

INDICES OF DRAMA AND MUSIC IN THE PARABLES OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN AND THE RICHMAN AND LAZARU

Sunday EDUM & Isaac O. IBUDE
University of Port Harcourt

Abstract

The domination of the Christian faith during the middle ages created a new vista for theatre, drama and music to flourish. The Bible which is a documented proves, ideals and authenticity of the Christian faith has not only served as a spiritual dictionary of the Christian faith, theologians and historians but a critical source for musicologists, playwrights and directors. This study is a critical analysis of dramatic and musical dimensions in the parables of *the Good Samaritan* and the *Richman and Lazarus*. In doing this analysis, the study utilizes the literary and content analysis methods of qualitative approach of research. The major findings in this research is that the parables of Jesus Christ as documented in the Bible are critical sources that are highly theatrical, musical and dramatic in content and form, its dramatic and musical dimensions are highly pedagogical, entertaining and very enlightening for contemporary Nigerian audience. It therefore recommends that Nigerian playwrights, musicologists and directors should document, interpret and score these parables and other stories in the Bible as play-text, musicals for easy comprehension. Directors and musicologist are also encouraged to promote evangelical theatre by dramatizing these stories in order to promote the Christian faith and champion sustainable development in Nigeria

Key Words: Parable, Theatre, Drama, Music, Indices

Introduction

Historically, drama and theatre have been ascribed to have emerged from rituals, mimetic impulse, festival, myth, story-telling, among others. These historical accounts are more of oral as no one has come up with the specific date that theatre and drama originated. It appears that it is one of the gifts of nature that man came to dominate as a superior being. Nwosu is of the view that drama and theatre are natural activities which are as old as man and his environment (4). The implication of this is that drama is as old as man and as such accompanies man in any manner of growth and development within his environment. From the ritual and mythical origin of drama and theatre, moral behaviors as characterized in all theatrical experiences in all cultures is paramount. In spite of cultural differences that accompany any art form in human society, its mandate is tripartite –education, enlightenment and entertainment. From the Greek classical theatre culture as documented by Oscar Brockett, Frank Whiting, Arnold Stephanie, Jerry Pickering, etc. the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides are drawn from rituals and mythological stories. For instance, the evergreen *Oedipus Rex*, *Medea* and *Phaedra* were drawn from popular Greek myths. Similarly, the medieval drama gave birth to biblical stories in theatre and drama in line with the Christian doctrinal ideals. For example, the, *Qualm Queritus*, *Everyman*, *Doctor Faustus* etc. which were generally grouped under Mystery, Miracle and Morality plays are classics of the medieval era. Arnold Stephanie assertion is very revealing concerning the growth and development of Christian drama. In her words;

Medieval society was organized largely around the Catholic Church, and it was as part of the religious observation that the theatre developed in medieval Europe. The great medieval mystery cycles...initiated by the Catholic Church in the tenth century to make Christian teaching more accessible (19)

However, among the documented biblical drama, few have been extracted from the parables of Jesus Christ. It is for the foregoing that this study attempts an analysis of selected parables of Jesus Christ not from a spiritual, theological or sermon dimension but from a creative artist point of view. Our business in this study will be to identify some of the dramatic elements and theatrical possibilities such as character, plot, diction, spectacles, actions, Scenography and other

performance elements prevalent in these parables. The parables will include, *The Good Samaritan* and *Lazarus and the Richman*

Drama and Parable Defined

The term parable is a story aimed at teaching individuals or groups. Etymologically, the word parable comes from the Greek παραβολή (parabolē), meaning "comparison, illustration, analogy."(qtd. In Wikipedia). It was the name given by Greek rhetoricians to an illustration in the form of a brief fictional narrative. Johnson creatively defines the term as:

a succinct, didactic story, in prose or verse, which illustrates one or more instructive lessons or principles. It differs from a fable in that fables employ animals, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature as characters, whereas parables have human characters. A parable is a type of analogy. (2)

Although some scholars of the canonical gospels and the New Testament attributes parable to the one expressed by Jesus Christ but the term predates the ministry of Jesus Christ. For the *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, defines parable as "a metaphor or simile often extended to a short narrative; in biblical contexts almost always formulated to reveal and illustrate the kingdom of God (1). Characteristically, a parable is usually short, illustrates a universal truth, usually simple in narrative, it sketches a setting, describes an action, it often involves a character who faces a moral dilemma or one who makes a bad decision and then suffers the unintended consequences (Wikipedia)

Drama on the other hand is an action driven stories intended to educate, enlighten and entertain. Its basic attributes are action, conflict and dialogue. Seen as an action story that requires interpretation from readers for proper understanding, the term drama etymologically originates from the Greek word *Darn* which means to do. It is as a representation of man in social action. This implies that drama mirrors the actions of man in any given society. Drama is a work of arts which delineates human life and activity through the presentation of action by means of dialogue between groups of characters (Nwabueze 15)

Although the term drama, dramatic, theatre and theatrical are often used interchangeably by scholars' depending on their stand point and the application, they are connected by performance and communication. This position is echoed by Lawal when he observes that the words theatre and drama are often used interchangeably. Theatre is not inherent in drama only: rather it encompasses the words and actions of our everyday activities (1). Similarly, Dawns et al opinion is that drama and theatre are intertwined in content and form. According to them:

Drama is a form of theatre that tells a story about people, their actions and the conflicts that result. Conflict is the key to the movement of a story and is what qualifies a theatrical work as play. (14).

The inference of this is that drama and theatre are built on conflict of interest and the relationship between individuals and groups. Beranger defines Theatre as:

a way of seeing men and women in action, of observing what they do and why they do it. Human beings are both theatre's subject and its means of expression. Because of its twofold connection to our humanity, theatre becomes one of the most immediate ways of experiencing another's concept of what it means to be human (3).

Its qualities include aliveness, immediacy, doubleness, fiction, spaces and audience. Cohen wraps it all when he opines that, the word theatre came from the Greek Theatron or "seeing place" It is a place where something is seen. And the companion term drama comes from the

Greek dran, “to do” it is something done. Action. Theatre: something is seen, something is done. An action is witnessed (9)

Parable and drama are complementary in content and form as one can be used to prosecute the other. The target of drama is the target of a parable because drama and parable are didactic and pedagogical as it educates and instruct. They are both fictional even when drama is drawn from a historical source. This is because through plotting, issues can be omitted and through creativity and dramatic convenience ideas can be added. Like parables, drama indirectly presents man in actions and reactions within his environment. Another similarity between drama and parable is that issues in both are often romanticized in a manner that the audience are compelled to accept it.

It is important to note that like drama, the defining characteristic of a parable is the presence of a subtext suggesting how a person should behave or what he should believe and what he should not. Drama like parable provides guidance and suggestions for proper conduct in one's life and the society which he lives. Drama uses figurative language in its communication and as such gives room for multi-interpretation. Parables like drama express an abstract argument by means of using a concrete narrative which is easily understood.

Elements of Drama Defined

Aristotle in his seminal work entitled *Poetics* descriptively examines the content and form in drama. Plot, character, thought, music and spectacles have been identified as the elements of drama that forms the structure. According to Cohen, the division of plays into components is an ancient analytical practice. Aristotle described the components of a tragedy as plot, character, theme, diction, music and spectacle (41). In defining plot, scholars have drawn from Aristotle description to define plot as the structure of a literary work. The term plot from Aristotle description is *mythos* and it is the “soul of drama”. Plot is the sequential arrangement of events, incidents and actions in a dramatic work. Plot gives the play a storyline that spans from beginning middle and end. Cohen notes that:

Although colloquially we may think of *plot* as synonymous with *story*, the two words are quite different. Story is simply a narrative of what happen in the play as might be described by someone who have seen it whereas plot refers to the mechanics of story-telling, including the sequence of the character's comings and goings; the timetable of the play's events; and the specific revelations, reversals, quarrels, discoveries and actions that take place on stage as in furthering the plot. (41-42)

Plot is crafted and selective on like story that is highly narrative in content and form. What story will accommodate, plot may ignore because its essence is built on creativity and relevance to the dramatic action. From Cohen's analogy plot is characterized by sequence of actions carried out by the characters in the story, series of events, actions, reactions and mechanics of story-telling. Similarly, Brockett opines that: “plot is often considered merely as the summary of a play's incidents, but though it includes the storyline. It is also refers to the organization of the elements into a meaningful pattern” (18). Plot gives meaning to the story through its structure. Plot can be simple or complex or compound in type and may be episodic, climatic or a combination of climatic and episodic in structure.

While plot gives the structure of the play in an arranged format, character is the persona that the structure surrounds. According to Udumukwu a character is “the imaginary actor in dramatic text or fiction whose moral and disposition as revealed in the course of the action are patterned after the real life” (39). Characters are designed to reflect the individuals in a society and are usually revealed through their dialogue and actions. For Abrams characters are:

Persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, which are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, emotional qualities by inference from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it –the **dialogue** –and from what they do-the **action**. (33)

Cohen submits that: “Characters are the human figures-the impersonated presences who – undertake the actions of the plot” (42). The way an author presents a character may be direct presentation, whereby a character is described by the author, the narrator or the other characters or indirect presentation where a character's traits are revealed by action and speech. In Bernardo’s opinion characters must be properly developed to attract believability from readers. She posits that:

An important component of modern fiction is characterization. Historically, realistic characterization has only intermittently been considered an essential part of good writing; in eras when allegory and didacticism become more important than realism, characterization generally goes out the window.

Characters created in every dramatic work must be believable, true to life and carry some traits that are plausible. In his book *Aspects of the Novel*, E. M. Forster defined two basic types of characters, their qualities, functions, and importance for the development of the novel. He identified flat and round, dynamic and static. Thought is the externalization of a writer’s mindset. Referring to thought as theme, Cohen defines it the abstracted intellectual content. It may be described as the play’s overall statement: its topic, central idea, or message as the case may be (43). Similarly, Aristotle’s fourth component, diction, relates to the pronunciation of spoken dialogue; TO literary character of a play’s text, including its tone, imagery, cadence, and articulation, and to its use of literary form and figures such as verse, rhyme, metaphor, apostrophe, jest, and epigram (43). For spectacle Aristotle’s last component, encompasses the visual aspects of production; scenery, costumes, lighting, makeup, properties, and the overall *look* of the theatre and stage. It would be wrong to infer that *spectacle* is synonymous with *spectacular*, for some productions are quite restrained in their visual artistry. Rather, *spectacle* here refers to “something seen” (Cohen 44)

Summary of the Parables of the Good Samaritan and the Rich Man and Lazarus

19 “There was a rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, full of sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man also died and was buried; 23 and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Laz’arus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.’ 25 But Abraham said, ‘Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Laz’arus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ 27 And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house, 28 for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ 29 But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.’ 30 And he said, ‘No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ 31 He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”(Luke 15:4-7 Revised Standard Version (RSV))

The Good Samaritan

30 Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, 34 and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; then he set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 And the next day he took out two denarii[a] and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' 36 Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?" 37 He said, "The one who showed mercy on him." And Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise. (" Luke 10:30-37 Revised Standard Version (RSV))

Function of Music in Drama

Music in drama is planned and shaped as part of a dramatic performance. It is engineered by humans to bring about a closer integration of music and the story in order to express the feelings and deep thought of the character as expressed in the lyrics. Brown (2007) and Robinson (2017) in discussing the function of music in theatre classified the use of songs as follows: character songs, exposition songs, conflict songs, narration songs and summary songs. In addition, songs can function in unique ways as comment song, musical metaphors, cameo songs and parodies. The primary function of music used in drama is to define character.

