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FROM THE EDITORS

Over the past six years we have seen, very clearly, that there are many African scholars eager to participate in the debates of the social sciences. Our view, expressed in previous editions, is that African scholars are faced with many challenges to effective participation in a dialogue with scholars in the world, although advances in technological communication have facilitated the matter. The ease with which a growing number of scholars can communicate via e-mail is, in fact, a revolutionary development that, with each passing day, brings new hope to growing numbers of scholars from Africa. For certain, the debates that take place among social scientists of the world have not been truly global; the internet is challenging that historical norm. We readily admit that this journal has followed that wave of technological advance, yet we also acknowledge that the ease with which a growing number of scholars can communicate does not mean that there now exists equal access to scholarship: barriers of all kinds persist. Participation in scholarship, as any academic knows, is closely tied to resources available. Moreover, wonderful, creative, well-researched, and informed scholarship can sometimes be hampered by the now long-established challenge of communicating in another language, often perceived as the unwelcome residue of a colonial age. Many, if not most, African scholars are multilingual and have sometimes emotional reasons for keeping a distance from all that stems from the colonial era, including expressions of local ideas in only English, French, Portuguese, and others. So study in the colonial language is viewed, from the start, as practical, necessary, linked to survival, options in life, to include ‘speaking truth to power,’ but somehow, for many, understandably alien. Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, at all times of the day, one sees school age children walking to and from school; one is struck by how early they are on the roadsides, often in school uniform and very often barefoot. Supported by families and whole communities, Africa’s children are taught to value their education, to learn the skills that are required for a better future for all of Africa. The drive to learn is visible and omnipresent; it is an essential component of hope amidst the many other challenges that rural and urban families face on a daily basis.
There was a day, throughout Africa, when we heard that there was a severe shortage of college graduates; Africans could not be expected, we were told, to govern their own in an effective way. Development, in all its forms, would have to be delayed. Decades of African despair followed. When the first wave of African scholars reached the global scene, it was the Cold War; they were therefore viewed by many as impractical, radical, and ‘devoid of ideas.’ For decades, academic publications on African affairs would describe African social and political chaos as a temporary disorder (Huntington 1968) or due to the Marxist orientation of African leaders. In fact, many early Africanists sympathized with the decidedly leftist orientation of African ideas on politics and policy. But then something happened at the end of the Cold War. Suddenly, anyone with leftist ideas was viewed as backward, moronic, or worse, as leaders embraced the virtues of privatization and the free-market. As we have discussed in previous issues, this is what Bates, et al. (1994) suggest that the problems are with African scholarship – it is ‘devoid of ideas.’ Once African scholars have ideas of merit to contribute, Bates et al. suggest, these will naturally ‘break through.’

We know otherwise. Improvements in communications technology do help but merit is certainly not the only reason why ideas become popular and, sometimes, persist. It is naïve to suggest that the global exchange of ideas is, in any way, democratic and open; it is an ideal we can all strive for, but let us be clear: the forums in which scholarly debate take place are filled with egos, pride – ethnic, national, religious – and agendas of all kinds. Alas, to this day, many of the ideas held by scholars from all over the world are based on various subjective experiences in their respective lives. In spite of the objective and rational pretense of so many, the very hypotheses that arise and theories that are developed, are usually the direct result of some kind of personal bias. Scholars do not pick notes on ideas from a proverbial hat of objectivity; they pursue research in one or another direction because of their own subjective experiences on this earth. And, as indicated above, in their quest to make themselves heard, scholars are greatly aided or hampered by the resources made available to them.
It is with the aforementioned challenges in mind that Africana was started. We share the ideal of Hegel but we also understand the materialist reaction of Marx to Hegel’s methodology. We are for the free-and-open debate of ideas but acknowledge the various contexts within which these debates take place: inherently biased, constrained, filled with personal pride of all kinds and, dare we say, when it comes to African area studies, filled with emotion. The era of free-market obsession, more of us are understanding in retrospect, temporarily forgot the prospective ‘other’ costs of what is now termed neoliberal reform. As has happened at other periods, it was a period of rationalism, when solutions seemed straightforward and easy; if only, its advocates maintained, others would follow. But the realities of that reform, while rational, were not necessarily reasonable, that is, they sometimes neglected the impact on humanity, the environment, and other significant factors. Like all of us on this earth, Africans strive to find the appropriate balance between what might seem to work, or seem ‘rational’ at any moment in time, with what proves to be ‘reasonable.’ Neoliberal reform, come hell or high water, has in the eyes of some, already happened while scores of social, environmental, and human challenges remain unanswered.

With our hope of improved access by African scholars to the debates and our hope of greater inclusion of African voices, the observer will readily see that there is much at stake as we contemplate this and future issues of Africana. We believe that the inclusion of local concerns must happen in countless ways, for it has not been the mark of self-assured world powers, now and historically. And, again, inclusion of local voice is necessary for achieving mutual understandings of reasonableness, in all social and political relationships. With our own limited time and resources, we reiterate that with every issue of Africana, we are faced with the challenge of making decisions. How well polished, for example, is a contribution? Should this journal, as so many have done, summarily dismiss African scholars’ contributions due to awkwardness of expression in the colonial language? How much editing should be done? How, why, and where, on balance, should we place emphasis on the author’s content over style? At the end of the day, or publishing
deadline, we understand that a certain ‘rawness’ of expression may enter into play, that the dialogues over who or what should be included can continue endlessly. All said, we choose to do something, to make decisions, to publish at least some, and to move this initiative forward. It is simply too important.

In this vein, we are pleased to share the work of Dr. Akeem Ayofe Akinwale entitled “Digitisation of Indigenous Knowledge for Natural Resources Management in Africa.” Like others before him, Dr. Akinwale understands that there is wisdom in the thoughts of local populations that remains, in mainstream scholarship, largely untapped. With methodological rigor, Dr. Akinwale considers ways in which the thoughts, ideas, and practices of local indigenes can be documented, even digitized for future research. With a clear understanding that the prevailing norms have led to much environmental damage and local hardship, Dr. Akinwale considers whether other local ideas might help manage environmental resources in a more effective and sustainable fashion.

Largely due to the legacies of the colonial era and the cold war, sub-Saharan states remain highly centralized. Through the years, various initiatives on strengthening local governments have come and gone, with varying degrees of success. Those of us who have been following the literature and policy debates on local governance will find the study entitled “Local Government Administration in Nigeria: A Review” very helpful. In it, Michael B. Aleyomi explains why local governance matters to democratic and other forms of development.

For those who follow the global debates over human rights, we have included a piece by Dr. Oladele Abiodun Balogun & Ademola Kazeem Fayemi entitled “Human Rights in a Multiculturalist World: The Myth and Reality in Continental Africa and Afro-Diaspora.” Here, the authors consider the perspectives of the Ifá in relation to the Universalist claims made by human rights advocates and ask if and when they are compatible. We leave their conclusions for the reader to discover and
applaud the authors’ efforts to have us all think through the ongoing challenges related to our global understanding of human rights.

In this era of growing concern over global terrorist networks and threats to human security, we thought Dr. Victor Egwemi’s contribution entitled “Boko Haram, Terrorism and Failing State Capacity in Nigeria: An Interrogation” to be especially relevant. With great urgency, Dr. Egwemi describes the growing Nigerian (and other) concerns regarding Boko Haram and other terrorist groups within the context of Nigeria’s weak and failing state capacity.

This is followed by an expression of concern by researchers Richard S. Maposa, Tasara Muguti and David Tobias, in “Mass Deception or Reality: Reflections on the Politics of Sanctions in Zimbabwe, 2000-2012,” who argue that, in the Zimbabwean political context, political rhetoric does not always match on-the-ground realities. In many ways, the words of politicians have been used to appease the concerns of either Zimbabwean citizens or outside observers, who pay little attention to realities, while policies such as (internal) land reforms and (external) sanctions continue to be improperly administered. The authors argue that true engagement with the international community would be a more effective path toward finding policy solutions that actually work.

Expressing a theme found above, Dennis Masaka & Agrippa Chingombe argue that we need to work “Towards a Fusion of Western and Traditional African Educational Systems in Zimbabwe’s National School Curriculum.” Here again we find that local voices are not always being heard and the view that they need to be, if both external relations and local policies are to be improved.

Much is said of road accidents in African contexts from a range of perspectives, much of it fearful and hostile toward someone, including local drivers and/or local governments. Here, Edwin Mhandu and Takawira Kazembe study the issue in a piece entitled “Urban Myths
Pertaining to Road Accidents in Zimbabwe: The Case of Chinhamo Service Centre along Seke Road Linking Harare and Chitungwiza.” They consider the various factors that might be at play, including the views of the local Shona, who argue that there may be some spiritual mischief at play.

Finally, we consider a piece from the internationally recognized authority on Nigerian politics, Ibaba S. Ibaba entitled “The Roots of Terrorism in Nigeria: Exploring the Poverty Connection.” As always, Ibaba has carefully researched the matter, provides data and tabulations, then draws conclusions. To him and to all contributors to this issue, thank you for being a part of Africana. We cap this issue with a Book Review by Aaron Mupondi, Sign and Taboo: Perspectives on the Poetic Fiction of Yvonne Vera, and remind readers that we welcome relevant reviews.

We were privileged, with this issue, to have had the prodigious and skillful editing talents of Anne Serafin, one of the two members of Africana’s Advisory Board. Anne lent a great deal of her time and a tenacious effort to our production regimen, during which she was plagued with a mysterious and frustrating problem with her e-mail which, somehow, she managed to surmount. Anne, on behalf of the executive team and our contributors, I extend a warm and grateful ‘Thank You!’

It is now, with great pleasure, that we present to you the December 2012 issue of Africana. As always, your comments and feedback are very much appreciated.

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DIGITISATION OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE FOR NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

DR. AKEEM AYOFE AKINWALE

KEY TERMS: Afrikology, digitisation, indigenous knowledge, natural resources management.

