume design of the film cannot be underemphasised because it is used to reinforce the characterisation of the actors and depict colonial period in Nigeria; socially, economically and culturally to the extent that characters that shared affinity with the colonial masters are dressed in western style to project the level of British dominance and acculturation among Nigerians during that period which invariably depicts their western

mentality and the oppressive conditions of Nigerians under colonial rule



Fig 2: Prince Aderopo dressed Western Graduation Attire

Photo credit Excerpt from *October 1* by the researcher

Another Archetypal example of colonial influence perceived in the grand entrance of Prince Aderopo into Akote community after successfully obtaining his degree from the British university making him the first graduate in the community. His mode of dressing showcased the influence of Western education on his personality. Beyond that, Prince Aderopo dressing reflects the western style throughout the film to project the western education that he has acquired, he imbibes their fashion style to highlight the strong colonial influence in his character, and mentality. This is because, despite the fact that, Prince Aderopo hails from Akote community he dresses like a British man throughout the film. Apart from him, the costume designer also showcases the influence of colonialism in the dress sense of other Nigerian elites in the movie. They are depicted in different scenes wearing western outfits that indicate that they have been influenced by British fashion trends of the period. These include, tailored suits, dresses, shorts and blouses popular among the then Nigerian elites who were educated in British

institutions or were influenced by western fashion through trade and cultural exchanges.



Fig 3: Inspector Danladi Waziri, Sergeant Amusa and Sumonu in their official Police Uniform

Photo credit Excerpt from *October 1* by the researcher

From the foregoing, the police officers costumes clearly indicate the uniform of the colonial police represented in brownish short khaki, black jacket with red cape and a black cap. This is the typical dress code of the local police during the colonial era. The police uniforms are a professional costume that differentiated the police officers from other characters in the movie. It is obvious that, the costumer researched into the era and creatively replicated the uniform of the police force of the era. The colonial police guards in *October 1* functions can be likened to the local guards and warriors who were in charge of maintaining law and order in the precolonial Nigeria. However, due to the colonial influence their dressing mode changed to reflect the western police uniform concept. The texture, colour and style of their costumes are influenced by the colonial masters design. More so, colonial dominance is also seen

in costume design of the British colonial officials and administrators because they clearly denote the period.

Historical Reenactment of the Social Status of Characters Through Costumes

Deola Sagoe the costumier of *October 1* paid great attention to historical accuracy in the costume design of *October 1*. In the interview the researchers had with her, she revealed that she embarked on extensive research to ensure that the costumes in the film authentically replicate the social status of characters in the film through the fashion styles of Nigerians in the late 1950s. This feat was achieved by her through studying archival photographs, historical documents, and consulting with experts to capture the nuances of the era. Since the colonial era was the period when Nigeria was under the leadership of the British government who were the representatives of the Queen of England. The costume designer therefore used the fashion style of the British people through the colour and texture of their fabrics to enhance the believability of the film and reconcile it with the era in Nigeria history.



Fig 4: The District commissioner is officially dressed in a British Military Uniform

Photo creditExcerpt from *October 1* by the researcher

From the foregoing, the district commissioner is seen in a British military uniforms made up of suit, tie, and trouser which was the fashion standard among the upper colonial ruling class at that time. These costumes are accurate representations of the clothing worn by British officials during Nigeria's colonial period to highlight their social status and occupation while reflecting the authority and presence of the colonial administration.



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era. The police in *October 1* can be likened to the guards and warrior who were in charge of maintaining law and order in the precolonial era. However, due to the colonial influence their dressing mode changed to reflect the western police uniform concept. The texture, colour and style of their costumes are influenced by the colonial masters design. The historical accuracy of the costume designs of the colonial masters in *October 1* was also perceived in the British colonial officials and administrators costumes because they clearly note the period.. Also, the costumes of Prince Aderopo, a Nigerian elite in the film showcase western style of dressing, such as tailored suits and trousers. These costumes symbolize modernity, education, and high social status within Nigerian society during the period before independence. The juxtaposition of Western attire with traditional Nigerian fabrics underscores the complexities of identity and social stratification, which highlighted how Nigerians navigate between their indigenous cultural roots and external influences.