The combination of music with a standard play derived from the parables of the Good Samaritan as well as Lazarus and the Richman brings to the fore emotions; create moods and dramatic actions which words alone cannot fully convey. Music beyond providing entertainment will contribute to the development of the story, themes and communication of the drama through songs. Songs are used by lyricist and composers to develop characters and advance plots. According to Robinson 'song becomes part of the storyline... as they are intricately woven with the script of the drama, giving music its own role and function.' Furthermore, music in drama helps to keep and renew the attention of the audience. This is achieved through the use of upbeat songs which add energy to the music. The use of appropriate melody, harmony and rhythm helps the audience to relate with the moods and emotions of the performance thereby are able to access important subject matter in the plot.

Indices of Drama and Music in the parables of the Good Samaritan and Richman and Lazarus

The parable of *Richman and Lazarus* the thematic thrust of this story is that of giving and discrimination. It cautions us not to discriminate as a result of class, social status or gender. Although the story is set in Hades, its thrust is on the living with strong ideology for the audience to be weary of those within their environment as no condition is permanent. Thematically, the play calls for equality, love and tolerance for each other.

The major character in the story is Lazarus, a poor and sick person who is dynamic in the dramatic action. The story describes him as "a lay poor man named Laz'arus, full of sores, 21 who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table; moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom." (Luke 21-22). The description of Lazarus in this passage presents a Marxist view of the Nigeria situation of class struggle between leaders and the led, the rich and the poor, the upper and the lower class, the preliterate and the capitalist, the weak and the strong etc. Lazarus represents the poor masses, the neglected Niger Delta People, the unpaid Civil Servants, the rejected prisoners, the unemployed graduates who can barely feed a roof on their head, no money to even raise a home or attend to their education needs. His sick disposition reminds us of the lack of health facilities and proper health care for the poor masses. In a parallel vein, the Richman represents

the upper class, the Nigerian politician who does not care for the masses, the corrupt public office holder, the oppressor, the chauvinist who will not give room to the voice of women to be heard and the wealthy class who feeds on the sweat of the poor. Abraham in this story is more of a judge and the mediator between the rich and the poor. He rewards according to the heart and actions of man.

Dramatically and theatrically speaking, these characters can be properly delineated from appearance, action and thought. Lazarus can be delineated as the protagonist while the Richman is an antagonist. Both characters are dynamic because they both undergo changes in the course of the dramatic actions. While on earth, Lazarus was very poor while Richman was rich but after their deaths, Lazarus became rich while the Richman became very poor. Abraham in the story is a donor as joy eternal was in his bosom. There are minor characters that are referred to in the dramatic action. They will include the Richman's five brothers, Moses and the prophet.

There is also crafted dialogue in this particular story that fulfills the elements needed in a story to make it drama. The dialogue is the conversation between the Richman and Abraham as presented thus

Richman: 'Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Laz'arus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.'

Abraham: 'Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Laz'arus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.'

Richman: 'Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'

Abraham: 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.'

Richman: 'No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.'

Abraham: 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead. (2)

The dialogue is simple and realistic even though it is paradoxically put for the interpretation and education of man. The actions are set like we see in Aristophanes' *The Frogs* physical and celestial. On earth where the rich man enjoys his wealth and affluence and in Hades and Abraham's bosom where judgment appears to have been passed on the concerned characters

At the levels of spectacle and music, one can conjecture as an interpreter from the actions and reactions of the different characters a mixed genre at the level of music and high application of spectacles. Joyous music for rich man while on earth and solemn (dirge) for Lazarus while on earth and the reversed while in Hades. Appropriate musical sounds reflect as well as help to define the character and mood being presented by the performer. Joyous moods as exemplified by the rich man while on earth and Lazarus while in heaven are achieved by the use of bright sound. This is made possible by setting the lyrics to music in a major key and applying major and dominant seven chords in the harmony. In contrast, moods reflecting pains, trauma, suffering as exemplified in the character of the man attacked by armed robbers in the story of *The Good Samaritan* is couched in melodies that sound like dirges. The lyrics are set to music in minor keys with the use of minor and diminished chords. Costumes, makeup, props, set, light are well suggested in the story through the mood of the characters, the setting of the actions and class of the characters that are highly descriptive.

Theatrically and dramatically reading *The Good Samaritan* reveals that it is well plotted in a simple and climatic structure with two different settings. The road where the man was attacked

by the robbers and the inn where the Samaritan lodged him. Five different characters are identified. They include, Man who is the major character or the protagonist as the case may be. His character is identified as 'Man' meaning he can be from any background and that he moves from Jerusalem to Jericho. His is a flat character that remains sick after the attack by the robbers in the course of the story and never speaks. He is the owner of the story and without him there will be no story of such. The Robbers, which the number is not revealed by the story can be crafted to be three and above. They are armed robbers who steal as a means of livelihood. They can be placed as antagonist to Man since they make things difficult for him by beating him and stealing his belongings. The Priest and Levite are also portrayed as unkind individuals who do not represent or reflect their background. A priest is a religious leader while the Levite is also from a Priestly lineage that ought to be kind and friendly. The Samaritan is a pivotal character that propels the story to its dramatic progression. The story presents him as a kind, compassionate and human-friendly. He can be seen as a helper to the man beaten by the robbers. He is the authorial voice of the story. The inn keeper is also a helper.

The story also displays a lot of spectacle of costumes, props, makeup, and implied stage directions. The characters in the story clearly indicate their personalities and background. For example, the Robbers, the Priest, Inn Keeper and the Levite give a clearer clue to the costumier on the required costumes for each of them. The description of an Inn clearly guides designers on the performance elements needed for the interpretation of this story. The story is set on the road between Jericho and Jerusalem and the inn where the Good Samaritan kept the Man. Other identified props in the story include beast, wine, oil, denaries and man belongings stolen by the robbers.

Another level of the dramatic projection in the parable is the use of simple language that is clear. The communication below is a testimony:

Levite: (gives them to the innkeeper,) 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.'

The thought in the story is that of love and kindness to neighbours and fellow individuals. The story calls for compassion and good neighborliness in the society. To the Nigerian audience, the story cautions against tribalism, nepotism, corruption and arm robbery. The story calls for love to one another for sustainable development.

Conclusion

Drama as a form of literature uses imitation as a method which taps on imagination. In a related view, the mimetic thrust of a parable speaks essentially in allegorical terms, expressing a short story aimed at teaching a moral lesson. When the parable of choice as we have in this contribution is the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-36) and the Richman and Lazarus, instant attention is drawn to the fundamental principles of God's love; to the wonderful, restorative and healing will of God's love which breaks frontiers of man and his society. In fairness to this parable, it is the sacred word of God which should not be trivialised, let alone reduce to drama.

Across History, art is known to have grown or developed side by side with ritual observance to the point where arts attain a distinguishing purpose which warrants a departure from ritual. The 'parable of the Good Samaritan and the Richman and Lazarus' are sermons which preach love and deserve as many publics as can possibly be attracted to it. The story of this parable paints itself easily to dramatic and musical representations and organizations which in turn avails, and irresistible and most effective format for preaching the sermon of God's love

In the parables analysed so far, the research has identified Jesus to be the playwright as the three parables are instructional materials from him. The parables are also very relevant to the Nigerian society as its characters as identified are prominent in the Nigerian situation and its actions mirror

the Nigerian society. The paper calls on theatre practitioners especially directors, playwrights and composers to expose these parables through proper adaptation as they are very relevant to the Nigerian society.

Works Cited

Barclays, Williams. *The Gospel of Luke*. USA: WJK, 2001

Barranger, S. Milly. *Theatre: A Way of Seeing* (5th ed). USA: Wadsworth, 2002

Brown, Larry. A. The Dramatic Function of Songs in Musical Theatre. July, 2007
http://larryavisbrown.homestead.com/files/theater_topics/musical_theater.htm
Retrieved from the web 27th January, 2018

Cohen, Robert. *Theatre* (6th ed) USA: McGraw-Hills, 2003

Downs, Williams Missouri, Wright, Lou Anne and Ramsay, Erik. *Experiencing the Arts of Theatre: A Concise Introduction*. Belmont: Thomas Wadsworth, 2007
<http://www.slideshare.net/es99.trish.turner/the-8-methods-of-characterization-powerpoint>
retrieved from the web on January 2008

Mooris Leon. *The Tynale New Testament Comments*. England: Intervarsity Press, 1989

Nwosu, Chukwueme Canice. *Postmodernism and Paradigm Shift in Theory and Practice of Theatre*. Onisha: Eagleman, 2014

Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Retrieved from the web copyright © 1946, 1952, and 1971.

Robinson, Russia. *Music in Musicals: The Relationship between Song Functions and Hit Songs*. 2017
https://russiarobinson.wordpress.com/2017/04/03/music-in-musicals-the-relationship-between-song-functions-and-hit-songs/?blogsub=confirming#blog_subscription-6
Retrieved from the web 27th of January, 2018.

Stephanie Arnold. *The Creative Spirit: An Introduction to Theatre*. New York: McGraw, 2011

The Christian apologetic and research Christianminiseries...<https://Carm.org>.

The Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America retrieved 2017

Udumukwu, Onyemechi. *A Guide to Narrative Fiction and Drama*. Port-Harcourt: Emhai Printing and Publishing Co. 1997.

The Evolution of the Merchant Class in the Niger Delta, 1500-1900.

**O. C. Asuk, PhD,
Department of History & Diplomatic Studies,
University of Port Harcourt.
otokpom.asuk@gmail.com**

Abstract

The Niger Delta, a significant African periphery in the Atlantic world economy, carried the greatest volume of British West African trade without government agents, forts or settlements leading to the emergence of an indigenous merchant class that developed a set of regulations for commercial transaction and mastered the complication of pre-colonial business management. This work, primarily, analyses the rise of a prosperous indigenous merchant-entrepreneurial class in the Niger Delta and its dramatic fall, which resulted in the region's contemporary poverty, rural backwardness, and social conflicts. Using oral traditions, archival materials, published and unpublished works, the study examines the trajectory of this evolution concomitant with contemporary development crisis of the Niger Delta region. It demonstrates that the Niger Delta merchant class gradually emerged with the development of the historic long-distance trade, expanded and became consolidated with the advent of the Atlantic economy, but suddenly collapsed under European imperialism and colonialism, which blocked the transition from merchant to industrial capital.

Introduction

The historiography of the Niger Delta spins around the narratives of its commercial interaction with Europe from the fifteenth to the twentieth century, and the post-colonial crude oil economy-oriented social conflicts. The Afro-European exchange relations facilitated the rise and fall of a class of wealthy merchants in the Niger Delta. The evolution of a merchant class was always accompanied by a 'spectacular accumulation of capital' and the growth of city-states (Baran, 1957: 137), which occurred in the Niger Delta. According to Coquery-Vidrovitch (1976), exchange remains the most obvious manifestation of a network of relationships and reflects the *internal* organization of society through the organization of production. Trade contributes to the enrichment and preservation of governments, and brings enormous welfare to states and kingdoms (Barbon 2003: 67). For trade and exchange to take place, there has to be the production of complementary needs. The pre-European Niger Delta fishing villages exchanged fish and salt for the foodstuff of the hinterland due to geographical production disparities (Horton 1969; Abam 1999). This distributive and exchange system developed slowly but unimpeded over several centuries and facilitated the transactions between the Niger Delta and Europe (Alagoa 1970).