ABSTRACT:
This paper examines digitisation of indigenous knowledge as a critical resource for the promotion of effective management of natural resources in Africa. The paper is based on content analysis of primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from 12 in-depth interviews conducted among stakeholders in the Nigerian cultural industries while the secondary data were obtained from relevant documents through an electronic search of databases. The paper is grounded in the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations and Afrikology with a focus on the need to intensify the preservation and propagation of African indigenous knowledge for natural resources management. The findings reveal several opportunities and challenges in attempts to promote African approaches to natural resources management since the advent of the digital revolution. Africans’ experience of digital revolution is discussed with reference to success stories of digitisation of indigenous knowledge systems. Discussions suggest the need for concerted interest in digitisation of African indigenous knowledge to intensify efforts geared towards natural resources management. Such digitisation should be launched in all virtual communities and educational systems; this is to enhance its effectiveness. Also, governments and NGOs should initiate projects to develop digitisation of indigenous knowledge in order to promote cultures and enhance indigenous capacity for environmental sustainability and effective management of natural resources in Africa.
INTRODUCTION
The indigenous knowledge of Africans remains a gold mine, although it has been suppressed since the advent of cultural imperialism exemplified by harrowing scenes of devastation in the contexts of slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism. This situation affects natural resources management in Africa, the world’s second-largest and second most-populous continent, after Asia. Africa embodies diverse ecology with complex biodiversity, which affects its development in all ramifications (Ogundiran, 2005). As reported by Arowolo (2010), Africa covers six percent of the earth’s total surface area and 20.4 percent of the total land area with 30.2 million square kilometers including adjacent islands. The population of Africans has reached over one billion people, representing 15 percent of the world’s total populations. Africa is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, both the Suez Canal and the Red Sea along the Sinai Peninsula to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the southeast, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. The continent has 54 sovereign states (Asante, 2007).

Natural resources can be found in the African side of the biosphere, referring to the global ecological system that integrates all living beings and their relationships including their interaction with elements of the lithosphere (land), hydrosphere (water) and atmosphere (air) (Folke et al., 2011). An observation of the geography and topography of Africa shows that the continent is characterised by complex biodiversity and an abundant supply of natural resources including land and water. Both land and water contain a large number of other natural resources such as wildlife, minerals, freshwater and groundwater.

The above mentioned natural resources have been managed effectively through the use of indigenous knowledge in Africa for the past several centuries. Indigenous capacity for management of natural resources has been observed in several African empires since the
ninth century, particularly in the Nok, Hausa, Eze Nri (Igbo Ukwu), Ashate, Gao, Kanem, Mali and Ashanti empires (OBrien, 2005). Indigenous capacity was equally noticed in other empires at different locations such as Songhai, Oyo, Benin, Dahomey and Zulu. Eventually, a large number of Africans were enslaved and Africa was officially colonized by powerful European countries, providing a new benchmark for knowledge management on the continent.

As a result, Africans are presently behind the rest of the world in terms of ability to develop indigenous potentials for effective management of natural resources. This is evidenced by Africa’s high incidence of deforestation, environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity. High levels of deforestation and irrigation have resulted in water tables rising to the soil surface, creating severe salinization problems (Folke et al., 2011). It can be observed that the capacity of local institutions is presently at variance with the speed of resource exploitation in sub-Saharan Africa.

Essentially, Africans are expected to align their indigenous knowledge with the modern reality, particularly in the areas of information technology in order to maximise the sharing of the indigenous knowledge, which can result in creative solutions to environmental problems (Were, 2011). This expectation is reinforced by the fact that the spiraling human demands for resources has weakened the capacity of the earth’s natural systems, as evidenced in “collapsing fisheries, falling water tables, shrinking forests, eroding soils, dying lakes, crop-withering heat waves, and disappearing species” (Brown, 1996: 4). The above-mentioned environmental problems are common in most developing countries. The problems can be addressed through appropriate knowledge.

Thus, there is urgent need to bridge the widening knowledge gap in African societies (Kalu, 2010). While the old generations of Africans are conversant with indigenous knowledge, the new
generations largely ignore such knowledge. The new generations are now recognised as “net generations” based on their interest and dexterity in the use of technology (Roberts, 2011; Poore, 2011; Maciel and Albagli, 2009; Hessels et al, 2009). However, the next generations could be exposed to the dangers of ignorance about the traditional knowledge of their ancestral environment. There is therefore an urgent need to bridge the knowledge gap in order to intensify the preservation and propagation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management in Africa.

Since African societies presently contend with an onslaught of digital revolution, this paper therefore examines digitisation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management in Africa. Issues raised in the paper are contextualized within the ambit of the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations and Afrikology. Emphasis is specifically placed on the social context in which the enduring aspects of the knowledge base of Africans can be preserved and propagated with the aid of digital technology to further the cause of development in Africa and elsewhere. The paper proceeds from introduction to other sections including literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, and finding. A suitable conclusion is then advanced.

AN OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE REVIEW
Available studies on the subject matter of this paper are reviewed under the following headings: digital revolution, digitisation, indigenous knowledge, natural resources management and theoretical framework. The review reveals the widespread influence of digital revolution and its implications for societal development. It also depicts a dearth of research on digitisation of indigenous knowledge in relation to natural resources management. As shown by Bisong and Andrew-Essien (2010), many academics and development professionals are yet to appreciate the value of indigenous knowledge as a valid mode of learning, research and application for sustainable
development and socio-economic transformation of society. Consistent with this situation, Were (2011) expressed the need to promote Africans’ indigenous knowledge across the world. It is believed that the need could be met through innovation and development of knowledge networks. An understanding of digitisation is relevant in this regard since it provides a basis for development of innovation in the preservation and propagation of indigenous knowledge, which can be used to promote effective management of natural resources. A discourse on digitisation therefore starts from a description of the digital revolution, which Markillie (2012) described as the third industrial revolution. The first industrial revolution, Markillie says, began with the mechanisation of the textile industry in Britain in the 18th century, while the second industrial revolution began with the assembly line and spread of mass production from America in the 20th century.

**Digital revolution**

The emergence of new technologies for rapid dissemination of knowledge is known as digital revolution, accompanying the development of science and technology since the wake of the Second World War (Hessels et al, 2009). Studies on this subject largely focus on the concept of knowledge society, which was first coined by Fritz Machlup in 1962 and then developed by Peter Drucker in 1968 (Maciel and Albagli, 2009). Subsequently, in the early 1970s, Daniel Bell observed the emergence of a post-industrial society, while Marc Uri Porat introduced the notion of the information society in 1976 (Maciel and Albagli, 2009). The information society has been described as a new model of development in the following words:

> It followed the agricultural, scientific and industrial revolutions. The information society has developed into a global information society. [...] The basic characteristics of the society are powerfully developed sciences, information
technologies impacting on our lives, economic development and the production of knowledge. [...] Compared to the advantages we must take note of some disadvantages. First is the big gap in the applications of new information technologies between the developed and the underdeveloped countries. For example, the developed countries in the world own 85% of technology and information. Only 25% belongs to developing countries. (Vranesh et al, 2005: 101)

As a result of the digital divide, the world reflects the interest of two distinct groups, namely the generators and the users of new knowledge. Many countries are relegated to the role of users while a few countries, firms and institutions act as the main generators of new knowledge and innovations (Maciel and Albagli, 2009). Considering its history of dependency on western technology, Africa is in the group of the users of new knowledge.

In this context, digitisation of African indigenous knowledge has become increasingly necessary to prevent the erosion of our authentic African heritage. Such digitisation can be used to promote effective management of natural resources in Africa and elsewhere. In this way, the crisis of climate change can be confronted, particularly through the use of orthodox or alternative remedies.

**DIGITISATION**
Digitisation is defined in this paper as the codification of information or knowledge for specific purposes. It has been argued that all knowledge can be codified (Maciel and Albagli, 2009). Codified knowledge can be made globally available through digitisation. The concept of digitisation is connected with interest in the management of cultural heritage in the technological environment, although it remains in its early stage of development. Studies on digitisation of cultural heritage have been integrated into the curricula for Library
and Information Science (LIS) in Europe, particularly in the context of the Bologna process (Manžuch, Huvila and Aparac-Jelusic, 2005). The concept of digitisation has been recognised in memory institutions including museums, archives and libraries. Digitisation therefore constitutes a process by which knowledge can be preserved and propagated. For instance:

Learning and knowledge develop according to communication processes mediated by specific conceptual, cultural and institutional frameworks. [...] In this context, local learning capacity is strategic; it involves the construction of several types of knowledge, experiences, competencies and skills, and is not limited to access to information. (Maciel and Albagli, 2009: 102)

Research on digitisation has been based on two basic perspectives: a library-oriented approach and a cultural heritage oriented approach. The first perspective portrays digitisation in terms of the system of knowledge in relation to digital libraries, while the second perspective is primarily based on communication of memory. The above-mentioned perspectives on digitisation raise critical issues such as conversion, storage, protection and delivery of authentic metadata in the lifecycle of digital resources. In fact, digitisation is affected by other issues such as: concerns about ownership, poor storage, adulteration, inadequate infrastructure and profiteering (Adkins, 2010).

The issue of ownership is critical, as communities are being robbed of their heritage through conversion from artifacts to metadata. Markillie (2012) noted that digitisation will allow things to be made economically in much smaller numbers, more flexibly and with a much lower input of labour, as evidenced by the availability of new materials and completely new processes such as 3D printing, easy-to-use robots and new collaborative manufacturing services.
available online. The wheel is almost coming full circle, turning away from mass manufacturing and towards much more individualised production. The digital technology can enable production of almost anything, anywhere — from America to an African village. With digitisation, everything can be processed via smarter software. The relevance of digitisation has been demonstrated in manufacturing and other industries that have gone digital, such as office equipment, telecoms, photography, music, publishing and films. It can empower small and medium-sized firms and individual entrepreneurs. The possibility of digitisation of indigenous knowledge is considered in the light of the above, especially with a focus on the need for effective management of natural resources.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE
As reported by Bisong and Andrew-Essien (2010), indigenous knowledge has been defined as community-based knowledge systems, which have developed since the inception of the community in question. The issue of indigenous knowledge has, however, been neglected in the discourse on knowledge management. The concept of knowledge management is relatively new; it gained widespread recognition as a striking feature of the information society since the 1990s (Widén-Wulff et al, 2005). Similarly, indigenous knowledge management has gained recognition worldwide, although it is less popular in literature. In her description of indigenous knowledge management, Hunter (2005: 113) submitted that:

Communities and organisations around the world are realising the value and significance of indigenous knowledge and the importance of preserving it for future generations. Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs) are being established globally, but particularly in Australia, Africa, Latin America and Asia. The capture and preservation of indigenous knowledge is
being used to revitalise endangered cultures, improve the economic independence and sustainability of indigenous communities and to increase community-based involvement in planning and development.