Historical Re-enactment of Nigerian Cultural Identity in *October 1* Through Costume

Traditional Nigerian attire are displayed in the film to reenact the indigenous fashion style of the Nigeria people. Traditional fabrics and accessories like Aso-oke, Ankara, Adire and local beads are worn by Akote people, particularly during the independence ceremony scenes. These fabrics are used to signify and express Nigerian cultural identity and heritage, in contrast to the western clothing worn by characters influenced by colonialism. The costumes are accurately used to highlight

Nigerians from different ethnic groups. For example, Igbo ethnic group is shown through Chidinma's father's attire. Similarly, the fabric and style of the costume of the Hausa traveler depict he is an Hausa man. The costume uses Akote community as the microcosm of the Nigeria society. The costumes of each character reflect their ethnic background to indicate that Nigeria in the colonial era was characterised by so many ethnic groups cohabiting together in the same space.



Fig 5: Independence celebration in the Akote society with different Traditional Ethnic Attires

Photo Credit: Excerpts from *October 1* by researchers

From the picture above, it is obvious that the independence celebration in Akote community is a representation of their cultural expression; it is a significant milestone in the life of the people perceived in jubilation and funfair. It is a major shift from the colonial imperialism. The independence ceremony is celebrated with various colourful indigenous attire of the people to connote liberation from colonialism. The costumes reflect their innermost feelings of freedom and self-identity. The costume design creatively projects the scenario of the independence of Nigeria through costume with all the parties

represented in their traditional attires since Nigeria is a heterogeneous community with diverse cultures. Beyond cultural expression, the costumes in *October 1* also serve symbolic and narrative purposes

Additionally, despite the strong western influence on the dress sense of the Nigeria people during the colonial era, the Nigerian cultural identity and the cosmological belief system of the Yoruba people through indigenous clothing style of some characters who possess strong spiritual powers and relevance are also emphasised in the film. The character of Baba Ifa is a typical example. This is aptly represented with a complete Yoruba traditional attire and accessories. The costume designer pays detailed attention to the costume of the Ifa priest because he represents the religious institution of the Yoruba people and also show the cultural identities of Nigerian people before the advent of British colonial masters.



Fig 6: Baba Ifa is dressed in indigenous Aso Ofi traditional Yoruba cultural Outfit.

Photo credit Excerpt from *October 1* by the researcher

From the picture above, it is clear that the costume designs in *October 1* are deployed to enhance the historical reenactment of the film

by using cultural details to recreate the atmosphere of colonial period before independence. The costumer effectively utilises costume designs to depict the pre-independence Nigerian society in terms of clothing and fashion. The costumes not only recreate history but also symbolise the complex cultural interplay between colonial influences and indigenous Nigerian cultural identity during a pivotal moment in the nation's history.

Historical Reenactment of Nigerian Nationalist Struggle Through Costume

Costumes are used in the film to show how some Nigerian Nationalists representing Nigerian elites and educated individuals employed traditional Nigerian attire to depict their resistance against colonial authority and dominance. One of the most popular female elites during that era is Funmilayo Ransom Kuti. She was a very popular nationalist among the Nigerian elite. She is a traditional activist who fought against colonial domination during the period. In the film, her personality is projected in her costume designs which showed her resistance against the westernisation of the Nigerian culture by not wearing western outfits throughout the film. Instead, she wears beautifully woven Aso Oke sewn into buba and wrapper to proudly identify with her cultural background. She therefore represents the passion and tenacity of African women who fought for Nigeria's identity and independence. The beauty in her cultural expression is highlighted in her fabrics, accessories, hairstyles, and foot wears, which are carefully chosen to reflect the Yoruba fashion trends and cultural norms.

during the colonial period in Nigeria. These cultural details doubtless contribute to the overall authenticity of the film's visual representation. The historical authenticity of the costume design enhances the film's narrative and helps to transport viewers to that specific time and place in Nigerian history. Making costumes integral symbol of the film's storytelling and cultural depiction as well as the tool of the nationalists' struggle for Nigeria's emancipation.