Regional peculiarities and diversities influenced the development of long-distance exchange relations between Niger Delta and the hinterland up to the Niger-Benue confluence area (Northrup 1978: 21; Kolapo 1999: 96-121). Periodic markets predominated the long-distance trade, and was primarily a function of volume and spatial distribution of purchasing power (Abam 1999: 91-2). However, where effective demand was really strong, regular markets abound. The conditions, which gave rise to local markets and long-distance trade in the Niger Delta, were also responsible for their non-expansion. The opportunities for exchange in the Niger Delta without the stimulus of extra-continental factors facilitated the development of pre-colonial long-distance trade and many border markets. Economic surpluses produced beyond immediate household needs facilitated the growth of a market economy. There was widespread exchange activities characterised by a complex and efficient organization supported by the evolution of a general-purpose currency and an embryonic capital market at an early date (Hopkins 1973: 51). Bohannan and Dalton (cited in Hopkins 1973: 52) had categorized African economies as traditional devoid of markets and market principles, or were operated peripherally

where they existed, while the principles of reciprocity and redistribution dominated. But it has been shown that the forms of exchange relevant to Africa involved surpluses in mutually complementary systems of specialized production such as between coastal fishing groups and hinterland agricultural producers (Austen 1987: 20-1).

The subsistence economic production activities in Africa were characterised by a gendered division of labour (Uneh 2006: 72-3). The transition from subsistence to a specialised economic system reflected the existence of entrepreneurial development 'triggered by the emergence of market opportunities', which introduced critical conditions for the creation of formal and informal institutions and structures to sustain the process. While the formal institutions include state laws and enforcement mechanisms, the informal ones were mostly ideological, cultural, and moral sanctions (Inikori 2002: 43). The institutions sustained the local long-distance trade between the Niger Delta and the hinterland. The development of the Atlantic slave trade proved that the market sector of the Niger Delta economy, 'excluding the much larger subsistence sector, was completely dominated by market exchanges conducted around the export sale of slaves' (Inikori 2002: 46). The emergent exchange opportunities of the trans-Atlantic trade transformed the fishing villages into city-states and their subsequent urbanisation (Alagoa 1971: 271; Ejituwu 1991: 53; Horton 1969: 37-58). This work examines the historic processes of the evolution of a merchant-entrepreneurial class and its impact on the Niger Delta.

Analysing a Merchant Class

A merchant class is a dominant group of entrepreneurs who had accumulated capital from their commercial enterprises and engaged in certain productive activities. Every commodity of trade has its use- and exchange-value: while the former is realised in consumption, the latter is realised in exchange. Exchange-value presupposes 'a definite economic relation', and is inseparable from a market on which goods are exchanged', generating surplus-value as the source of profit (Giddens 1971: 46-50). For any given time-period, the process of capital accumulation presupposes that some pre-accumulated capital would have been thrown into the process of production for the employment and reconversion of surplus-value into capital. Marxist scholars would argue that it mostly occurs when a free labour force has been successfully created through the separation of previous owners from their means of production leading to the production of absolute or relative surplus-value in the process of primitive accumulation based on pre-capitalist relations of production (Frank 1978: 239).

If pre-capitalist accumulation refers to the beginning of capitalist accumulation, then it is both capitalist and non-capitalist. However, non-capitalist accumulation need not be pre-capitalist in its simultaneity with capitalist accumulation (Frank 1978: 239). Thus, primitive accumulation with non-capitalist relations of production need not be prior to, but contemporaneous with capitalist production and accumulation as *primary* accumulation to differentiate it from pre-capitalist primitive accumulation and production (Frank 1978: 241). Such primary accumulation naturally accompanied and made substantial contribution to capitalist accumulation. It also implied super-exploitation of wage labour as its consumption fund and the reproduction of its labour power draws directly on this non-capitalist production. The so-called primitive accumulation appears primitive because it forms the pre-capitalist stage of capital accumulation and the mode of production corresponding with it (Frank 1978: 242). The decisive role of primitive accumulation as a critical antecedent to the emergence of capitalism or a market economy is reflected in its concurrent development of the processes of accumulation of capital and creation of capitalist class relations (Naanen 1987: 49).

The Niger Delta coastal merchants' process of capital accumulation from the long-distance commerce falls under the primary stage of accumulation. A considerable mass of the capital amassed in this prehistoric stage of capital accumulation in the Niger Delta was produced with relations of production that did not require the separation of wage labour producers from their means of production. Osaghae (1994: 147) noted that the process of primitive accumulation

of surplus basically involves the use of the instrument of the state to create means of production. In the Atlantic economy, Niger Delta oligarchy, with the instrument of state control, actively dictated the terms of exchange, imposed sanctions, regulated trade, and acquired considerable state revenue from trade taxes and dues, *comey* (Jones 1963: 5). Meanwhile, a variety of non-capitalist and pre-capitalist relations of production existed to contribute to this process of capital accumulation. According to Frank (1978: 246-7), non-capitalist relations of production are important for the capitalist process of accumulation to provide and sustain a potential labour force for which capital pay less-than-subsistence wage, and, utilize non-capitalist 'socialist' relations of production to produce value that enters process of capital accumulation.

The canoe-house, a compact and well organised cooperative trading unit and fighting base (Dike 1956: 34; Jones 1963: 55), symbolised the 'socialist' relations of production in the Niger Delta. A canoe-house was a collection of persons of freeborn and slaves grouped together for purposes of trade, and subjected by native law and custom to the control, authority, and rule of a chief (Jones 1963: 55; Alagoa 1964: 15). It became increasingly active in advancing a class of budding entrepreneurs with its power and organized force of the society employed to hasten the transformation of the relatively simple mode of economic production into the capitalist mode. The increment of economic surplus appeared immediately in a concentrated form and came largely into the hands of emergent capitalist-potentates like Jaja and Nana who decided to use it for expanded investment purposes and the development of property relations (Naanen 1987: 56). This corroborated Baran's (1957: 143) position that widening the area of capitalist activities enhanced the evolution of legal and property relations accustomed to a market economy and established administrative institutions requisite for their enforcement.

The Rise of the Merchant Class in the Niger Delta

Eastern Niger Delta long-distance traders conducted trade up to the Niger-Benue confluence communities of Aboh, Onitsha, and Idah from the ninth century (Alagoa 1970: 319-29; Kolapo 1999: 99-121). They also linked and entrenched their trade with the Western Delta port of Warri through the Benin River to the lagoon ports of the Ijebu territory (Inikori 2002: 63). The dominant canoe transportation system provided the Niger Delta communities, endowed with the appropriate natural resources of suitable trees, viable opportunity to specialise in the art of canoe production, and facilitated a flourishing trade in canoe (Alagoa 1970: 323-5; Inikori 2002: 63). The pre-accumulated capital by the Niger Delta traders from the hitherto long-distance trade facilitated their advanced commercial movement as shown by Brassmen who used the capital from their fishing economic activity to enter the Atlantic trade (Alagoa 1964: 98). Thus, the long-distance trade that preceded the Atlantic-based slave trade adequately prepared Niger Delta traders to adapt themselves to the dynamics of overseas trade (Alagoa 1970: 329; Northrup 1978: 22).

The location of the Niger Delta communities on the Atlantic seaboard offered them a strategic advantage to become the middlemen between the Europeans and the hinterland (Dike 1956: 5-7). By 1485, the emerging Niger Delta merchant class benefitted from the Portuguese Crown's royal privilege granted to the earliest settlers of Sao Tome for a profitable trade with indigenous merchants (Ryder 1965: 221). The Niger Delta merchants articulated the productive forces of surplus labour in the hinterland for further production and expansion of capital formation (Asuk 2013: 117). The incorporation of the long-distance trade structures and the canoe-house into the trans-Atlantic commerce ensured the availability of labour requirement for production (Abam 1988: 36). The pre-European contact political economy of the Niger Delta had encouraged the spirit of individualism with enterprising individuals encouraged to participate in the long-distance trade from where they entered the trans-Atlantic slave trade and challenged the dominant state hierarchies (Horton 1969: 46). The profits generated from the long-distance trade were invested in the slave trade. The rise of Niger Delta is tied to the

evolution of this viable and aggressive merchant-entrepreneurial class, and capitalist-financiers of hinterland productive activities in the African periphery (Dike 1956: 42).

The Niger Delta exchange system had always involved huge capital requirements and investments, and mostly members of the state hierarchy and cronies or agents, relatives or sons of powerful princes and chiefs with access to state apparatuses and capital or access to credits (trust) could engage in it (Hopkins 1973: 86; Osaghae 1994: 147; Kolapo 1999: 109). Therefore, kings, lineage heads, queens like Kambassa of Bonny, and influential chiefs with a large chest of state capital as merchant-entrepreneurs dominated the emergent merchant class (Alagoa and Fombo 1972: 8-9). Slaving was a commercial enterprise in the hands of a small wealthy oligarchy, or else a state monopoly, conducted to conform to official regulations and payment of prescribed taxes (Dike 1956: 36-40; Hopkins 1973: 104-5, 125). The kings and canoe-house heads always reinforced their monopoly of credit facilities and commercial patronage to their mercantile advantage against independent rivals (Naanen 1987: 53). However, even with state control and regulation, King Pepple of Bonny was not among the first ten wealthiest forty-three Bonny slave merchants between 1791 and 1792 (Inikori 2002: 47). With the dramatic growth of the Atlantic trade, African merchants obtained credit facilities from European customers, raised their capital base, and expanded commercial frontiers (Dike 1956: 109; Hopkins 1973: 109).

Labour and capital increment was necessary for the assemblage of a band of raiders, payment for equipment, guides, agents, tolls, and maintenance of retainers and captives (Hopkins 1973: 104-5, 125). Beside organizing the sale and shipment of slaves, and co-ordinating the coastal *entrepots*, Niger Delta merchants also supervised the storage and distribution of European goods received in exchange for slaves as wholesalers, landlords and brokers in the internal trading sphere, providing accommodation and interpreters for their visiting trading partners. As wholesalers, Niger Delta merchants acquired a wide range of goods like cloths, guns, gunpowder and other meretricious goods, which they supplied to sizeable coastal and interior markets over a long period of time for the reproduction of capital (Dike 1956: 106-7; Hopkins 1973: 110-1). According to Inikori (2002: 53), Niger Delta merchants

were also large-scale traders in textiles, in firearms, in iron, in copper, in knives, in cutlasses, in beads, in hats, in caps, in axes, and several other goods. The problem of warehousing and accounting must have been daunting. So, must have been the complexity of bargaining the prices and the assortments with the European traders. Since the profits of the merchants were accumulated in these assortments of goods, converting the profits to real wealth is an intriguing issue.