Indigenous knowledge management refers to a process by which communities capture, control and share their ideas to meet specific local needs (Hunter, 2005). As indicated in a recent study by Finneti (2011), indigenous knowledge management includes traditional stories, songs, dances and ceremonies that reflect beliefs related to spirituality, family, land and social justice. It includes potentially patentable knowledge about traditional medicines, foods, farm practices, architecture and construction, handicrafts, artwork and folk music. It also includes knowledge about people, places, plants, animals, and historical events associated with a particular community. Essentially, indigenous knowledge management is embedded in cultures and depends on the understanding and use of local language (Akinwale, 2010).

The recent story of Chinua Achebe’s disapproval of an attempt to alter his literature underscores the value of indigenous knowledge management. As reported in popular dailies, Achebe objected to the use of the title of his novel *Things Fall Apart* for a new film under production by Curtis Jackson, popularly known as “50 Cent” (The Punch, 2011). Jackson reportedly offered Achebe the sum of one million dollars ($1,000,000) for the use of the title but he rejected the offer. Achebe’s lawyer reportedly mentioned that the title would not be sold for even one billion dollars, stating that the book has remained invaluable to Africans since it was first published in 1958.

The relevance of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management has been well established in literature. Yet, such knowledge has not attracted adequate attention in the global race for
environmental protection. As observed by Brown (1996), hunters and gatherers were able to protect the natural environment through the use of their skills without exposing the ecosystems to dangers. The scales of human activities have, however, increased and thus affected the habitability of the earth. Overgrazing has led to degradation of rangeland in Africa, while air pollution and acid rain have contaminated forests in Europe. This situation calls for a dramatic shift in the existing perspectives and strategies being used for the management of natural resources. Knowledge of past and present innovations can be combined in this regard to ensure effective management of natural resources.

**Natural resources management**
The need for effective management of natural resources has been recognised by state and non-state actors in different parts of the world. Actions taken by government in various African countries include promulgation of environmental protection laws, establishment of forest reserves and monuments. The significance of natural resources management was demonstrated in the first scientific global stocktaking of the world’s ecosystem services undertaken in 2005 by the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (Folke et al., 2011).

In line with the directives of the United Nations, a number of state actors have established environmental protection agencies in order to ensure effective management of natural resources such as land, water and air. As reported by Folke et al (2011), the focus of governance is slowly moving from conventional, sector-based resource management to more integrated approaches for managing landscapes and seascapes and the ecosystem services that they generate. Other researchers equally observed that any ecosystem-based management operates in a global context and requires collaboration and collective action in much more complex
institutional settings than previously acknowledged in studies of local natural resource management institutions (Mahon et al., 2009; Galaz et al., 2008).

The UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere Program (MAB) links global environmental governance with place-based ecosystem management and spans local-regional, national, and international scales. The MAB programme was launched in 1970 to promote the importance of the relationship between people and the natural environment. The programme specifically focused on the need to promote sustainable development and conservation of biodiversity. From 1976 to the present, UNESCO has created up to 500 biosphere reserve sites in different countries, creating international networks of protected natural sites including Yellowstone National Park (in the United States), Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (in Australia), the Sundarbans (in India), Mount Kenya (in Kenya), and the Mount Olympus National Park in Greece.

The need for natural resources management has also been reinforced through the establishment of the World Heritage Sites by the World Heritage Committee, operating under UNESCO’s directives since 1972. Available literature indicates that 182 countries have indicated support for the World Heritage Sites where a number of places of natural importance have been preserved. At least 800 World Heritage sites have been found in 138 countries. These include the Island of Goree in West Africa, indicating the locations from where the enslaved Africans were transferred to the Americas from the 17th to the 19th centuries. Apart from the above mentioned actions, it is important to note that:

A new research arena called Earth System Governance is developing focusing on the formal and informal rule systems, institutional architectures, agency beyond the state, and actor-networks at all levels of human society […]
A key challenge yet to be realized in relation to Planetary Stewardship and Earth System Governance is to combine emergence of multi-lateral institutions and regime formation with mechanisms for incorporating biosphere understanding and capacity of responding to ecosystem dynamics into such efforts. This combination is particularly challenging as it includes elements of equity, legitimacy and self-determination of peoples. (Folke et al., 2011: 731)

Actions by the non-state actors include public and political awareness campaigns, voluntary monitoring schemes and informal pressure directed toward protection of natural environment. Loosely connected non-state actors operating in different countries have been able to complement the roles of states in the management of natural resources. Addressing climate change through forest plantations, for example, may replace ecosystems targeted by the U.N. Biodiversity Convention (Lambin & Meyfroidt, 2011). Following the launch of International Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), there has been an important opportunity to integrate knowledge systems, learning and policy support, on social–ecological interactions in relation to climate change and ecosystem dynamics. An observation of the array of actions taken to ensure effective management of natural resources suggests the relevance of a polycentric decision-making structure, which allows for testing of rules at different scales and aids resource users at multiple levels in the crafting of new institutions to cope with changing situations. This is based on recognition of the fact that meeting challenges requires transformations of world views, institutions, approaches, and methods (Folke et al., 2011).

Previous research by Folke et al (2011) focused on the necessity and challenge of reconnecting humanity to the biosphere. They argued that this is a fundamental prerequisite in the search for planetary opportunities that meet both global sustainability criteria.
and human development needs. They equally discussed governance challenges of social-ecological systems from the local to the global, focusing on the challenges of reconnecting to the biosphere. At the core of the global sustainability challenge is extending the human favorability period of relative stability of the last 10,000 years that has allowed countless species to flourish (Steffen et al., 2011). As observed by Westley et al (2011), the challenge can be overcome through the ability to govern for persistence with change as well as transformations at local and regional scales. The present focus on digitisation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management can be justified in the light of the foregoing.

**Theoretical framework**

The issue of digitisation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management requires further explanation. Thus, this section presents the assumptions and implications of relevant theories, such as the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations and Afrikology. While the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations primarily applies to social change in western society, Afrikology is geared towards promoting the authenticity of African heritage. A combination of both theories is suitable for a better understanding of digitisation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management in Africa.

**Theory of Diffusion of Innovations**

The Theory of Diffusion of Innovations was refined by Everett Rogers in 1962 based on his study of the propagation of hybrid corn among the Iowa farmers in the United States of America in the 1950s and 1960s (Minishi-Majanja and Kiplang’at, 2005). The theory dwells on the process of adoption of an innovation and how the adoption affects social change. Innovation refers to improvement on and creation of a new product or process for public consumption (Kvam and Stræte, 2010). As observed by Valkonen (1970: 165), “the diffusion of innovation is usually a part of the process of social change.” Various
Stages of adoption of an innovation were mentioned by Minishi-Majanja and Kiplang'at (2005: 213) in the following order:

Potential adopters of an innovation must learn about the innovation, be persuaded as to the merits of the innovation, decide to adopt, implement the innovation, and confirm (reaffirm or reject) the decision to adopt the innovation.

As argued by Valkonen (1970), the process of adoption of an innovation by an individual requires three sub-processes, namely awareness, interest and adoption. Attention is given to divergence in people’s reactions to the process of adoption, explaining differences in their levels of awareness, interest and actual adoption of innovations. Awareness of innovations depends on several factors including mass communication, observation of nature, work environment, social interaction and personal contacts. Also, interest in adoption of innovations depends on existing attitudes among the potential adopters. The forms and levels of education coupled with perceived relevance of innovations are relevant since they affect human behaviour. An illustration of the social context of the willingness or refusal to adopt an innovation is presented thus:

It is important to notice that the relative advantage of an innovation is very often different for different individuals. For example, a milking machine is very advantageous for people with many cows, less advantageous for people with one or two cows, and quite useless for people with no cows. (Valkonen, 1970: 169)

The above illustration exposes the scope of the theory, dwelling on why individuals may not be equally interested in adoption of innovation. As argued in the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations, the literates are more likely to adopt innovations compared to the illiterates. Similarly, Valkonen (1970: 167) asserts that: “those who are
likely to adopt innovations tend also to consume mass communication more than others”. Conceivably, the actual adoption of innovations could be influenced by the difficulty of and cost of adoption. Knowledge, skills and abilities can also affect the actual adoption of innovations. From the canons of the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations, it is clear that digitisation of indigenous knowledge constitutes an innovation, which can be adopted on the basis of its relative advantage. However, contrary to the basic assumptions in the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations, corporate organisations, governments and NGOs usually take responsibilities for digitisation of indigenous knowledge. Another theory is required in this context to strengthen the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations, as summarised herewith:

Too much attention is paid to correlational relations between variables, at the expense of causal interpretations and propositions which are theoretically more important. [...] Instead of natural social systems, only segments of systems are studied. This makes it difficult to combine the results of diffusion research with theories of social change. (Valkonen, 1970: 177)

Based on the above mentioned issues, the Theory of Afrikology is equally adopted to strengthen the arguments on digitisation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management, focusing on social change in African society. Both theories provide a basis for adequate explanation of adoption of innovations in an African context and elsewhere.