Fig 7: Mrs Funmilayo Ransome Kuti dressed in Complete Yoruba Traditional Costume

Photo credit Excerpt from *October 1* by the researcher

Historical Reenactment of Power Hegemony in *October 1* Through Costume

The costume designs in *October 1* are rich in historical symbolism that reflect the political power play and dynamics in Nigeria during colonial period. There are several pointers of power play in the costumes of *October 1*. For example, the police officers are depicted in formal western military uniforms. These costumes symbolise the authority and control exerted by the British colonial administration over the Nigerian people in the film. The uniforms, particularly, signify the structured hierarchy and bureaucratic control enforced by the colonial rulers.

their political structure. This is because the police officers are the representatives of the colonial master, they are given a special uniform (costume) that separated and elevated them from other characters. The costumes therefore serve as a symbol of authority and power. Apart from that, some characters in the film equally reflect their political leaning through a blend of traditional Nigerian attire and Western clothing to signify their hybridization of cultures during the colonial era.



Fig 8: Inspector Danladi addressing his local Police Subordinates

Photo credit Excerpt from *October 1* by the researcher

Power hegemony is also noticed in the costume development of characters in the film to indicate transfer of power. Particularly, when Nigerians are preparing for their independence, the colourful costumes worn by Nigerians during this pivotal moments in the film symbolise the nation's aspirations for self-determination and sovereignty. The traditional Nigerian attires worn in these scenes signify the reclaiming of their cultural identity and sovereignty and desire to assert Nigerian values and traditions on the global stage. The choice of costumes of the Nigerians during independence celebrations in the film reinforced the

symbolism of unity and national pride, as Nigerians from diverse backgrounds ~~one~~ together to commemorate their journey ~~and~~ independence. In the film, costume design is intertwined with narrative themes of identity, justice, and societal change.



Fig 9: The Relative of Prince Aderopo Victims they Mourn the Death of their daughter

Photo credit Excerpt from *October 1* by the researcher

The evolution of characters' costumes mirrored the power tussle, personal growth, conflicts, and resolutions within the broader historical context of Nigeria's struggle for independence. Hence, symbolic imagery, such as the wearing of traditional attire during significant ceremonies reinforced the characters' connections to their cultural heritage and their roles in shaping Nigeria's future as an independent nation. The costume designs ~~October 1~~ therefore served as a powerful visual tool that enhanced the film's historical authenticity and narrative depth. Through careful attention to detail and symbolism, Deola Sagoe effectively captured the complexities of Nigeria's transition from colonial rule to independence, illustrating how costume design conveyed profound cultural, social, and political themes within the context of historical storytelling through character development

Historical Re-enactment of Elements of Costume Design in

October 1

Elements of costume refer to the fundamental components that make up an outfit or attire. These elements contribute to the overall design and visual impact of the characters in a film in order to enhance storytelling, character development, and visual authenticity. In *October 1*, these elements include fabric choice, colour schemes, textures, patterns, and accessories. Each of the elements deployed by the costume designer to serve some specific purposes: fabric and texture conveyed the tactile and visual qualities of costume in the film while colour and pattern evoked emotions and Mood while cultural background and the accessories complemented and defined character traits. At the same time, the silhouette contributed to its aesthetic and historical accuracy. According to the costumier, “the costume elements in the film was chosen and crafted to support the storyline and establish character identities in the time period or cultural milieu of colonial era”. The statement indicates that, the costume elements were artistically and creatively used to depict the setting, and characterisation of characters, the costumes not only enhanced aesthetics but also expanded the audience's understanding of the story and its cultural and historical backdrops. The costumes in *October 1* equally reflected the fashion and style prevalent in Nigeria during the late 1950s to early 1960s through the creative composition of their elements.

Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that, the costume designer of *October 1* committed a lot of attention to historical accuracy in costume

designs of the film through intensive research. This did not only add depth to character portrayal but also enriched the audience's engagement with the narrative, fostering a deeper appreciation for the historical period depicted. It is also observed in the study that, costume elements such as period-specific styles, creative application of fabrics and textiles, appropriate colour, and meticulous attention to accessories contributed to the film's historical authenticity. Also, it is noted that, characters' costumes are used to realistically reflect their social status and cultural delineation in order to enhance the visual narrative depth of the film.

Thus, costume design plays an essential and multifaceted role in reinforcing historical authenticity and cultural identity within film. It illustrates how carefully curated costume choices can significantly enhance the portrayal of Nigeria's colonial past, serving as more than just visual elements but as integral components of the storytelling process. The garments worn by characters in the films do not merely reflect fashion; they embody cultural values, social hierarchies, historical events, and the tensions between tradition and colonial influence. By grounding characters in historically accurate attire, the films successfully transport audiences to specific moments in Nigeria's complex history, thereby fostering a deeper emotional and intellectual connection to the narratives. Costumes function as a visual language communicating identity, resistance, adaptation, and continuity of cultural practices across time. Ultimately, this study highlights the artistic responsibility involved in historical filmmaking and the power of costume design to shape audience perception and understanding. By presenting history through an accurate and culturally sensitive visual lens, costume design

not only enhances cinematic storytelling but also contributes meaningfully to the preservation and celebration of Nigerian identity and history.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of this study, several key recommendations can be made to improve the authenticity and impact of costume design in Nigerian historical films. Firstly, it is recommended that filmmakers and costume designers should engage in comprehensive historical and cultural research when preparing for historical film. A deep understanding of the era being portrayed is essential to ensure that costumes authentically reflect the time's clothing styles, materials, and customs, and cultural nuances. To achieve this, collaboration with historians, anthropologists, cultural experts, and members of local communities should be prioritized. Such partnerships not only enrich the design process but also ensure that cultural elements are represented with sensitivity and accuracy. Additionally, film institutions and production companies should invest in training programs, workshops, and access to research materials that support culturally informed design practices. These initiatives will help emerging costume designers develop the skills and knowledge required to accurately depict historical periods and avoid costume misrepresentation in films.

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The Challenges of Conflict Resolution in Nigeria from Islamic Perspective: An Appraisal of Prophet Muhammad Strategic Approach

By

OLOWOLAGBA, Lekan Yusuf

Department of Sociology and Criminology
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin
yolowolagba@alhikmah.edu.ng

Abstract

Conflict resolution in Nigeria remains a challenging issue, with religious differences being a major contributing factor. Despite numerous efforts by different government levels, these conflicts persist, often resulting in serious loss of life and destruction of property. This study offers an Islamic perspective on these issues, focusing on the conflict resolution strategies used by Prophet Muhammad. By employing content analysis and conducting interviews, the study explores the Prophet's techniques, assessing their applicability in modern-day Nigeria and examining specific instances where these techniques were employed. Findings from the study reveal that negotiation, reconciliation, and arbitration were key strategies used by the Prophet. However, these approaches are not widely adopted in Nigeria today. The study provides various examples of the Prophet's approach, such as his actions during the Hijrah, his peaceful exit from Mecca despite oppression, and his efforts to reconcile Muslims with other tribes. Even when he had significant power, the Prophet chose peaceful means over force, underscoring his dedication to harmony and coexistence. The study concludes that a core problem in Nigeria's conflict resolution efforts is the insufficient use of effective methods demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad. It suggests that Nigeria could benefit from adopting such peaceful strategies to aid societal development. Religious

communities are encouraged to implement the Prophet's conflict resolution techniques while maintaining their unique identities. Embracing these proven approaches could greatly contribute to resolving conflicts and fostering peace within Nigerian society.