Since the slave trade depended on violence, it favoured the emergence of military-oriented monarchs and chiefs who utilised their monopoly optimally for the accumulation of considerable capital. Subsequently, the ruling elites suffered increased competition from the private sector and wealthy merchants operating on a large-scale (Jones 1989: 28-30). The structural scale and organisational complexity of the slave business inherently required the possession of a substantial entrepreneurial skill exhibited by Niger Delta merchants in a great deal. Moreover, without any formal education, trade development prompted merchants' acquisition of 'the use of English and accounting skills to maintain business records in English and keep correspondence with merchants in England' (Inikori 2002: 53). The origin of *pidgin* English, as a commercial language in West Africa, was located in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Commercial elites of Niger Delta successfully evolved institutional arrangements, appropriate instruments and mechanisms for the maintenance of law and order for smooth organisation of exchange interaction. Obviously, 'these institutions were an ingenious adaptation of old practices to the new circumstances' (Inikori 2002: 54).

The growth of trade enhanced the identification of promising house members and their encouragement for commercial engagement, albeit with tax obligations to their masters and subsequent attainment of independence (Horton 1969: 46; Wariboko, 1997: 110). The attendant colossal wealth accumulated from the slave trade made members of the merchant class like Kings Pepple of Bonny and KingBoy of Brass to combine it with the emergent trade in agricultural produce in defiance to the subsidy package as compensation for its abolition (Anene 1966: 27-8; Dike 1956: 66). This was interpreted as a “crisis of adaptation” (Hopkins 1973), which should not be sought in the tensions from the structural change in the export trade alone, but also in the worsening nineteenth-century terms of trade (Law 1995: 3; Kolapo and Korieh 2007: 1-16). The hinterland producers' desire for Niger Delta merchant-capitalists to finance their production and participation offered the latter the opportunity to monopolise the interior markets' production and secure increased indigenous accumulation (Dike 1956: 42, 107). A system of free wage labour was a pre-condition for a built-in tendency towards indigenous capital accumulation (Sweezy, cited in Brenner 1977). While the slave trade was effectively monopolised by a small number of large entrepreneurs, particularly the politico-military class, the palm oil economy was open to include small-scale traders.

However, the domination of large-scale enterprise was not absolute since there existed evidence of purchases of slaves in ones and twos (Law 1995: 12). The involvement of small-scale merchants in the palm oil economy was more profound as it was pursued by all classes particularly in the hinterland (Hutton, cited in Law 1995: 12). In the Niger Delta, the marketing of agricultural produce continued to be dominated by existing large-scale entrepreneurs. These merchants bought oil in small quantities from several growers and producers in calabashes, bulked it up, transported it to the coast, and sold it in puncheons to European customers. The smallest unit of traded palm oil was the puncheon of 240 gallons or three-quarters of a ton. Nevertheless, the domination of large-scale merchants did not reflect merely their superior competitive efficiency, but enforcement through state prohibitions and other strategies on small-scale enterprise (Law 1995: 12-13). The degree of the wealth of the merchants was primarily measured by the number of trade canoes and men under a canoe-house director.

The strength and influence of a house is dependent on the wealth derived from trade. The king and his house had to compete in trade with his subjects from his or other houses (Dike 1956: 164; Anene 1966: 32). For instance, in Bonny, King William Dappa Pepple, Perekule V and the Royal House was progressively outstripped in wealth by the Manilla and Annie Pepple Houses, which were under ex-slaves, Oko Jumbo and Jaja (Dike 1956; Cookey 1974: 49). On assumption of the headship of Annie Pepple House in 1863, Jaja paid off the £150,000 owed European supercargoes by his master-predecessor, Alali, and empowered twenty young-men six months later to enter the palm oil trade as guarantor for *trusts* from European merchants for them (Dike 1956: 185). The potentates exploited their privileged access to credit to dominate the foreign trade against merchants without stately ties as the supercargoes relied on them to determine *trust* beneficiaries (Dike 1956: 102; Naanen 1987: 53). Consequently, there were restrictions of recommendation for *trust* to enable the monarchs secure advantageous terms of trade against their competitors. The extensive credit system in the Niger Delta increased the foreign capital portfolio for financing the operations of entrepreneurs especially in the expanding export sector. Scholars have suggested that contemporary international loans and ‘suppliers’ credits is the product of the trust system that survived the pre-colonial Atlantic economy (Hopkins 1973: 109).

Initially, Afro-European trading relations signified a complementary partnership with business interests cemented by a mixture of goodwill and extensive credit obligations. The trans-Atlantic slave trade profoundly announced the rise of a relatively small but viable group of large entrepreneurs which development commenced in the historic long-distance trade, and the process of indigenous capital accumulation in the Niger Delta (Dike 1956: 36-40; Inikori 2002: 62-3; Asuk 2014: 1-15). Meanwhile, private merchants had become functionally indispensable to the operation of the mercantile community. The heavy scale of taxation of merchants' wealth

reflected not only the royal appetite for revenue, but also a conviction that commercial wealth required to be restrained for socio-political reasons: the accumulation of wealth in private hands actually posed a threat to the dominance of the monarchy (Dike 1956: 184). Subsequently, taxation became a source of friction in the last quarter of the nineteenth century when profits from the export trade were reduced to a minimum. Levying duties on palm oil became problematic due to its trickling quantities collected at many diverse points prompting the reluctance of dominant capitalists to accommodate new traders thus generating competition (Hopkins 1973: 145). Many dominant merchants in nineteenth-century Niger Delta were of servile origins who started as official traders for their masters from where they accumulated wealth to enter the trade on attainment of independence. Independent profit maximisers competed in the market outside of any system of social relations of exploitation. The exploiting classes also performed productive functions which derived from their position as exploiters. Reflecting on Brenner (1977), such mechanisms for profit maximisation and competition in the market effectively led to profound indigenous accumulation in the Niger Delta.

The period 1860-1890 marked the height of prosperity and power of Niger Delta's merchant class with the rise of a new generation of trade monopolists and highly resourceful-entrepreneurs as well as powerful rulers who controlled large territories and an equivalent enormous volume of trade. The preponderant combination of power and capital led to a further development of trade and expansion of indigenous accumulation, and the possibility of a transformation of the relations of production and ownership of property (Naanen 1987: 53). The organization of trade was highly dependent on the regulatory role of these potentate-entrepreneurs who had the sole right of negotiating for trade, fixing prices and stopping trade when terms were violated (Jones 1963: 91-4; Gertzel 1962: 364). A significant amount of *comey* to the potentate would guarantee the reopening of trade (Cookey 1974: 20-1). On the *Rio Real*, the supercargoes paid about 5 bars on each ton of oil amounting, £75 on a 300-ton vessel and £100 on a 400-ton vessel as *comey*. To checkmate friction and maintain tranquillity in the marketplaces, these potentates regularly travelled to the interior and established diplomatic relations of diverse nature (Wariboko 1999).

The restoration of order or foreclosure of trade disruptions depended on the ruthless enforcement of market laws with the potentates utilising part of their *comey* in the hinterland spheres of influence and acquired great prestige from among the interior market communities where they built up a sort of feudal empires (Dike 1956: 43; Ikime 1968; 1977a; 1977b). For Nana, the British merchants recognized his authority and allowed him to regulate the *comey* paid to his chiefs (Anene 1966: 80). His trade boys naturally exploited their master's prestige to engage the trade of the oil-producing Urhobo hinterland country. British merchants who traded on the Benin River did so on Nana's terms, while his refusal to accept the price for palm produce stipulated by British trading agents led to his eventual deportation in 1894 (Anene 1966: 152-3; Ofonagoro 1979: 146). Similarly, by 1886 British merchants began to challenge Jaja's dictatorial terms and engaged him in the most serious of periodic trade disputes as Jaja resisted their penetration into the hinterland markets of Ohambele and Essene against his terms (Anene 1966: 86). Jaja aggressively developed the Ohambele market with stores and recruited market inspectors, while the Ohambele middlemen-merchants depended on Jaja's capital to produce palm oil from the interior (Anene 1966: 86; Naanen 1987: 53). Jaja simultaneously developed the Essene waterside to a trade canoe-landing site and the principal market of the area. The Aro, attracted by the prosperity of Jaja's trade, established a friendly mercantile relation with him. The older Egwanga market, close to Opobo and located at the strategic position that commanded the approaches from Bonny to the Imo and Essene Rivers, was further developed by Jaja.

Bent on expanding his capitalist production portfolio, Jaja pioneered a new trade route linking the Imo River, through Southern Ibibioland, to the Qua Ibo River, and concluded agreements with the landowners to enable him access the rights of trade and settlement on the river banks (Cookey 1974: 89-90). Consequently, Niger Delta merchant class gained sufficient

commercial influence on their hinterland markets to frustrate British mercantile ambitions. Therefore, when European traders decided to reduce Jaja's *comey*, he stopped trade and arranged to ship his oil directly to England. Only Miller Brothers of Liverpool dissociated itself from the European merchants' hostile attitude to Jaja, traded on his terms, and did excellent business at the expense of the firms of the African Association (Anene 1966; Cookey 1974). By the time of Acting Consul Johnston, Jaja's export trade had attained an annual value of £160,000 while *comey* produced a whopping annual revenue of £30,000 (Anene 1966: 82). Acting Consul Johnston confronted Jaja's reluctance to open up trade routes into the hinterland markets by considering terminating Jaja's right to *comey*. Meanwhile, Jaja had shipped his oil directly to Liverpool and blocked British penetration of his hinterland markets. Moreover, Alexander Miller Brothers and Admiral Richards of the British Navy had accepted Jaja's territorial trade regulations (Anene 1966: 82-5).

With stupendous accumulated merchant capital from the middleman trade and monopoly of the supply side, by the 1880s, Niger Delta merchants penetrated the sphere of European exclusive preserve, the export trade, in reaction to the 1870s' economic crisis in Europe, and warranted expatriate firms' attempted price reduction to undercut African traders. Their entry into the export sector and expansion into more productive fields, generated cut-throat competition between expatriate firms and indigenous merchants (Dike 1956: 112; Gertzel 1962: 365). When Jaja reacted to a succession of expatriate firms' Price and Produce Agreements to undercut him, sealed a contract deal with a Birmingham hardware firm and procured *manillas* (trade currency) at higher prices of palm oil from 1883 to 1886, European firms opposed by merging into a gargantuan monopoly, the African Association Limited, in 1889, to sniff the indigenous merchants out of business (Gertzel 1962: 365; Cookey 1974: 116-7; Naanen 1987: 52-3). Albeit, the currency contract with the Birmingham firm offered Jaja a very auspicious and favourable bargain.

While such price agreements and mergers (monopsony) subsisted, the indigenous merchants continued to look farther afield to the Commission Houses in England and obtained a higher price regime for their produce beyond the scale of established European firms in the Niger Delta. Consequently, expatriate merchants, except Alexander Miller of Glasgow, experienced a crisis of double loss as Jaja successfully left them without produce and stocks of unsold goods (Naanen 1987: 53). In the ensued mercantile competition, Jaja had the most unfair advantage with his exemption from duties, which European firms paid in Opobo (Gertzel 1962: 365). Jaja and Nana represented Nigeria's first generation of modern capitalists and entrepreneurial giants (Rotimi and Ogen 2008: 48). They had quite extensive commercial organizations stretching over considerable areas and employed several thousand personnel in various capacities like canoe-men, traders, labourers, warriors, local buying agents, market inspectors, security-men, etc (Gertzel 1962: 362; Anene 1966: 86). The number of labour employed by these merchant-entrepreneurs on their commercial farms in the neighbourhood of the port cities far exceeded the populations of the cities (Inikori, 2009: 181-2).