**Afrikology**

Afrikology is an all-inclusive epistemology of knowledge generation and application that has roots in African cosmology; it transcends
earlier perspectives on African development. This theory was propounded by Nabudere (2011) based on his recognition of the fact that mainstream scientific knowledge is unable to fully explain the crisis facing humanity. He therefore called for development of new knowledge that can be applied to contemporary needs, given the shortcomings of the old epistemologies of knowledge inherited from the Enlightenment. In his words:

The task of African scholars is to explore, trace and investigate the role ancient African knowledge systems contributed in laying the ground for the institutions of knowledge creation and their application to human needs throughout history. [...] This can help us to overcome the current malaise by creating a new ‘synthesis’ in which the original African contribution makes a further contribution based on new understandings, called ‘Afrikology’ (Nabudere, 2011: 2)

Afrikology seeks to initiate and promote a long-term solution to the African crisis through production of knowledge based on an African heritage. With its status as the cradle of humanity, Africa is reputed as the original source of knowledge; Greek philosophers including Thales, Pythagoras, Democritus, Plato and Aristotle were reported to have been educated in Egypt, where they were students and researchers. These Greek philosophers laid a foundation for the development of knowledge in Europe. Nabudere (2011) emphasised the continued relevance of Afrikology for the creation of a better society. A key focus in Afrikology is the need to establish a new science for generating and accessing knowledge for sustainable use. The need for digitisation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management can be recognised in this context.

Digitisation is a relatively new science which can support integration of the traditional and modern systems of knowledge
creation and application. Ultimately, Africa’s indigenous knowledge is collectively managed through oral traditions, encompassing various forms of knowledge about different aspects of the society. With digitisation, oral traditions and other forms of indigenous knowledge can be preserved and applied to meet the needs of contemporary societies. A description of the contemporary relevance of Africans’ knowledge of divination is instructive here:

In African conditions, divination plays an important role even in contemporary conditions in the lives of the people, and is maintained within the memories of the practitioners as a coherent system of knowledge. The practices help to cure the sick, easing their anxieties and helping them to come to terms even with challenging circumstances posed by modernity. (Nabudere, 2011: 42)

Contrary to expectations, research on divination remains inadequate, while emic perspective is largely ignored in available studies on the subject. Following their studies on the manifestations of divination among Africans, Asians and American Indians, Winkleman and Peek (2004) argued that divination attracted limited scholarship. Thus, Africans’ competence in divination is due for digitisation to promote its relevance in the contemporary society. The need for digitisation of indigenous knowledge has been clearly demonstrated in India through the establishment of Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) in 2001 and National Biodiversity Act of 2002 (Thomas, 2010). The Indian TKDL has been promoted officially through agreements with international patent organisations such as the European Patent Office (EPO), the United Kingdom Trademark and Patent Office (UKTPO) and the United States Trademark and Patent Office (USTPO). The Indian experience implies the significance of digitisation in the preservation and propagation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management. Research methods
Qualitative research design was adopted due to the nature of the issues under investigation. Apart from the use of relevant documents, several in-depth interviews were conducted to explain digitisation of indigenous knowledge and its implications for natural resources management in Africa. Both primary and secondary methods of data collection were used. The primary method of data collection was obtained through unstructured in-depth interviews with stakeholders in the Nigerian cultural industries including Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation (CBAAC), National Theatre, Nollywood, museums, and mass media. The choice of these areas is based on the fact that cultural industries worldwide have adapted to the digital revolution. Twelve participants were purposively selected based on their profession and involvement in the preservation and propagation of traditional cultures.

Specifically, a total of 12 in-depth interviews (eight for men and four for women) were conducted among different groups of participants such as artists, curators, community leaders, journalists, actors and directors. The interviews were conducted via telephone based on the need for instant connection with participants, who may have otherwise declined to participate in academic discussions due to their busy schedules. This approach was possible with the use of hitherto established social connections with the participants. The data from each interview were noted and recorded appropriately. Each interview session lasted for 60 minutes and was conducted between June and September 2011.

The length of each interview did not extend beyond 60 minutes since the interview was conducted via ICT (mobile phones) and the participants were experts on the issues addressed in the study. Some interviews were rescheduled due to network failure and agreements reached with participants. Call credit was exhausted and interview ended abruptly after two sessions. The discussions in each of the interview sessions were primarily based on digitisation of
indigenous knowledge and its implications for preservation and propagation of the knowledge for natural resources management. The list of the questions addressed in each interview is presented as follows:

1. What are the existing methods for preservation of indigenous knowledge?
2. How has indigenous knowledge enhanced or hindered natural resources management?
3. Can indigenous knowledge be propagated through digitisation?
4. How can digitisation of indigenous knowledge affect natural resources management in Africa?

The above questions were equally addressed though the secondary data obtained from electronic search of databases including SocINDEX, IK Notes, Computers and Applied Sciences Complete, Communication and Mass Media Complete, and Academic Source Complete. Each of these databases provides several thousands of relevant up-to-date documents. The outcomes of the search were scrutinized and due consideration was given to only documents that directly relate to the issues of digitisation, indigenous knowledge and natural resources management. Over 50 documents were downloaded and reviewed in this process, focusing on several cases of digitisation of indigenous knowledge and natural resources management in relation to African experience of digital revolution.

The data obtained from both primary and secondary sources was subjected to narrative and thematic content analysis, which provides a basis for description and interpretation of frames from data, theory and literature (Grbich, 2007). The data generated from in-depth interviews was transcribed, summarised and harmonised to indicate convergence or divergence of different frames associated with the subject matter under investigation. Based on participants’
responses to each question, the data was transcribed selectively consistent with the process of transcription, which Davidson (2009: 37-38) described thus:

In common are views of transcription as a process that is theoretical, selective, interpretive, and representational. [...] The process is a selective one whereby certain phenomena or features of talk and interaction are transcribed. [...] Because it is impossible to record all features of talk and interaction from recordings, all transcripts are selective in one way or another. Selectivity needs to be acknowledged and explained in relation to the goals of a study rather than taken to be unremarkable.

Original transcripts of the interview data were analysed to ensure authenticity of meaning. The data generated from secondary documents were equally summarised and analysed accordingly. The validity of data was established through cross-referencing of facts. This approach is in consonance with the conventional recognition of validity in research regardless of whether the research is quantitative, qualitative or combined (Lewis, 2009).

Findings and discussions
Findings and discussions presented in the next sections are based on a combination of data obtained from documents and in-depth interviews. It is clear that attention has been devoted to digitisation of indigenous knowledge in a number of countries. However, several issues about digitisation are yet to be adequately addressed in Africa given the interplay of social, economic, political and technological factors. African societies need to devote more attention to digitisation of their indigenous knowledge in order to promote effective management of natural resources.
Preservation of African indigenous knowledge

African indigenous knowledge has been preserved by traditional institutions and a number of cultural industries such as museums, mass media, and cinema. Oral tradition has been used as a key method of preservation of African indigenous knowledge for centuries. In his discourse on indigenous knowledge, the strengths and weaknesses of oral tradition were summarised by Carraway (2011: 9) as follows:

In the distant past all knowledge was memorized and passed from one generation to the next within an oral tradition. The continuity of knowledge could be broken by the simple death of the memory keeper before the information was passed onto the next generation. By its very nature, knowledge within the oral tradition would be of limited geographic expanse.

Apart from oral tradition, other methods such as drama and records have been used to preserve indigenous knowledge in Africa. As mentioned by members of the Nigerian Association of Theatre Arts Practitioners (NANTAP), theatre has contributed immensely towards the development of African indigenous knowledge. Concerning the use of digitisation as a resource for preservation of indigenous knowledge management, narratives from various discussants showed that the rate of digitisation of indigenous knowledge is low. In his response to the question about digitisation of indigenous knowledge, an informant from a national theatre passed the following comment:

I am not an expert on the issue of digitisation of indigenous knowledge but I can refer you to our staff in another department. He is in charge of the audio-visual and other technical matters. He is the appropriate person, who will tell you everything you need to know. (Male IDI, September 2011)
Based on awareness of digitisation of indigenous knowledge, the informants from private organisations were more expressive than those from the public sector. All the informants from the mass media mentioned several instances of digitisation of indigenous knowledge, citing television programmes such as African Cuisine, Back to the Roots, Travel Guides and a number of festivals – Argungu, Osun, Ofala, Eyo, etc. – that have been recorded on videotape for wider circulation. Another informant mentioned that:

We have embarked on a project that will eventually lead to digitisation of cultures. We have started with FESTAC 77. Some cultural issues have been selected. We have artifacts, dances, and other cultural symbols. [...] Yes, the project has been in progress since the past several years. It is not easy to convert cultural symbols into digital technology. It takes time. But our major challenge is lack of funding. [...] We pay in dollars. About $15,000.00 is required to produce a tape, which can play for up to two hours only. (Male IDI, September 2011)

FESTAC 77 is an acronym for the second Festival of the World Black and African Arts and Culture, which was organised by the Nigerian Government in 1977. FESTAC historically emerged in 1956; it was endorsed in France by the Pan African Cultural Society, which resolved to propagate the values and originality of the Black and African Arts and cultures. The first FESTAC was celebrated in Senegal and it lasted for two weeks. The second and latest FESTAC 77 was celebrated in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1977; focusing on the need to document the authentic records of Africa and peoples of African descent throughout the world. Its objective was achieved through a colloquium, which was divided into ten groups dealing with different aspects of African indigenous knowledge such as follows: Black Civilisation and Arts, Philosophy, Literature, African Languages, Historical Awareness, Pedagogy, Religion, Science and Technology.
Propagation of African indigenous knowledge

A number of social institutions are responsible for the propagation of African indigenous knowledge; these include the family, the school, religious organisations and the mass media. The role of the mass media is very critical in this regard, especially through its primary functions such as information, education and entertainment. They also expressed concerns for the changing nature of the society, indicating the need to promote digitisation of African indigenous knowledge. A journalist recalled that many cultural symbols had been converted into PDF and stored in the central server for interested readers, pointing to the fact that several cases of African indigenous knowledge can be downloaded online. The journalist gave an instance of his experience in the process of digitisation of indigenous knowledge as follows:

There was a time I went to Iragbiji to cover an event, which is a festival. That was in 2009 and everything I covered in the events was processed, published and eventually stored in the central server for online viewing. Copies were sent to the people in Iragbiji. Later, they invited us again because they know that we are helping them to promote their culture.