Keywords: Conflict, Conflict Resolution, Islamic Perspective, Strategic Approach, Prophet Muhammad:

Introduction

Conflict resolution utilizes specific techniques to address and manage issues within society. These methods represent deliberate human efforts to tackle fundamental societal challenges. The approach to managing or resolving a conflict is determined by the conflict's nature, its root causes, how it evolves, and its effects within a particular political framework, whether that society is culturally uniform or diverse. Conflicts arise due to various pressures associated with demand and supply, and if they are not contained, they can disrupt social harmony and peaceful coexistence. Some individuals view conflict as a barrier to societal health, economic progress, and development, often linking it with negative elements such as violence, ~~desire~~, and irrational behavior (Usono et al, 2014).

Islam acknowledges that conflicts can occur. The word —Islam—comes from —Salam,—which means peace and happiness in both this life and the afterlife. As a divinely revealed religion, Islam provides ~~guides~~ on personal conduct and international relations, primarily through the Qur'an and the Hadith, which are the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Within these sacred texts, Allah lays out comprehensive principles for resolving conflicts. The life of Prophet Muhammad serves as an example

of applying these principles in practical situations, demonstrating how Islam addresses conflict resolution effectively. This emphasizes Islam's role as a complete and practical religion for addressing various aspects of life, including conflicts (Monjur, 2011).

The Qur'an states:

"Verily, those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness, their Lord will guide them through their faith; under them will flow rivers in the Garden of Delight (paradise) peace will be their greeting therein (Q10:9-10)".

—The good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allah orders the faithful believer to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly) then verily He, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend (Q4:34)—

—Whoever pardons and makes reconciliation— his reward is [due] from Allah. Indeed, He does not like wrongdoers— (Q42:40).

—And speak good words to all people— (Q2:83).

—Believers! if an evil-doer brings you news, ascertain the correctness of the report fully, lest you unwittingly harm others, and then regret what you have done— (Q49:6).

These lines highlight the significance of resolving conflicts peacefully, practicing forgiveness, fostering reconciliation, speaking kindly, and carefully assessing information to prevent harm. Shariah, often seen as —Islamic law,—represents a comprehensive lifestyle guided by principles of mercy, compassion, and the pursuit of ~~welf~~ and justice for individuals and society alike (Vehapi, 2013).

Throughout history, Islam has consistently promoted efforts towards peace building. Despite this, Nigeria has faced numerous conflicts since gaining independence. Key events include the Aibirof 1929, the struggle for independence, electoral violence, religious clashes, ethnic tensions, and the Boko Haram insurgency (Usono et al, 2014). These conflicts have various origins, such as disputes over revenue allocation, boundary disagreements, ethnic and religious differences, gender inequality, electoral violence, and widespread corruption. For example, the Biafran War was triggered by fears of marginalization within the military (Olaifa, 2017). In Northern Nigeria, conflicts often center on ethnic and religious issues, while the Southern region contends with challenges like kidnapping, militancy, and community disputes (Olaifa, 2017). In this framework, the study scrutinizes the challenges of resolving conflicts in Nigeria by adopting an Islamic viewpoint, with a particular focus on the strategic methods employed by Prophet Muhammad.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria is currently facing major challenges due to ongoing conflicts within its communities. These disputes often grow into violent acts and destruction, causing significant disruption to social harmony and peaceful community interactions. The root causes of these conflicts typically involve differences in goals, beliefs, and power struggles, leading to grievances and hostility among individuals. While society generally views conflict negatively, some individuals continue to engage in these harmful actions. Therefore, it is urgent to address and resolve