No European firm, even if prepared to employ Kru labour on a vast scale, could have done the same (Gertzel 1962: 362). Even the Royal Niger Company (RNC) could only employ 1,500 personnel (Dike 1956: 212). According to Anene (1966: 89), Jaja had 4000 military force in his employ and more than a hundred trading canoes, while Nana possessed 236 large trading canoes carrying between eight and fifteen puncheons of palm oil each. At the height of his accumulation and power, Nana could put into the field 20,000 war-boys, equip and despatch 100 war-canoes at the shortest notice (Ofonagoro 1979: 145). Nana's capacity to finance 20,000 fighting force or Jaja's 4000 can compare favourably to the Dutch East Indian Company of a worldwide reach with a force of 30,000 soldiers at its height (Goldin and Reinert 2007: 196). Each of Nana's war-canoes had 36 paddlers, 2 large cannons, 5 coxswains, 2 boys to bail water, a crew of 38, 24 blunderbusses, and a large number of flint-lock guns and machetes, and had a body-guard of 40 men armed with Winchesters (Ofonagoro 1979: 145).

Niger Delta indigenous merchants also combined trading and commercial agriculture from the mid-nineteenth century (Inikori, 2009: 181-2). Several merchant chiefs from Bonny established agricultural plantations in Asa and Ndoki areas where a huge number of servile-labour was engaged in agricultural production in addition to the "sub-urban" settlements and extensions of Houses at the height of their capital accumulation (Alagoa and Fombo 1972: 69). Similarly, merchant accumulators like Abam and Fiberesima from Okrika had cassava farms on the Okrika mainland in the nineteenth century (Abam 1988: 66). Unfortunately, the prospects of this generation of indigenous merchant accumulators to pioneer capitalist agricultural production like their counterparts elsewhere conflicted with the most dramatic phase of European imperialism intolerant of indigenous competition (Naanen 1987: 53). This corroborated Wallerstein's (1976: 37) position that metropolitan bourgeoisie, being afraid of the use of peripheral state's structures by the local bourgeoisie to successfully check the scale of metropolitan accumulation, would ruthlessly dismantle local competition.

The Collapse of the Merchant Class in the Niger Delta

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Niger Delta merchants would have attained the Rostow's "take-off stage", but were frustrated by European imperialism. Obstacles against Niger Delta merchant class' investment in capitalistic production of consumer goods were just too profound: the existent market incentives were infinitesimal; ostentatious life-style and wastefulness was widespread; non-monetisation of the economy prevented the establishment of financial institutions and availability of indigenous credit to facilitate productive investment. But the most devastating was the imperial and colonial suppression of indigenous accumulation of capital (Naanen 1987, 1993; Asuk 2013: 142-231). Inikori (2002: 61) demonstrates that the development of entrepreneurship in large-scale production of commodities for the market had begun to truncate with the rupture of the historic local long-distance trade by the Atlantic slave trade as slaves were paid for with politically and socially valuable goods and unconvertible meretricious items with no guarantee for savings. Though the advent of the palm oil economy marked a new beginning, the unassailable ascendancy of the expatriate merchants caused the displacement of a resourceful indigenous merchant class (Olukoju 2002: 178).

Niger Delta prosperous commercial elites could not translate their economic and military superiority and influence into outright political control over their commercial peripheries, which could have served as a bulwark to this onslaught (Dike 1956: 215; Anene 1966: 87-91; Cookey 1974: 88-92). For as Anene (1966: 80) noted, Nana's empire was basically commercial although his relations with petty Jekri (Itshekiri) and Urhobo (Sobo) chiefs in the immediate hinterland had considerable political significance. As indigenous accumulation expanded significantly, Niger Delta merchant class had engaged in expansive investment in real estates and lived ostentatiously like classical epicureans with monumental display of wastages. For instance, a great portion of King Pepple's wealth in the early nineteenth century was wasted in his fantastic dowry payment on the daughter of the King of Warri during their marriage. According to Jackson (quoted in Anene 1966: 24), "Gold and Silver Plates, costly Silks and fine Cloths" were mere presents to the King of Warri on his arrival at Bonny. Similarly, King Opubo's country home in Orupiri was described in 1826 as "the most pleasant spot in Pepple's dominions", while Oko Jumbo and numerous other indigenous merchants had, in addition to their town residences, palatial estates higher up the river, where they lavishly entertained white merchants (Alagoa and Fombo 1972: 69).

At the height of indigenous accumulation and power Niger Delta coastal merchant-potentates expended huge percentage of their accumulation in the acquisition of arms and ammunition to enhance their capacity for further exploitation and primitive accumulation. The possession of expansive chest of armoury with a concomitant expansion of trading empire was an inherent trend of the period. King Karibo Amachree of New Calabar was noted to have spent about 1,000 Spanish dollars in 1851 and two-times that amount in 1855 to procure guns of particular specification (Wariboko 1999: 154). Similarly, by 1882, about sixty percentage of Oko

Jumbo's guns and cannons were custom-made with Brass from Glasgow with the seal of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, on them. The armoury of Inikiroari Young-Briggs of Abonnema was a magnificent exhibition of the wealth of a very successful merchant-prince and war-canoe director (Keni-Briggs 19/02/2012).

The Niger Delta witnessed negative multiplier effects since the procurement of slaves for exports was through violent means destructive of trade and organised production of goods and services, but favoured the diversion of entrepreneurial talents to political organisation that supported predatory activities. Consequently, the limitation of the exchange of human beings for imported consumer manufactured goods was reflected in the critical obstruction of any serious development of organised capitalistic production, and investment of profits from commerce. This is against the backdrop that capital accumulation involved 'both the opportunity and necessity of expanding assets or reinventing profits in existing enterprises or new ventures' (Jalloh 2002: 317). Whereas the exchange of hinterland and coastal produce 'generated multiplier effects which stimulated further production for market exchange, ... the taking of captives, like the stealing of goods generated no such multiplier effects, (but) ... destructive multiplier effects that stimulated unending cycle of socio-political conflict' (Inikori 2002: 65).

The incapacity to produce multiplier effects to provoke the continuous expansion of the frontier of opportunities for large-scale investment was gruesome. Thus the contraction of the Niger Delta domestic market and lack of production for market exchange enhanced the elongation of the subsistence sector and took off the necessary pressure on the merchant-entrepreneurs to innovate and search for new technology and new forms of mercantile engagement. Niger Delta merchant-entrepreneurs could not divert part of their economic surpluses to the improvement and tightening of social relations of production. While access to the currents of capitalist developments and rudiments for its explosion and release of irresistible energy for its maturity by the merchant class was strategically acknowledged, its full development was forcefully blocked. The Niger Delta merchant class was exposed to a series of ruinous competition with expatriate interests in the same manner fledgling capitalism in other underdeveloped climes "was forcibly shunted off its normal course, distorted and crippled to suit the purposes of Western imperialism" (Baran 1957: 143-4).

The marginalization of Niger Delta merchants had begun in the nineteenth century before the formal imposition of colonial rule in 1900 (Olukoju 2002: 178), which shifted the viable economic and commercial centres further inland and dangerously away from the control of the erstwhile merchant class (Anyanwu 1979). British colonialism fatally destroyed the prospects of transition from merchant to industrial capital. The financial sector collapsed as merchant-entrepreneurs could not access credit opportunities for the development of financial institutions. The gruesome penetration of the hinterland by European expatriate commercial concerns led to the critical contraction of the merchant class' markets and the creation of a needy class of petty traders in the hinterland (Nwabughuogu 1982), which "operated in a contracted market and in an atmosphere of hostility" and vulnerability (Olukoju 2002: 181). This condition warranted Ijo petty traders of Nembe-Brass to revert to the fishing occupation and smuggling to compensate for commercial losses. The tremendous wealth combined with a mass of cheap manpower could not warrant the transition from mercantile to industrial capitalism, which always required the vigorous and generous support of the state. The process of primary accumulation of capital was far from being completed, but still going through mercantile capitalism when European imperialism struck (Asuk 2011). The abrupt way in which European capitalist imperialism broke into the historical development of the Niger Delta merchant class precluded the materialisation of the classical conditions for economic growth.

Conclusion

The historical development of a merchant-entrepreneurial class, its consolidation and sudden collapse was concomitant with the rise and fall of the Niger Delta. The pre-European

contact factor of exchange in the Niger Delta deconstructed the general characterisation of African societies as primitive subsistence economies without market dynamics. The commercial elites of the Niger Delta grafted the existent commercial structure of the local long-distance trade into the emergent fifteenth-century Atlantic-based world economy and served the European economic needs. The transition from a fishing economy to trade, first, in slaves and later in agricultural products, facilitated the creation of a class of wealthy Niger Delta merchants and launched the communities into commercial prosperity and power. There was no indication that members of this merchant class of the Niger Delta borrowed any notions of commercial mercantilism from Europe. The emergence of the merchant class was accompanied by the growth of the coastal villages and their transformation to city-states with spectacular accumulation of economic wealth.

The transformation of money wealth into capital was made possible by the availability of labour, while the primary accumulation of capital would have played a strategic role in the transition from commercial to industrial capitalism in the Niger Delta. The particularly large and concentrated mercantile accumulation in the Niger Delta was made possible due to the geographical location of its communities which gave them the possibility of an early development of maritime commerce and the institutionalisation of canoe-house system. The punitive expeditions against the historic merchant class became episodic in the transition from the pre-colonial to the colonial economy. The expansion of the economic frontiers of the merchant class and its skills and knowledge in a socially productive direction would become tragically suppressed by the forceful penetration of the hinterland by European economic interests. The most traumatic implication of the collapse of this merchant class was contemporary poverty, rural backwardness and social conflicts in the Niger Delta.

References

- Abam, A. S. (1988). A history of the Eastern Niger Delta, 1885-1960: challenges and responses of a society in transition. Unpublished Ph.d Dissertation, University of Lagos.
- Abam, A. S. (1999). *The Okrika kingdom: an analysis of the dynamics of historical events*. Oweri: Springfield Publications.
- Alagoa, E. J. (1964). *The small brave city-state: a history of Nembe-Brass*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Alagoa, E. J. (1970). Long-distance trade and states in the Niger Delta. *Journal of African History* xi, 3. pp.319-329.
- Alagoa, E. J. and A. Fombo. (1972). *A chronicle of grand Bonny*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.
- Anene, J. C. (1966). *Southern Nigeria in transition, 1885-1906: theory and practice in a colonial protectorate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anyanwu, C. N. (1979). The growth of Port Harcourt: 1912-1960. In Ogionwo, W. (ed). *The city of Port Harcourt: a symposium on its growth and development*. Ibadan: Heinemann. pp.15-34.
- Asuk, O. C. (2011). Two oils, same phenomena: historicizing exclusion, poverty and contemporary violence in the Niger Delta. *African Research Review*, vol. 5, no. 2. pp.1-15.