From the perspectives of the informants from the Nigerian film industry, everybody is now expected to be abreast of the rapid change in technology. It was mentioned that directors and film producers cannot continue to rely on old tactics in film production due to the dawn of a new era in which everything has changed (Kalu, 2010). It was noted that the change in technology is a welcome development, as it adds colour to the works of artists. A few informants, however, remarked that a lot of practitioners in the Nigerian film industry are still living in the past, claiming that it is important for all Africans to come to terms with the new technology so as not to miss the opportunities that are now available in that
channel. Similarly, Bisong and Andrew-Essien (2010) observed that an interaction could occur between the pre-existing knowledge and the new information and communication technology (ICT) when it is interpreted. Further illustration regarding the propagation of indigenous knowledge was provided by an informant as follows:

Our museum is very busy. A lot of people come here daily and weekly. There is no day that we do not receive students, starting from those in kindergarten and primary schools to students from secondary schools and tertiary institutions. A lot of students from tertiary institutions usually come for research purposes. Many of the students at lower levels are more interested in the museum for recreation. We receive an average of three schools daily. Researchers come here daily for one study or another. (Male IDI, September 2011)

Surprisingly, a lot of studies at primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions does not reflect African reality and are yet to be used for developmental policy formulation. Nwagwu and Iheanetu (2011) observed that policymakers in Nigeria have not been able to adequately access valuable information—theses, dissertations, reports, and abstracts—in research institutes and universities. The Nigerian experience is similar to the situation in several African countries given Were’s (2011) observation that universities that generate most of the research information are still operating on outdated policies of closed access. Many useful publications such as theses, dissertations, and other research reports are under closed access and in manual form.

**African experience of digitisation of indigenous knowledge**
Cases of digitisation of indigenous knowledge have been recorded in several African societies including Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique,
Nigeria and Egypt. With the assistance of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), some cultural traditions of the Massai community of Laikipia, Kenya, were designed for digitisation in 2006 (Wendland and Van-Weelde, 2008). The Kenya case occurred in the light of a WIPO expert mission to the Massai community followed by establishment of a pilot training programme, as part of the WIPO’s creative heritage project aimed at empowering indigenous communities to make informed decisions about documentation of their cultural heritage. Members of the Massai community, with an expert from the National Museum of Kenya, travelled for training at the American Folklife Centre and the Centre for Documentary Studies in the United States. The WIPO then provided necessary materials to promote digitisation of indigenous knowledge management in Kenya; the materials include a basic kit for field equipment, computers and software (Wendland and Van-Weelde, 2008). Based on the WIPO’s training programmes, digital cultural products that could be produced include videos, tapes, digital photography and discs. While images can be converted into digital photography, dances and songs can be converted into videos and discs.

Apart from the Kenyan experience, community mapping projects have been undertaken in southern Africa, particularly in Mozambique where the technologies and methods used by indigenous communities have advanced from basic compass and tape with hand-plotted maps to modem-sophisticated GPS mapping and the use of portable digital assistants (PDAs), digital cameras and GIS software to produce community maps (Hunter, 2005).

A number of organisations have indicated interest in promoting digitisation of indigenous knowledge in South Africa. For instance, Google has offered to digitize all Mandela-related records including an account of his imprisonment for 27 years (Adkins, 2010). Also, the University of Michigan has offered to provide support for effective management of ‘born-digital’ records of proceedings of the
Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Moreover, the South African Apartheid Museum, established in 2001, accommodates several digital records.

**Indigenous perspectives on Natural Resource management**

All the participants expressed their awareness of indigenous approaches to natural resources management and they mentioned a diversity of customary practices such as religion, taboos, mores, and caution in human interaction with the natural environment. Consistent with the views expressed by the participants, the accumulated knowledge from archaeological studies confirms the existence of a wealth of experience from indigenous knowledge in connection with the local infrastructure of natural resources management for socio-economic development of society. An illustration of the indigenous approach to effective management of natural resources was given by Ogundiran (2005: 159) as follows:

Rather than being mere farmers, the stone-tool users of the last two millennia B.C. were hunters and fishers, who practiced strategic foraging as their modern descendants still do, especially in rural hinterlands. They also raised cattle, sheep, and goats wherever the ecology permitted. The immense challenges involved in scheduling and coordinating these multiple food-sourcing activities in unpredictable environmental and climatic conditions testify to the ingenuity of the LSA populations in mastering not only the short- and long-term climatic patterns, but also in developing sophisticated understanding of the water-table levels, the use values of the surrounding fauna and flora, and in devising creative ways of combining sedentarism with mobility in order to cope with the changing environmental conditions. All these must have affected sensibilities about space, land, material property, and knowledge production among LSA communities.
The above excerpts reinforce the Folke, et al (2011) discovery that people and societies are integrated parts of the biosphere. It is noteworthy that societies are interconnected through the earth’s biophysical life-support systems. Human action alters ecosystem support not only locally and regionally but also globally. In a globalized society, there are no ecosystems without people, who depend on ecosystem functioning. They are intertwined and thus, ecosystem services are generated by social–ecological systems. Social–ecological systems are dynamic and connected from the local to the global, in complex webs of interactions subject to gradual and abrupt changes.

But unfortunately, this all-important strategy for natural resources conservation and management based on these religious belief systems and socio-cultural practices have almost been completely eroded away by the acculturation and enculturation of almost all African communities by the coming of Christianity with their western type of education. This Christian way of religion, worship system and education saw nothing good in African traditional religious practices (Eneji et al., 2012: 34)

Closely related to the above is the fact that current perspectives and worldviews mentally disconnect human progress and economic growth from the biosphere, while people and nature are treated as two separate entities. Human actions are often viewed as external drivers of ecosystem dynamics. As a result, many of the serious, recurring problems in natural resource use and environmental management stem precisely from the lack of recognition that ecosystems and the social systems that use and depend on them are inextricably linked.

This situation suggests the need for a shift in perspective in attempts to ensure sustainable protection of the natural environment
and effective management of natural resources. The shift from people and nature as separated parts to interdependent social–ecological systems will provide exciting opportunities for societal development in tune with the biosphere; this is what Folke et al. (2011) called a global sustainability agenda for humanity, reflecting the Stockholm Memorandum signed by Nobel Laureates on May 18, 2011 at the conclusion of the Third Nobel Laureate Symposium on Global Sustainability, held in Stockholm, Sweden. The above-mentioned agenda stipulates that human development and progress must be reconnected to the capacity of the biosphere. Folke et al (2011: 727), however, observed that “the implications of a connected world where the economy and the biosphere are linked in complex ways have not been sufficiently addressed.” In recognition of continuity and change in indigenous socio-cultural practices and their implications for natural resources management, it is necessary to preserve the existing indigenous knowledge in digital forms.

**CONCLUSION**

The present article is based on the need for a digital revolution of African indigenous knowledge and its implications for effective management of natural resources. Without compromising the continued relevance of the traditional interpretation of cultures, digitisation of indigenous knowledge is required for the promotion of natural resources management in African societies. In the light of digitisation of indigenous knowledge, the younger generations of Africans can acquire authentic knowledge of their heritage from the older generations. Otherwise, the future generation may be deprived of the opportunity to acquire authentic knowledge of their pedigree. This situation can be addressed through digitisation aimed at bridging the existing generation gap.

Experience has shown that digitisation of indigenous knowledge is highly complex and that great caution and resources are
required to ensure its effectiveness. Based on the experience of digitisation of indigenous knowledge in several countries, the first steps in indigenous knowledge projects involve identifying the material to be preserved and then capturing it in a digital form so that it can be systematically documented (Hunter, 2005). The pressing problems against digitisation of African indigenous knowledge include inadequate funding, lack of technical know-how, and inadequate infrastructure. Therefore, there is a need to promote an integration of science and society. This can be articulated within existing public private partnerships and town-and-gown interaction. The need for adequate interest on the issue of digitisation of indigenous knowledge for natural resources management cannot be over-emphasised.

Governments and NGOs should primarily exhaust local ideas in proffering solutions to societal problems. Also, due consideration should be given to received knowledge in order to enhance the development of African indigenous knowledge. The question of ownership of indigenous knowledge should be clearly addressed through policies. Moreover, adequate interest in e-knowledge is urgently required in African society, especially in rural communities. Further research is therefore needed in the following areas: rural infrastructure, digital literacy, cyber-community, cybernetics, and alternative approaches to natural resources management.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA: A REVIEW

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KEY TERMS: grassroots, third tier, political system, good governance, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT:
For any responsive and dependable political system, the development of the rural areas must be its major concern. Development will be insignificant in such a political system if the government does not positively affect the life of the people of the grassroots or if development eludes the grassroots dwellers. Therefore, the problem of governance, particularly at the local level, has been in a doldrums in the political history of Nigeria. These problems have been documented and they include corruption and mismanagement, lack of adequate manpower, lack of autonomy, inadequate planning, inadequate revenue, poor implementation of policies, lack of participation by the people and intergovernmental conflict. What this paper will try to do is to focus on these challenges and determine the factors responsible for them and suggest some relevant way forward in order to ameliorate the difficulties. This paper, therefore, concludes strongly that since the problems of local government in Nigeria are copious, adequate and practical solutions are needed. These include: the expansion of democratic space, the entrenchment of democratic culture and the promotion of good governance, transparency and accountability. Without these solutions, rural development of the grassroots will be a mirage.
INTRODUCTION
The importance of the creation of local government anywhere in the world reveals the need to aid development at the grassroots. The establishment of such areas is geared to play vital social, political and economic roles for the overall development of the country. The realization of this important fact coupled with the desire to bring the government nearer to the people (most especially people in the rural areas) has prompted the Federal Government of Nigeria to introduce a number of significant reform measures to local government administration, particularly since 1976. The local government reforms of that year made some fundamental changes in the structure, functions and finances of local government cum useful points of reference for successive governments for subsequent reform programmes that have been introduced in Nigeria. The 1976 reforms clearly defined the power and functions of local government and made them the third tier of government with enhanced prestige and responsibilities. The purpose of the reforms was to bring about the development of the rural areas.