- Asuk, O. C. (2014). Slave trade and the beginning of indigenous accumulation in Eastern Niger Delta. *The Calabar Historical Journal*, vol.6, no.1. pp.1-15.
- Austen, R. A. (1987). *African economic history: internal development and external dependence*. London: James Curry.
- Baran, P. A. (1957). *The political economy of growth*. New York: Modern Reader.
- Barbon, N. (2003). A discourse of trade. In Clark, H. C. (ed.). *Commerce, culture, and Liberty: readings on capitalism before Adam Smith*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund.
- Brenner, R. (1977). The origins of capitalist development: a critique of neo-smithian marxism. *New Left Review*, no. 104. pp.25-98.
- Cookey, S. J. S. (1974). *King Jaja of the Niger Delta: his life and times, 1821-1891*. New York: Nok Publishers.
- Coquery-Vidrovitch, C. (1976). The political economy of the African peasantry and modes of production. In Gutkind, P. C. W. and Wallerstein, I. (eds). *The political economy of contemporary Africa*. Beverley Hills: Sage Publications. pp.90-111.
- Dike, K. O. (1956). *Trade and politics in the Niger Delta, 1830-1885: an introduction to economic and political development in Nigeria*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Frank, A. G. (1978). *World accumulation, 1492-1789*. London: Macmillan.
- Gertzel, C. (1962). Relations between African and European traders in the Niger Delta, 1880-1896. *Journal of African History* 3, 2. pp. 361-366.
- Giddens, A. (1971). *Capitalism and modern social theory: an analysis of the writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Webber*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hopkins, A. G. (1973). *An economic history of West Africa*. London: Longman.
- Horton, R. (1969). From fishing village to city-state: a social history of New Calabar. In Douglas, M. and Kaberry, P. M. (eds.). *Man, in Africa*. London: Travistock. pp.37-58.
- Ikime, O. (1968). *Merchant prince of the Niger Delta*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Ikime, O. (1977a). *Niger Delta rivalry: Itsekiri-Urhobo relations and the European presence, 1884-1936*. London: Longman.
- Ikime, O. (1977b). *The Fall of Nigeria: the British conquest*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Inikori, J. E. (2002). The development of entrepreneurship in Africa: Southeastern Nigeria during the era of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In Jalloh, Alusine and Toyin Falola (eds). *Black Business and Economic Power*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press. pp.41-79.
- Jones, G. I. (1963). *The trading states of the oil rivers: a study of political development in eastern Nigeria*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Jones, G. I. (1989). *From slaves to palm oil: slave trade and palm oil trade in the Bight of Biafra*. Cambridge African Monograph series, no. 13.

- Kolapo, F. J. (1999). Trading ports of the Niger-Benue confluence, c. 1830-1873. In Law, R. and Strickrodt, S. (eds.). *Ports of the slave trade (Bights of Benin and Biafra)*. Sterling: Centre of Commonwealth Studies. pp.96-121.
- Kolapo, F. J. (2007). The canoe in nineteenth century lower Niger and the Delta. In Korieh, C. J. and Kolapo, F. J. (eds.). *The aftermath of slavery: transitions and transformations in southeastern Nigeria*. Trenton: Africa World Press. pp.75-114.
- Law, R. (1989). Slave raiders and middlemen, monopolists and free-traders: the supply of slaves for the Atlantic in Dahomey, 1715-1850. *Journal of African History* 30, 1. pp.45-68.
- Law, R. (1995). Introduction. In Law, R. (ed.). *From slavery to legitimate commerce: The commercial transition in nineteenth century West Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp.1-31.
- Law, R. and Strickrodt, S. (1999). Introduction. In Law, R. and Strickrodt, S. (eds.). *Ports of the slave trade (Bights of Benin and Biafra)*. Sterling: Centre of Commonwealth Studies. pp.1-11.
- Lovejoy, P. E. and Richardson, D. (1995). The initial 'crisis of adaptation': the impact of British abolition on the Atlantic slave trade in West Africa, 1808-1820. In Law, R. (ed.). *From slavery to legitimate commerce: the commercial transition in nineteenth century West Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp.32-56.
- Naanen, B. (1987). Imperialism and non-capitalist transformation of modes of production: Nigeria, 1849-1939. *Pan-African Social Science Review*, 2. pp.41-73.
- Naanen, B. (1993). Economy within an economy: the manilla currency, exchange rate instability and social conditions in South-Eastern Nigeria, 1900-48. *Journal of African History* 34, 3. pp.425-446.
- Nwabughuogu, A. I. (1982). From wealthy entrepreneurs to petty-traders: the decline of African middlemen in Eastern Nigeria, 1900-1950. *Journal of African History* 23, 3. pp.365-379.
- Ofonagoro, W. I. (1979). *Trade and imperialism in southern Nigeria, 1881-1929*. New York: Nok Publishers.
- Olukoju, A. (2002). The impact of British colonialism on the development of African business in colonial Nigeria. In Jalloh, Alusine and Toyin Falola (eds) *Black business and economic power*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press. pp.176-198.
- Rotimi, K. and Ogen, O. (2008). Jaja and Nana in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria: proto-nationalists or emergent capitalists. *Journal of Pan-African Studies*, vol. 2, no. 7.
- Ryder, A. F. C. (1965). Portuguese and Dutch in West Africa before 1800. In Ade-Ajayi, J. F. and Espie, I. (eds.). *A thousand years of West African history*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press. pp.217-237.
- Uneh, E. I. (2006). Niger Delta women in historical perspective: from earliest times to A.D 2000. An unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Port Harcourt.
- Wariboko, N. 1997. *The minds of the African strategists: a study of Kalabari management practice*. Madison: Associated University Press.

- Wariboko, W. (2007). New Calabar middlemen, her majesty's consuls, and British traders in late nineteenth century Niger Delta. In Korieh, C. J. and Kolapo, F. J. (eds). *The aftermath of slavery: transitions and transformations in Southeastern Nigeria*. Trenton: Africa World Press. pp.17-40.
- Wariboko, W. E. (1999). New Calabar: the transition from slaves- to produce-trading and the political problems in the eastern Delta, 1848-1891. In Law, R. and Strickrodt, S. (eds.) *Ports of the slave trade (Bights of Benin and Biafra)*. Sterling: Centre of Commonwealth Studies. pp.153-168.

TRANSLATOR-TRAINING IN SOME NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BY

Mombe Michael Ngongeh

Email: michael.mombe@uniport.edu.ng

Tel: [08063682273](tel:08063682273)

Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
University of Port Harcourt.

Abstract

This paper focuses on the Nigerian Translator-training programmes and its challenges. It is a descriptive research premised on a problem raised by Akakuru that most translation graduates from Nigerian universities can neither translate nor talk about translation. This paper sets out to investigate the validity of the statement and to point out where the problems lie as well as propose some solutions to them. Data for this work were collected from websites of some Nigerian universities that train translators up to the Masters and Ph.D. levels. Data were also collected from the websites of some renowned African, European and Canadian universities that equally train translators up to the Masters and Ph.D. levels and whose graduates are performing well in the field of translation in and out of their countries of origin. A comparative analysis of the data collected reveals some lacuna in the Nigerian Postgraduate Translator-Training Programmes at the levels of the trainees, the trainers and the content of the programmes themselves. The paper further suggests that the way forward for a successful translator-training programme in Nigeria is to adapt and implement the European and the Canadian models.

Key words: Translator-training programmes, Translation graduates, translation trainees, Translator Trainers, Training institutions.

Introduction

Translation is a complex and dynamic activity that requires diverse but convergent competences. Translation extends the frontiers of knowledge and breaks linguistic and artificial barriers between nations and cultures. In Akakuru's opinion, it is a crucial factor in information dissemination and in cultural exchanges and development. The importance of and the need for translation all over the world have increased dramatically over the last few decades. Due to the social and economic need for interlinguistic communication in Africa and in the ECOWAS sub-region in particular, there has been a growing awareness that major actors (translators and interpreters) in the interlinguistic communication should be given a sound educational base in translation. Consequently, many university departments in Nigeria have mounted Translator-Training Programmes at the post graduate level, leading to the award of M.As and PhDs in Translation Studies.

The question begging for an answer is whether the programmes end up producing the translators that are equipped with what it takes to face the competition and the challenges of the profession out there in the job market. Akakuru (2005: 214) observes rather unfortunately that Nigerian translation graduates can neither translate nor talk about translation. It has also been observed that some graduates of the Translation Programmes are engaged in jobs that have nothing to do with translation. Could this suggest that the programmes do not adequately prepare students for a career in translation?

The fact remains that some translation graduates in Nigerian universities, at the end of their training do not have some vital skills or competences they are supposed to have. A trained translator as Dorothy Kelly (2005:26) suggests, should have the following competences or skills:

1. Language skills

- i) Perfect command of all aspects of the first language.
- ii) Good knowledge of one or more other languages.

2. Thematic skills

Familiarity with some fields of study such as economics, finance, legal matters, technical or scientific domains.

3. Translation skills

- i) A capacity to understand texts in the source language and render them correctly in the target language, using the register and other language conventions that correspond to their intended purpose.
- ii) The capacity to obtain rapidly and efficiently in both source and target languages, the background knowledge (facts, terminology and language conventions) necessary to produce a translation of professional standard, even in less widely known fields.
- iii) The ability to use research tools and to become familiar with research strategies.
- iv) A capacity to master and uses machine translation and machine assisted translation and terminology tools.

So sad enough, it has been observed as earlier mentioned, graduates from some Translator-Training Programme at the graduate level in Nigerian universities do not have some of the above skills and competences at the end of their training. For instance, some of the Training-Programmes do not have Internship and Machine Translation/Computer Assisted Translation as courses in the programme (Name of Universities concerned withheld). The consequences are that graduates from the Programmes do not feel confident enough to apply for translation jobs when they are advertised. This is because some of the jobs, especially international jobs, specify that applicants must have experience and some knowledge of Computer Assisted Translation tools.

This paper explores the Translator-Training landscape in some Nigerian universities, identifies some challenges and suggests some solutions that, if applied, can improve the quality of translation graduates. We shall start by looking at the factors militating against translator-training in some Nigerian universities.

Challenges of Translator Training in some Nigerian Universities

I. The Trainees themselves

All things being equal in the universities and the translation schools, most candidates admitted into the programme lack the minimum entry requirements. The minimum qualification or requirements for a translator-trainee is the mastery of the working languages, computer knowledge and the determination to successfully go through the programme. Unfortunately, it is often realized from the answer scripts of the trainees that they are seriously deficient in their working languages.

Furthermore, due to lack of means, most candidates do not have the training materials needed for their success in the training programme. These materials include laptops, internet facilities, translation softwares, and good smart phones.