However, the increased responsibilities of local governments in recent times seem not to be adequately matched by their financial resources. This has been manifested in the inability of most—if not all of them—to perform satisfactorily in their new tasks such as the establishment and payment of primary schools, teaching and non-teaching staff, provision of primary health care, and building of roads. It is now 36 years since its promulgation. As important as this tier of government has been, there seem to be some hurdles that have tamed its performance and functions in recent times. These problems involve the undue interference of federal and state governments (which is political in nature), bribery and corruption, and ill-trained and unqualified personnel to mention a few.
THE CONCEPT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Conceptualizing local government, like others in the social sciences, is not easy; it is difficult to have a universally acceptable definition for this concept in developing and developed countries of the world. Consequently, Ovwasa (1995) has opined that the meaning attached to local government varies from country to country and, more frequently, it has become the purpose for which local government is created. However, the concept of local government involves a philosophical commitment to democratic participation in the governing process at the grassroots level. This implies legal and administrative decentralization of authority, power and personnel by a higher level of government to a community with a will of its own, performing specific functions as within the wider national framework. A local government is, at the grassroots level of administration, meant for meeting the peculiar needs of the people (Agagu, 1997:18). Appadorai (1975:287) sees local government as government by the popularly elected bodies charged with administrative and executive duties in matters concerning the inhabitants of a particular district or place.

Local or grassroots government may be defined as having been established by law to perform specific functions within defined areas. A complex nation like Nigeria, with its many ethnic groups within a divergent and diverse culture, requires a high degree of decentralization, which they accomplish by creating local government authorities. Looking at the existence and relevance of local government, Ayo (2005) believes that local government is a territorial non-sovereign community possessing the right level of necessary organization to regulate its own affairs. Local government can be viewed as a legal personality with sufficient but limited powers of control over its staff, finances and funds (Amao, 2002).

Arising from our observation above, many definitions of local government have been suggested by different authors. As Ovwasa
(2004) analyzed elsewhere, local government has been defined as a subdivision of a nation (unitary country) and state (federal system) which has substantial authority to extract labour and impose tax over its jurisdiction. The council of such local government is constituted by law, and membership is either elected or selected. Ovwasa summarized the definitions of local government with the following observations:

i. Local government is created by law
ii. It has a representative government
iii. It is a lower level of government and it has a legal personality with the power to impose taxes in its areas of jurisdiction or competence, but with limited autonomy.

Local governments, at least in principle, deal with grassroots politics, i.e. keeping law and order, basic sanitation, constructing and maintaining local roads, supplying water, administering local schools, providing skill training and employment for residents, et cetera. However, community development is the process or effort of building communities on a local level with emphasis on building the economy, forging and strengthening social ties, and developing the non-profit sector. These are aimed at improving the quality of life of the people in the community. Are local government administrators in Nigeria performing their functions? If not, what are the obstacles? Before we delve into the problems of local government, let us attempt to look at its evolution in order to foster our understanding of the salient issues being raised in this paper.

**EVOLUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS IN NIGERIA**

The history of local government systems in Nigeria dates back to colonial days. The name, structure and composition have experienced different changes over the years. During the 1930s and 1940s, for
instance, local government was known as chief-in-council and chief-and-council, where traditional rulers were given pride of place in the scheme of things. In the 1950s, elections were introduced according to the British model in the western and eastern parts of the country with some measure of autonomy in personnel, financial and general administration (Nwabueze, 1982:20-21). It was on this premise that the rising tide of progress, growth and development experienced in the local governments in these areas was based. The pace of this development was more noticeable in the south than in the north.

During this period, heterogeneity was the hallmark of local government as there was no uniformity in the system and the level of development was also remarkably different. The introduction of the 1976 reforms by the military administration of General Obasanjo brought about uniformity in the administrative structure of the system. The reforms introduced a multi-purpose single-tier local government system (Ajayi, 2000:70). Efficient systems of native administration had existed in the various parts of Nigeria before the coming of the Europeans (Olatunbosun 1998). This was particularly the case in the northern and western parts of Nigeria, where the existing systems of traditional administration provided the colonial authorities with a much-needed workable basis for introducing the indirect rule system of governance, first in the Northern Protectorate and later in the Southern Protectorate.

Between 1900 and 1950, the Nigerian colonial authorities consisted mainly of traditional office holders whose main functions, according to Kareem (2005), were to maintain law and order and generally act as agents for the colonial government by providing certain basic services in their respective localities. With the pressure generated by the nationalist struggle for democratization and self-rule that emerged in the 1950s, more modern local government councils with elected members increased responsibilities and enhanced financial status. However, the local government councils suffered a
decline in status in the 1960s and early 1970s due to their inability to perform their functions up to expectation. Since 1976, however, a number of reforms have been introduced at the national level with the objective of transforming a local government into a separate tier, with clearly defined and enhanced responsibility, improved financial status and more development-oriented and viable structural rearrangements.

The beginning of the democratization of local government administration with the introduction of non-traditional elected or selected members can be traced back to the 1950s. The elected members constituted about seventy-five percent of the council membership. However, according to William (1994), the military government dissolved all the elected members in 1966 and their functions were taken over by councilors, some nominated by the respective military governors and some by traditional rulers. By 1975, the number of local government authorities in eight states (excluding the four states in the east and mid-west) was 113 and later increased to 301; in 1988 it rose to 442. Due to more agitation, it increased to 454 in 1989 and then 589 in 1991. Following the state creation in 1996, local government is presently 774 including the FCT. (Kareem 2005). No public institution in Nigeria has been so subjected to frequent reforms than local government. Almost all successive administrations in Nigeria introduce one administrative change or another. Apart from the celebrated 1976 reforms, state government officials have also introduced various manipulations. For instance, in Ekiti state, the tenure of elected local government officials was reduced to two years, while some three years. In the southwest, except for Lagos, a caretaker committee was introduced in 2003 immediately after the general elections. In a similar vein in June 2007, some state governments dissolved their local councils and appointed caretaker committees to steer the affairs of the council prior to the conduct of elections. In July 2011, the Kogi State government dissolved the elected local government chairmen and directed all the DLGs to take over the
affairs. In essence, it has become almost fashionable in Nigeria for an incumbent administration to introduce one change or another in the institution. So far the local government system in Nigeria has not been stable and thus its future remains bleak, uncertain and insecure.

What are the reasons for the creation of local government in Nigeria?
Many reasons, ranging from the political to the socio-economic, have been given for the creation of local government. These reasons have been captured by section 7(2) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended) by the following words:

The person authorized by law to prescribe the area over which a local government council may exercise authority shall:

(1) Define such an area as clearly as practicable

(2) Ensure, to the extent to which it may be reasonably justifiable, that, in defining such areas, attention is paid to:

- the common interest of the community in the area
- the traditional association of the community, and
- its administrative convenience.

In summary, the following are the purposes for the creation of local governments:

1. Grassroots participation in governance
One of the major reasons for the creation of local government in Nigeria is to bring governance closer to the people. Participation by the citizens-in-governance is one of the underlying precepts of democracy and the modern notion of government. This is done through
participation in the electoral processes and decision-making in the local communities. For this reason, local governments also serve as political incubators for budding politicians. They afford future leaders the opportunity to undergo political training (See section 7 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999).

2. Administrative convenience
Local governments are created for administrative practicality and suitability. There are many functions that will be cumbersome for the State and Federal Governments to perform because of the distance separating them and the people. Such functions can be best and effectively performed by the local government, e.g. collection of rates, radio and television licenses, and the registration of births, deaths and marriages. Local government is also created to serve as the presence of the federal and state governments amongst the local people and as a channel through which policies are communicated and implemented.

3. To provoke development
Local governments are created to bring about meaningful development in the rural areas. As agents of rural development, they are to use the funds made available to them by both federal and state governments and their internally generated revenue to improve on the lives of the people within their areas of operation through the following economic development in line with section 7(3&4) of the Constitution:

a. Initiating and attracting developmental projects to the local government such as provision of access roads, water and rural electricity;
b. Sustaining livelihoods through the provision of credit facilities for agriculture, arts, crafts and small scale business; and

c. Encouraging the formations of cooperative societies and other economic groupings.

4. Preserve the heritage and common interest of the people
The creation of Local Government is intended to bring people of common heritage or ancestry together as a political unit to further their interest and increase their participation in government business. In Nigeria today, there are over 250 ethnic groups with diverse cultures and tongues. These ethnic groups are further divided into communities. These communities form the constituents of most Local Governments in Nigeria. By carving out Local Governments amongst people of the same community, government is preserving such long 'traditional association' and using same to foster the interest of the people concerned.

The Hurdles of Local Government in Nigeria
As we have rightly noted, the problems of local government in Nigeria have been documented. These include inadequate planning, poor implementation of policies, inadequate revenue, corruption and mismanagement, lack of adequate manpower, lack of autonomy, lack of participation by the people and intergovernmental conflict (Adamolekun, 1983; Orewa, 1991). The history of local government in Nigeria shows that there are problems of governance. Various efforts have been made by government to reform the system and increase participation of the people. Despite these justifications, the third tier of government appears not to have justified the reasons for which it was established; instead, it has been in the doldrums. Why has local government failed in its expectations? How can these problems be
addressed and solved? These concerns will be addressed in the remaining part of this paper.

**Financial Constraints**
As much as the local governments may have rich programmes for execution, the financial means of doing so is not present. Revenue is by far lower than what is required in many cases. The economic and financial profile of the local governments in Nigeria is very poor compared to the developmental projects they are expected to carry out, despite the increase in the total amount of funds made to them since the early 1990s. Here, the situation is connected to and exacerbated by a high rate of mismanagement and the embezzlement of these funds. The corrupt officials of these councils divert money meant for some projects to their personal purses.