II. The Translator-Training Programme itself

Translator-Training in Nigeria has the following deficiencies:

1. Mode of Admission into the programme

In Nigeria, the training of “professional” Translators is carried out at the postgraduate level, at the university departments among other courses offered by the department. Out of the 30 Federal Universities that had approval from National Universities Commission (NUC) to offer postgraduate programmes for 2018/2019 academic session, only eleven offer Translator Training Programmes. Then out of the 28 State Universities that had approval from National Universities Commission to offer postgraduate programme, only six of them offer Translation at the postgraduate level. Admission into the Translation programme in these universities is not through a competitive entrance examination. Admission requirements for candidates aspiring to study Translation are the same as for other students applying to read any other course at the post graduate level. Candidates who apply to read Translation are mostly Bachelor Degree holders in French with CGPA from 3 points and above. No test is conducted to ascertain the candidates’ mastery of their working languages before they are admitted. A look at the admission requirements in some Nigerian universities is very revealing.

In the University of Ilorin for instance, the admission requirements for a Master’s Degree Programme including Translation Studies are as follows:

Applicants for the Master degree programmes who are graduates of the University of Ilorin and other recognized universities must have a minimum of Second Class Honours Degree (Lower Division) and must be applying for programmes in which they have their first degrees. However, applicants with Second Class Honours Degree (Lower Division) and those with higher classes of degrees seeking admissions into programmes outside those in which they have their first degrees may be admitted, provided they satisfy Senate in a qualifying examination to be conducted. The least class of Degree for all academic programme applicants is Second Class Honours Degree (Lower Division). Regardless of the institution where the Bachelor’s degree is obtained (www.unilorin.edu.ng 16/7/2017).

From the admission requirements, the following observations can be made:

- a) No special admission requirements for Translation programme.
- b) Applicants for the Translation programme must be graduates of the University of Ilorin who read French or Languages depending on their working languages, since the applicants must be applying for a programme in which they had their first degrees
- c) It is assumed that candidates who had their first Degree in French or any other language or languages from the University of Ilorin, master their working languages and therefore, do not need any examination to test their linguistic abilities for the Translation Programme. This is not very true. In the University of Buea in Cameroon where the Competitive Entrance Examination into the Advanced School of Translators and Interpreters (ASTI) is taken by all the candidates irrespective of the area of their first degree and irrespective of the university they come from, many candidates who read languages at their first degree fail the exam and many other candidates from the sciences and other field of studies pass in their numbers.

In Nigeria, the candidates’ working languages are: French-English, English-Igbo, English-Yoruba, English-Hausa.

Since no test is conducted to ascertain the candidates’ mastery of their working languages, most candidates that are admitted into the Translation Programme do not master their working languages and as Delisle (1984) puts it: “Translation class where the students do not master their working languages quite often degenerates into a language class without the knowledge of the lecturer”.

Furthermore, the absence of a competitive Entrance examination for prospective candidates for the translator-training programme allows for “déchets” into the programme. The same absence of an entrance examination to select qualified students for the Translator-Training Programme is equally noticed in the University of Calabar, the University of Port Harcourt, the University of Uyo, Lagos State University, Abia State University, University of Lagos, Amadu Bello University, University of Ibadan, Ekiti State University, etc.

Consequently, so many unqualified candidates get into the programme without a mastery of their working languages and cannot cope.

In Canada precisely in the School of Translation and Interpretation (STI), University of Ottawa, applicants for the MA in Translation should have an honours BA in Translation, or an equivalent. Applicants who do not have an honours degree in Translation are recommended by the STI for admission to a qualifying programme. Such applicants are usually Those students whose first degree is not in Translation, and likewise, those who do not already have previous translating experience, or those whose knowledge of either English or French or Chinese is inadequate. They are required to do a qualifying programme of one or two terms according to their needs, to bring them up to the level expected of graduates with an honours BA in Translation.

In France, an applicant aspiring for an MA at [Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs \(ESIT\)](#) (Advanced School of Interpreters and Translators), Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris III, must sit for a competitive Entrance examination and pass before the applicant is given admission.

All these checks and balances are carried out just in a bid to ascertain that the minimum requirement for an MA in Translation, which an acceptable level of proficiency in the working languages of the candidate, is met before admission into the translator training programme.

2. Objectives of the Programme

In Nigeria, universities offering Translator-Training have clearly stated that their objective is to produce translators for public and private sectors. But it is not clear if the translators the programme sets out to produce are Professional or academic translators. A well-conceived Translator-Training Programme should answer the following questions:

- *Is the programme out to produce academic translators, who translate little but talk more about translation or professional translators, who translate more and talk very little about the translation carried out?*
- *Will the programme produce both the professional and academic translators who translate well and equally theorize well on the translation carried out?*
- *What are the steps to be taken to connect the programme to the market realities of the profession?*

Well-defined objectives give direction and focus to the training programme. The objectives of the training programme also determine the kind of staff to be employed and the type of didactic materials to put in place. For a training that aims at producing academic translators, the lecturers should be University Lecturers who theorize more than translating. Then, for a training programme that sets out to produce professional translators, professional translators are engaged to teach either on part time basis or otherwise. Furthermore, for a programme intending to strike a balance between theory and practice, the teaching corps should be made up of both academic and professional translators. Finally, the programme must bring the trainees face to face with the realities of the translation profession in the field and the technological knowledge of the profession. This is achieved through having internship as part of the programme and by bringing translators and interpreters or other bilingual workers in the field, who should preferably be former students of the programme to talk to the trainees from time to time. Unfortunately, this is not the case with some translator-training programmes in some Nigerian universities.

3. Unsuitable Hands Running some of the Translator-Training Programmes

Translation practice and teaching requires a good mastery of the working languages by students and lecturers alike. In Nigeria, some of the translator training programmes are taught by bilinguals and not actually by professional translators. In some institutions, translation teaching is theorized and actual practical work relegated to the background. After a careful study of the situation, Akakuru (2005:214) laments as follows:

In our institutions, the problem is more herculean since some of the translation programmes in our institutions are run by unsuitable hands who, in addition to the original sin of being neither native speakers of French nor English, mistake translator-training for the training of those who, rather than translate, talk about translation.

Most teaching staff in the translator training programme have English as Language A and French as B where English and French are their working languages. They teach translation into French, their language B, a practice not acceptable in most international translation Schools where professional translators are trained. Under normal situation as it is the standard practice, translation into English is taught by lecturers who have English as their language A and translation into French by lecturers who have French as their language A. In most of the Universities in Nigeria, bilinguals (lecturers who have some knowledge of two or more languages, but did not read Translation) are the ones teaching major translation courses. Against this, Pym says that:

If the teacher is not a professional translator, so the argument goes, the training exercise cannot possibly result in the acquisition of professional skills; it can merely reproduce, at best, the concepts and skills of the teacher. An associated idea, more general in scope, is that university training in general does not serve the needs of the market (Bowker 2004, Chesterman and Wagner 2004, Gouadec 2007), not just because the teachers are often not professional translators but because the programmes themselves cater to the internal needs and formats of the educational institutions, (2009:7)

4. Market needs

Translation practice nowadays is driven by technology and most employers of Translators actually insist on knowing whether or not the translators they want to employ are equipped with the technological skills required. This explains why Machine Translation or Computer Assisted Translation is now central in the translator training programme in the world. In Nigeria, probably due to shortage of manpower, some of the translator training programmes do not offer any course in Translation Technology. Talking about translation technology and the market needs, Pym (1998) argues that “the market for translation is ultimately determined by available technology,” and therefore a professional translator should physically possess basic computer technology, not only to be able to work with geographically distant clients, but also to be able to access various data banks and information sources. Pym (1998) concludes that a translator, without this invaluable tool, will not survive as a professional in the Translation job market.

Some courses that are absent from some translator training programmes as realized from the brochures of some Nigerian universities are the following:

- i. **Machine Translation / Computer Assisted Translation:** According to information on the universities’ websites, this course is offered at the MA level by University of Port Harcourt, Ekiti State University, Delta State University, University of Ilorin, and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education in Rivers State: only five universities out of the seventeen

universities approved by the National University Commission (NUC) to run translator training programmes at the MA level during the 2018/2019 academic session.

Translation trainees who have no idea of Computer assisted Translation for instance, do not have the technological skills that are needed in the technologically driven field of translation nowadays in the translation market.

- ii. **Précis Writing:** We found out that only the University of Benin offers Précis Writing in her translator training programme. No other Nigerian university offers the course at the MA level. In addition, précis writing is one of the skills required in the translation job market. The United Nation Organisation and other international organisation always have précis writing as one of the skills required for the recruitment of their translators. Without the knowledge of Précis Writing, a translator may not succeed to secure an employment in an international organization.
- iii. **Translation Revision:** This is taught under various titles. For instance in the University of Technology, Durban, South Africa, it is taught under the title “Translation Quality Assurance”. In some universities, it is taught as Translation Criticism. Apart from Abia State University (ABSU), we did not find any other Nigerian university offering the course in its translator training programme. The translation market needs translators who are able to judge or criticize a translation in a bid to suggest a better translation to the one that was previously done.
- iv. **Sight Translation:** We did not also find any Nigerian university that offers Sight Translation in its translator training programme. It is a course that is very important to an in-house translator who, at any given moment, may be called upon by his/her boss to render the content of a correspondence in another language. It involves looking and reading aloud a letter or source text, in the target language as if it was written in that target language.
- v. **Introduction to Interpretation:** Every translator should have an idea of what Interpretation is and at times practice consecutive interpretation when the need arises. This is the course that equips a translator with that skill. The University of Port Harcourt offers it under the title, “Conference Interpretation” which, to me, is a misnomer. Conference Interpretation is, in other words, known as simultaneous Interpretation and any Translation/Interpretation School offering it must have interpretation booths.
- vi. **Practicum (Internship):** This is a course that gives the translation trainees some field experience and prepares them for the labour market. We find out that only Delta State University, Abia State University and the University of Ilorin, have it as a course in their translator training programme. The absence of Practicum or Internship in a translator training programme actually deprives the graduates of the practical experience which employer will like to see before employing them.

So far, these are the challenges faced by some Nigerian universities engaged in translator training. If some facts here are not accurate, it is due to the fact that some universities don't regularly update their websites. We do wish that the suggestions made in the following paragraphs would go a long way to improve the training of translators in Nigeria.

SUGGESTIONS FOR A VAIBLE AND EFFICIENT TRANSLATOR-TRAINING

For Translator-Training Programmes in the Nigerian universities to produce translators that would compete with their counterparts from Europe and America, some measures need to be taken at various levels. Some of the measures are:

1. **Admission:** admission into the schools of translation or Departments of translation in the various universities should be based on the following:
 - a) BA in translation. Here, if the candidates intending to read Translation at the Master's level had studied for a BA in Translation at the undergraduate level, the Translation School or Department should set the CGPA benchmark at which admission should be carried out. Such candidates may not need any entrance examination into an M.A programme in Translation.
 - b) BA in other domains: Here, the level of mastery of the candidate's working languages and the candidates' ability to translate or to study translation are very uncertain. For this reason, a competitive entrance examination should be conducted to select candidate that are deemed able to study translation successfully at the Master's level.

It can be seen here that if these measures are taken right from the onset, only candidates that are qualified for the programme will be admitted and there will not be any "déchets" in the training programme and the training will be successful.

2. ***Orientation/Motivation***

Right on the onset, the newly admitted students should be given some orientation to refocus their minds on their studies and the opportunities awaiting them when they graduate as translators. The people to give them this orientation should be Translators in the field, who will tell them of the challenges in the field and what it takes to overcome them. This orientation will definitely move their minds from thinking to have certificates without knowledge and will make them align their objectives with that of the institution.

3. ***A balance between theory and practice in the training programme.***

The dose of practice as against theory should be determined by the objectives of the training programme. The objectives, too, should be set following the needs of the Translation labour market. Since practical translators are needed in the field and translation lecturers needed in the universities, there should be a balanced dose of theory and practice so the graduates from the Training Programme should be able to practically translate and also theorize on translation. Delisle (1984) posits that the dose of theory or practice in a translation programme will depend on the objectives of the Training institution.

By this measure, a well-balanced Translator Training Programme will enable its candidates to fit squarely in jobs where more of translation practice is required and vice versa.

4. ***Feedback from former students***

This is another practice that is absent from most translator training programme in Nigeria. There will be an improvement of the translator training programmes in Nigeria if the training institutions establish a feedback practice that involves calling back former students of the programme, who are already working in the field and finding out from them what the challenges in the field are. They will, through such interactions, let the training institution know some challenges that are surfacing as a result of some deficiencies in the training. With this knowledge, the training institution adjusts its training programme to ensure that candidate currently undergoing training will be fit to deal with those challenges when they leave school and are working.

In addition, former students, where this exists, are called up to come and talk to students undergoing training, about the opportunities awaiting them out there. This constitutes a serious motivation to students. They become very serious with their studies and graduate on time since they know that jobs are waiting for them after studies.

5. ***Tailoring training to meet market needs***

Training institutions such as universities departments or schools where translators are trained may tailor their training to meet the Market needs by involving professionals in the field to take part in the training and assessing of the trainees. Pym (2009:8) suggests that:

Some of the steps being taken to bring training closer to the market include inviting professionals into the classroom, assessing of students on the basis of portfolios of their completed translations, using real-world ('authentic') translation tasks with explicit instructions from a client, and generally modelling competencies and skill sets in ways that can match up with market demands, such that an employer might ideally search a database of graduates for the kind of translator they are looking for.

In the same vein. Gile corroborates the point by saying that translation has evolved, our teaching methods should also adapt to the times and draw more closely on the realities of the market, casting aside the artificiality that sometimes characterizes translation activities in formal education (Gile 1995).

6. ***Courses:***

Most translator-Training Programmes in Nigeria need to contain some very important courses such as Terminology: theory and practice, Translation Revision, Sight Translation, Machine Translation and Practicum. These will certainly equip graduates from this programme with skills that enable them to face the challenges of the current translation market and competition. For professional self-confidence, ability to post-edit texts translated by the machine and to have the experience so required by employers before they employ a translator, these courses should be given the prime of place in any translator training programme. Most importantly, Translator training institutions should ensure that Practicum becomes a course during which the supervising translator where the students are carrying out the practicum, works with them on real translation jobs, assesses them and at the end send a report with a score that reflects their performance to the training institutions. To achieve this, the training institutions can avail themselves of the opportunities offered by Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and place their students in vital organizations where there are resident translators for internship programmes. They can also meet translation companies in the country and the international organization represented in the country and secure internship placement for their students (Mombe 2018).

7. ***Staff development:***

This is one other area that a translator training institution should pay attention to. We live in a globalized world and man-power training is carried out almost in the same manner all over the world. There is therefore need to sponsor translation lecturers to conferences and train-the-trainer workshops anywhere in the world. This will enable them to carry out their training just the way it is done in Europe, America, Canada and any other place in the world. In this way, their products will compete with other graduate from anywhere in the world. Indeed, Gouadec (2003, p.13) cited by Dorothy Kelly (2008) suggests that:

Teachers on a translator-training programme should spend one month in all three of the following situations:

- Working in a translation firm (either as a translator or a reviser or a terminologist)
- Working in an in-house translation service (same as above)
- Being a free-lance professional (same as above). That should be enough for a start. And that should clearly determine on their teaching approaches.

(Gouadec, 2003, p. 13)

8. *Certification and Ranking of Translator-Training Institutions*

In many countries professional certification is quite independent from educational degrees, a situation that might suggest the degrees are not trusted by employer groups. In Nigeria, the University Departments train and award degrees in Translation. The training will be more credible and trusted by the employers if professional organisation in the field of translation such as Nigerian Institute of Translators and Interpreters (NITI) certifies the translators through a kind of assessment and enter their names in a data base for professional translators. This will enable any employer wanting to recruit translators to access the data and recruit from there. In addition, the professional organisations can work hand in hand with the government to come up with accreditation criteria for accrediting Translator-training programmes in the various universities. Such accreditation will ensure that training of translators is done according to international standard and meets the market needs for translators.

CONCLUSION

Nigeria is often described as the giant of Africa and if it must assume this status in real terms, it means that Nigeria must influence other African countries in the areas of trade, diplomacy, military, etc. Linguistic barriers, mostly French, Portuguese, Spanish and Arabic can constitute a major hindrance. However, translators stand to bridge the gap and so require to be well trained for them to play their role efficiently. The current situation of translator-training in Nigeria, as has been highlighted above, is marked with a lot of shortcomings and leaves much to be desired. All hands have to be on deck to improve the situation. We are convinced that the suggestions made in this paper, if implemented would go a long way to improve translator-training in Nigeria. We long to see a new generation of Nigerian-trained Translators and interpreters that will take over from the current European/Canadian-trained Nigerian translators and interpreters gradually ceding the baton.

REFERENCES

- Amadu Bello University, Zaria: M.A. (Master of Arts) Admission Requirements. Retrieved on September 27, 2018 from https://spgs.abu.edu.ng/forms/abu_pg_admission_requirements_2013_2014.pdf
- Okpiliya, James Otoburu. "Historization of Setting and Textualization of History: A Comparative Study of Helon Habila's *Waiting For An Angel* and Chimamanda Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*." *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research* 11.1 (2014): 197-205.
- Okpiliya, J. O., Eyang, A. E., & Omagu, S. U. (2018). The City Space, Marriage and Female Friendship in Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will*. *Humanities Theoreticus*, 1(1).
- James, Otoburu Okpiliya, and Steve Ushie Omagu. "Disillusionment and self re-invention in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*." *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research* 15.1 (2018): 182-198.
- Okpiliya, J. O., & Inyabri, T. I. (2015). Social Contradictions and Change in Okri's *Dangerous Love*. *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, 12(1), 160-168.
- Okpiliya, James. "Fundamentalism, Terror and Discourse of Wantonness in Obinna Udenwe's *Satans & Shaitans* and Helon Habila's *The Chibok Girls*." *International Journal* 8.1 (2020): 50-57.
- Obar, Ayami Irom. "The Contributions of Commonwealth to World Diplomacy: 1960-Present." *African Journal of Economy and Society* 13.1 (2014).

Obar, Ayami Irom. "Decolonization in Asia, Latin America and Africa." (2018).

IROM, O. A. MARKET PLACE AND INTEGRATION: INTERROGATING OBUDU AND TIV WOMEN IN CROSS BORDER TRADE.

IROM, OBAR AYAMI. "FROM NIGERIAN YOUTH'MOVEMENT TO MILITANT YOUTH: BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND HISTORY IN YOUTH DEVELOPMENT."

Irom, Obar Ayami. "THE CHALLENGES OF PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN WEST AFRICA 1999-2013" in Chris S. Orngu, Elijah Terdoo Ikpanor and Gideon Lanna Jato (eds) ECOWAS at FORTY." (2017).

Bayero University, Kano, Admission Requirement for the Programmes. Retrieved on August 18, 2018 from <https://mybuk.buk.edu.ng/spsforms2019/admissionrequirements.php>

Gile, D. (1995): *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Co. [Google Scholar](#)

GOUADEC, Daniel (2003). "Position paper: notes on translator-training". In A. Pym, C. Fallada, J. R. Biau and J. Orenstein, eds., *Innovation and E-Learning in Translator Training*. Tarragona, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, pp. 11-19. [The text is also available at: <http://www.fut.es/~apym/symp/intro.html> or in No 1 of the journal *Across Languages and Cultures*].

Iheanacho A. Akakuru(2005)"Abstracting Significant Factors in a viable Translator-Training Programme" in *Trends in the study of Language and Linguistics in Nigeria*,pp.207-217

KELLY, Dorothy (2005). *A Handbook for Translator Trainers. A Guide to Reflective Practice*. Manchester: St Jerome.

Kiraly, Donald (2000), *A Social Constructivist Approach to Translator Education. Empowerment from Theory to Practice*. Manchester: St. Jerome.

Lagos State University - Lagos State University Post Graduate School
Master of Translation and Interpretation. Retrieved on November 12, 2018 from <https://www.studylocal.ng/CourseDetail/6459/Master-of-Translation-and-Interpretation.aspx>

National Open University of Nigeria, Admission Requirements for the Postgraduate Studies. Retrieved on September 23, 2018 from <http://www.nou.edu.ng/index.php/directorates/school-postgraduate-studies>

Ngozi, O. I. (2018), *French Language and Translation Studies in Nigerian Universities in the 21st Century: Retrospection and Prospecption*. Retrieved on 18 July 2019 from <file:///C:/Users/mombe/Downloads/137033-327640-1-PB.pdf>

Nnamdi Azikiwe University – Department of Modern European Languages, Requirements for M.A. in Translation. Retrieved on December 20, 2018 from <https://unizik.edu.ng/faculties/arts/departments/modern-european-languages/postgraduate-programme/>

- Nord, Christiane (1997), *Translating as a Purposeful Activity. Functionalist Approaches Explained*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
- Pym, Anthony (2009), *Exploring Translation Theories*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Soyoye, F. A. & Shahan Mayanja, (2012). *Current Issues in Translation Studies in Nigeria*. Germany: Wehrhahn Verlag. Retrieved on September 19, 2019 from <http://eprints.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/3952/1/Dr.%20Tar%20M.%202.pdf>
- University of Nnsuka, Nigeria- School of Postgraduate Studies. Retrieved on October 12, 2018 from <https://spgs.unn.edu.ng/wp-content/uploads/sites/35/2015/10/FOREIGN-LANGUAGES-AND-LITERARY-STUDIES.pdf>
- University of Port Harcourt- Department of Foreign Languages and Translation: Requirements for M.A/PhD in Translation. Retrieved on October 1, 2019 from https://o3schools.com/uniportpostgraduate_postgraduate_courses/#UNIPORT_Postgraduate_Postgraduate_Courses_4_DEPARTMENT_OF_FOREIGN_LANGUAGES_AND_LITERATURES
- University of Uyo-Department of Foreign Languages, Requirements for MA/PhD in Translation. Retrieved on September 10, 2019 from <https://nigerianscholars.com/school-news/uniuyo-postgraduate-programmes/>
- [University of Ottawa: School of Translation and Interpretation, Admission Requirements for MA in Translation. Retrieved on November 20, 2019 from https://catalogue.uottawa.ca/en/graduate/master-arts-translation-studies/#Admissiontext](https://catalogue.uottawa.ca/en/graduate/master-arts-translation-studies/#Admissiontext)
- Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris III [Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs \(ESIT\)](http://www.univ-paris3.fr/candidats--47807.kjsp?RH=1257522045619), Admission Requirements for MA in Translation, Retrieved on 15 November 2019 from <http://www.univ-paris3.fr/candidats--47807.kjsp?RH=1257522045619>