**Shortage of Skilled Workers/Personnel**
Inadequacy of trained and skilled administrative, technical and professional personnel renders local governments in Nigeria, with the exception for some few in the southern states, ineffective and inefficient in the performance of their constitutional rights. Reasons opined for this include the low image of local government in the mind of the professionals; questionable, subjective and sentimental manners of recruitment cum low or no incentive; and the threats and fear of retrenchment to junior workers, which has derailed their psychological balance and affected their efficiency and output.

**Lack of Autonomy**
Unnecessary political interference from state and federal governments is another constraint plaguing local government authorities in Nigeria. There is a high level of external influence and intrusion in local affairs by other tiers of government, which is worrisome and needs urgent attention. The future of local government is not guaranteed in a situation whereby the state governor
unconstitutionally dissolves the elected council officer without any probe or investigations into false and bogus allegations. As a result, this level of government has a crisis of recognition and autonomy. The question here is: Is local government truly the third tier of government, or a ministry under its respective state government? In a true sense, local government in Nigeria lacks autonomous financial power. It is now considered as an extension of the state's ministry. The inherent nature of this problem has caused subservience, a situation where local government waits for the next directives from the state government before the former can think of, let alone embark on, developmental projects. Thus local government has been an object of control and directives. As a result, square pegs are put into round holes in appointments to posts, which are mainly based on political party patronage.

**Laissez-Faire Attitude to Work and Wide-Range of Indiscipline**

That the third tier of government has been tagged the home of indiscipline is well pronounced among the workers. Little or no commitment to duty has become the rule rather than an exception; this includes senior officers. Some may travel over the weekend and not bother to return to work until Tuesday the following week, and the junior ones are very carefree in the habit of truancy regarding their jobs. Offices have been turned to marketplaces where officers hawk their goods freely. The rules that guide moral conduct and professional ethics seem to have been on sabbatical and at worst become a cobweb that is too weak to tame the monstrous activities of the workers. Indiscriminate lustful desires are noticeable among the workers. Relationships between super-ordinates and subordinates have been strained. Strict instructions handed down from the top echelon to the bottom are either not followed or treated with levity as a result of the immoral relationship between the boss and subordinates. Official duties are seen as an extension of private leisure. A laissez-faire attitude at work has arrested the efficiency of local government and has drastically affected its performance.
Lack of Continuity by Succeeding Governments

One of the problems facing local governments nationwide is the lack of continuity of government programmes and projects by succeeding governments. This disruption leads to economic and mental waste as well as the retrogression of development. Projects are done not according to or as demanded by the people but, regrettably, in tune with the selfish ends and aggrandizement of the political leadership in collaboration with the senior bureaucrats at the local government level of administration. Priorities are being misplaced.

Problems of Participation and Involvement

For over ten years, different terminologies have been used to justify people's participation at the grassroots level: "development from below," "bottom-up approach to development," "popular participation," “bringing government closer to the people,” and other catchphrases have been used to argue for people's involvement in the affairs that directly affect them (Lawal, 2000:66). From all manner of convictions, we can observe that the involvement of people in the affairs and running of local government in Nigeria is nonfigurative and theoretical rather than active and practical. Local government prepares estimates for its revenues and expenditures without properly consulting the people’s potential needs and problems. Different arguments have been put forward as to the responsibility for non-involvement of people in their own affairs. These include: loss of interest in the projects that do not benefit the chairmen and their cohorts; the belief by the officials that people are ignorant, illiterate and unenlightened; and the lack of political will by the leadership to run an open administration due to their selfish interests coupled with the poverty of socio-political philosophy for change.
Prospects and a Way Forward

In order to consolidate the gains made in local governance over the years and to reposition it for greater performance, there is a need to suggest a way forward and evaluate prospects. Unfortunately, local governments have demonstrated incompetence despite the basic rationale behind their creation: to meet the needs of the people at the grassroots. It is therefore desirable to suggest ways through which local governments can come out from this indolence and doldrum.

First, local government, as a third-tier government, should not be scrapped or changed to local administration; it should be strengthened and democratized instead. Officials of the local government should always be elected and not appointed.

Second, there is the need to put a mechanism in place to promote transparency and accountability at all levels of governance. Statutory allocation of local government councils should be reviewed upward and inward, for the improvement of Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) and for self-financial reliance. In addition, prompt release of allocations from federation accounts should be looked into to avoid delay in executing council developmental projects. Local councils are also advised to look for ways of attracting industries to their areas which will propel economic development, employment and increase their revenue base. In this regard, it will be crucial to strengthen institutions’ horizontal accountability and anti-corruption bodies in order to build up the economic and revenue base of the councils. Civil society organizations, particularly at the local level, should be reoriented and empowered to hold elected officials accountable.

Third, there is a great need to reform the structure of government at all levels. This will require a comprehensive review of the 1999 Constitution. For example, Section 7 of the 1999 Constitution that places local government under state government has made the
former a mere appendage of the latter. Executive and legislative bodies should display the political will and commitment to reform the 1999 Constitution, which has been criticized by all strands of society. The reform of the Constitution will address other issues that are germane to good governance, such as party financing, campaign financing, and a proper electoral system.

Fourth, local government should have total autonomy. This will allow and guarantee its survival and provide it with remedies for the problems highlighted above. There are good prospects for Nigerian local government systems. These include: convenient grassroots governance; quick execution of projects without the bottlenecks often encountered in getting approval from the state; provision of essential services to the public by the local government councils; and awareness of the community’s responsiveness and participation. By and large, there will be no bureaucracy with regards to the release of funds for social services.

Fifth, government should place a high premium on the participation of the people in all governance and development issues. Workers in local councils should be adequately motivated in order to prepare them for the task of service delivery. Workers occupy important positions in the production process in any organization. They are the ones that make things happen because they put life into raw materials and change its form to satisfy human needs.

Finally, the electorate should be educated and enlightened of the danger inherent in money politics. They should endeavour to vote for people of proven integrity rather than compromising their future and that of generations unborn. It is the belief of this paper that strict observance to these suggestions can lift local councils from their relegated position as tools of manipulation to the status of instruments of change and development at the grassroots level.
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HUMAN RIGHTS IN A MULTICULTURALIST WORLD: THE MYTH AND REALITY IN CONTINENTAL AFRICA AND AFRO-DIASPORA

DR. OLADELE ABIODUN BALOGUN & ADEMOLA KAZEEM FAYEMI

ABSTRACT:
The question of the universalism of human rights and its particular tendencies in a multicultural Age is now gaining currency in contemporary philosophical discourse. This paper is an attempt to contribute to the debate on the universalism and particularism of the values of human rights within the African Diaspora and continental Africa. In pursuit of a synthesis between these two perspectives, this paper raises anew the question of the distinction between the nature of man and the nature of a person, between alienable and inalienable rights, between cultural universals, relativism, and moral relativism. The paradoxes and insights from the conceptual and critical appraisal of these dialectical concepts inform this paper’s thesis that multiculturalism is compatible with the universalism of human rights. While basing the discourse within the purview of the hermeneutic-reconstructionist model in African jurisprudence, this paper establishes through extant texts in Ifa corpus that there are some ideas and principles of jurisprudence in Ifa that show the paradox of the dichotomy between universalism and multiculturalism of human rights. Further, this paper argues that the supposed parallels between the two perspectives become insignificant because human rights in both senses are geared towards the same goals: respect for culture, human values and dignity, tolerance of ideas and beliefs, promotion of peace and human development. It argues further that while this symmetrical ideal is more of a myth than reality in the legal systems of continental Africa and the African Diaspora, it is only in the context of unhindered commitment to multiculturalists’ human rights that human development can be sustained and the capacities of the citizenry most optimized. The paper concludes with an exploration of
the implications and imperatives of this resulting synthesis for the quest for development in continental and Diasporic Africa.

INTRODUCTION
The question of what constitutes the nature of human rights has unabatedly continued to generate controversies in contemporary jurisprudential discourse. Two orientations can be identified. On one hand is the Western liberal tradition, which constitutes the bulk of contemporary discourse (and activism) on human rights. This tradition holds that human rights are, by nature, of universal concern and, as a matter of fact, an expression of rights, which man enjoys and shares with his fellow men regardless of race, culture, colour, age, sex and creed. On the other hand are those who view the liberal tradition as representing a fragmentary discourse on human rights. In this orientation—call it the multiculturalist tradition—the universalist claim of the liberal tradition on the nature of human rights is challenged. The emergence of different Regional Charters on human rights has further provided the impetus for the raging debate in international human rights circles on the universal or relativistic nature of human rights.

In this paper, an attempt is made to investigate the controversy over the universality of human rights and its possibilities, contradictions and constraints in a multicultural world. The pertinent questions addressed in this paper are: Is it logically correct and consistent to accept the universal declaration of human rights as universally valid and binding over and above other cultural specific rights? Are there recognition, respect and observance of culturally specific rights in continental Africa\(^1\) and Afro-Diaspora\(^2\)? What is the

\(^1\) The term continental Africa is a geographical space connoting the mapped territory of any person or community within Africa.
myth and reality of human rights in the lived experiences of Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora? “How can universal human rights be legitimized in radically different societies without succumbing to either homogenizing universalism or the paralysis... of relativism?” (Cook 1994: 6)

The answers given to the above fundamental questions foreshadow some implications for other pertinent issues on human rights in the contemporary political landscape. Understanding such issues as the scope of human rights, the wanton abuses of human rights, mechanisms for human rights enforcement, democracy and human rights protection, and human rights activism is possible only if what truly constitutes the nature of human rights is properly grasped.

This paper is an attempt to contribute to the above debate on human rights discourse by attempting a philosophical exposition of the jurisprudential relevance of Ifa to the resolution of the controversy regarding the dichotomy between the universalist and the relativist nature of human rights. A proper starting point of this discussion is to first attempt a conceptual clarification of human rights.

**Human rights defined**

Human rights may be defined as those rights which all men enjoy simply by virtue of their humanity, the deprivation of which would constitute a grave affront to man’s natural sense of justice. In this context, rights mean something that can be demanded and insisted upon without embarrassment or shame. These rights can be seen in two senses: legal rights and moral rights. Rights in the legal sense denotes a benefit validly conferred by law, while in the moral sense

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2 By Afro-Doaspora, we mean the geographical location of people of African origin living outside the continent of Africa, whether or not with self-identifying ties to the continent.
rights are assertions of notions of wrongness and rightness without any backing of the legal and judicial system.

Given the above clarification, Osita Eze (2001:15) defines human rights as “demands or claims which individual[s] or groups make on society, some of which are protected by law and have become part of lex lata, while others remain aspirations to be attained in the future. These are claims which, according to U.O. Umozurike (2001: 38), are invariably supported by ethics and should be supported by laws made on society, especially its official managers, and by individuals or groups on the basis of their humanity. It follows from these descriptive conceptions that human rights may be violated, may not be legalized, may not be enforced immediately, or be unenforceable.

The claims of human rights incorporate such ideals as liberty, power, expectations and advantages, which the individual seeks to enjoy from the society by virtue of being human. Human rights are historically derived from a society’s structural needs and, more essentially, from man’s intrinsic (as well as extrinsic) needs, his powers, his powerlessness and the requirements for his self-fulfillment (Oyugi, 1989: 50). It must be quickly added that these rights are conceived as inherent or intrinsic in individuals as rational free-willed creatures, not conferred by some positive laws nor abrogated by positive laws (Obaseki, 1992: 17). They are not claims based on parochial interests. Rather, they are inherent and inderogable with a universal application. They are universal because all races, tribes and sexes, enjoy them and apply to all persons without discrimination, regardless of individual status.

In other words, human rights are derived from the fact of universal humanity, which man enjoys and shares with his fellow men, and as such, they should be granted and guaranteed to everyone. They are fundamental in that they are basic and are attached to his being born or created without necessarily contributing
anything to the society into which he enters. These fundamental rights are innate to man’s creation and are, as such, imprescriptible and inalienable (Eze, 1984: 3). Human rights, when recognized, respected and protected, enable man to fully develop and use all qualities such as intelligence, talent and conscience to satisfy both spiritual and mundane needs. In fact, human rights protect the dignity of every man.

Having established its meaning, we need mention here that human rights have risen *ex nihilo*. However, we shall not embark on a detailed discussion of the evolution of the concept of human rights, as we know it today.3

The important point we need bear in mind is that the promotion and protection of human rights are accorded high importance in international law, the UN Charter, the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the various UN covenants on Human Rights and other Regional Charters on Human Rights. These regional

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3 It suffices to say that the jurisprudential evolution of the concept can be traced from Sophocles, who lived during the pre-Socratic period in Athens, to the period when natural law theory started gaining prominence, down to the postulates of natural rights theorists such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Baron De Monstesquieu, J.J. Rousseau, and among others. The various ideological expressions of these natural rights theorists paved way to the British Bill of rights in 1688, the French Revolution of 1789, and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen into the American Constitution and the subsequent dissemination as the Bill of Rights in 1791. The ratification and adoption of human rights by the United Nations in 1948 resulted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A modern interpretation of the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights was made in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and adopted in 1993. For a detailed discussion on the historical evolution of human rights, see F.C.Eneumo, “Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law”, Remi A. Francis (ed.), Elements of Politics, (Ikeja: Malthouse Press, 1999).
charters and organizations governing human rights include the European Commission of Human Rights, the African Commission of Human and People’s Rights, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, among others.

All these documents state, in one way or another, the basic ingredients of human rights. They are generally grouped as first generation rights, second generation rights, third generation rights and fourth generation rights.⁴

⁴ Caution needs be exercised here, as this grouping should not be taken as rigid for they are closely related. The first generation consists of civil and political rights and they are libertarian in character. They include: the right to self-determination, the right to life, freedom from torture and inhuman or civil treatment, freedom from slavery and forced labour, the right to liberty and security, freedom of movement and choice of residence, right to fair trial, right to privacy, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, right of assembly, freedom of association, the right to marry and found a family, the right to participate in one’s government either directly or through freely elected representatives, and the right to nationality and equality before the law. All the rights in the first category are given prominence under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The second generation of rights is economic, social and cultural rights that require affirmative action of governments for their implementation. These rights incorporate the right to work, the right to just conditions of work, the right to fair remuneration, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to organize, form and join trade unions, the right to collective bargaining, the right to equal pay for equal work, the right to social security, the right to own property, the right to education, the right to participate in cultural life, the right to enjoy the benefit of scientific progress and right to enjoy the benefits of one’s own creative activity. All these latter category of rights are the subjects of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The third generation of rights encompasses “solidarity rights” and can be said to be more developed and sophisticated than its predecessors. This third generation of solidarity rights includes the “right to development, the right to peace, the right to a safe
The Myth and Reality of Human Rights in Continental Africa and Afro-Diaspora

Human rights, as earlier clarified, are claims that all beings are entitled to make and demand simply by virtue of their status as human beings. All the above stated basic tenets of human rights should be protected by the law as stipulated in the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. However, some of these basic human rights only have an internally recognized legal basis without total recognition and observance in all states’ municipal legal systems. Their international legal character lies in the fact that the International Conventions in which they are embodied are regarded under international law as legal instruments and precepts. But the juristic bases of a right within a municipal legal system are the recognition and protection accorded the right by that state’s legal system.

The problem associated with the enforcement of certain human rights in continental Africa and the Afro-Diaspora is that not all human rights reflected in treaty provisions are incorporated and accorded due recognition in the constitutions and legal systems of states. Many states have failed in fulfilling their duty of re-enacting the human rights provisions of International Conventions, which they have signed. In many cases, those that are even recognized and domesticated in the national constitution face the problem of enforcement and loyalty to the said rights. Any focus on human rights in many African states as well as in the Afro-Diaspora is largely on environment, the right to ownership of the common heritage of mankind, and the right to communication.” The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) detailed the fourth generation rights, which are about women’s rights. For details, see: Nsongurua J. Udombana, Human Rights and Contemporary Issues in Africa (Lagos: Malthouse press ltd., 2003).
the first generation of rights (that is, on political and civil rights). An emphasis on second generation rights (economic, social and cultural rights), third and fourth generation rights (solidarity rights and women’s rights, respectively) is more of a rhetorical myth than lived reality in continental Africa and Afro-Diaspora.

History is replete with countless records of gross violations of citizens’ fundamental human rights (across generations) by the state in these parts of the world. For instance, in spite of the democratic deluge in Africa today, human rights remain precarious as there is wanton violation of socio-economic, cultural, political, and women’s rights in many African states.

Certain obstacles and perhaps circumstances make the realization, protection, and enforcement of fundamental human rights impossible in general and in Africa cum the Afro-Diaspora in particular: war, psychiatric abnormalities, anachronistic traditions of human sacrifices and human indignity, totalitarian military government, utopian socialism, structural ineptitudes of judicial institutions and ignorance, amongst others. In times of war, human rights are thrown into oblivion. Where there is a natural disaster such as a landslide, the respect for human rights and their enforcement becomes difficult. We can also not rule out the influence of nature and nurture in a consideration of the obstacles facing the promotion of human dignity through the protection of human rights. With regard to nature, some people by biological constitution appear to be servile and feel no remorse for being treated unequally. Under irrational conditions, a person may have his or her human rights eroded. At the level of nurture, education and society are important factors. One’s level of education could be a constitutive force in the demand for or repression of rights. At the level of society, some conditions may affect one’s level of freedom, such as childhood experiences, type of upbringing and one’s level of consciousness. Anybody who takes another person’s life unjustifiably or acquires wealth/property
through an improper means can have his/her human rights, such as
the right to life or the right to property eroded away. Traditional
practices of human sacrifice in appeasement of the gods and other
anachronistic beliefs (such as in genital mutilations), religious
fundamentalism and enlightenment ignorance, and their negative
effects on human rights are still not uncommon occurrences in some
parts of Africa.

In addition to the above-identified constraints to the
realization of human rights ideals in continental Africa and the Afro-
Diaspora, the bulk of human rights abuses are caused by political
leaders and machineries of government. It is an irony that
government, which ought to be the prime protector of human rights,
is the prime abuser of human rights. In this sense, government and its
machineries are major constraints on the realization of the ideals of
human rights by intentionally stumbling on people’s human rights in
order to satisfy and further their egoistic, oppressive and recalcitrant
attitude. This private transgression is more noticeable in autocratic
regimes where gross violations of fundamental human rights are
committed with impunity. History is witness to the severe human
rights abuses experienced in Uganda under Idi-Amin (1971-1979),
Central Africa under Bokassa (1966-1979), Equatorial Guinea under
Nguema (1968-1979), and Nigeria under Abacha (1993-1998)
(Ogungbemi, 2007: 52). Worst off are the cases of human rights abuses
in Liberia, Kenya, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi and Somalia. The
quantum number of refugees that human rights abuses in these states
have created is incalculable.

The justice system operating in a given political state can be a
militating factor in the realization of human rights ideals. Where the
justice system is itself punitive, like the Nigerian example, nothing
better can be expected than a crass violation of people’s rights and
freedom. Defending and guaranteeing human rights presupposes the
creation of basic political, economic and social conditions. One of the
key conditions for a sustainable democracy with human rights in Africa is the establishment of efficient democratic institutions and the delivery of democratic dividends in various key sectors of the state. But the contrary is the case in continental Africa and the Afro-Diaspora.

In addition, the consumerist quest for materialism in the contemporary world has led to exploitation between individuals and institutions and individuals, as well as the imperialistic dimension of exploitation through the body of NGO’s and other international donor agencies.

One important constraint in the realization of human rights ideals in continental Africa and which also affects the Afro-Diaspora world is the largely contradictory nature of the constitutions of many states. Because of such contradictions in articles and sections of the constitutions as well as vague interpretations of relevant sections that border on human rights, violations of human rights are usually taken for granted with the end excused of constitutional lapses and ambiguities.

Some further constraints that affect the chances of human rights to have success in continental Africa and Afro-Diaspora are worth considering. Arguably, most African states and peoples remain aloof regarding the human rights principles in the African charter. This reserve can be explained by certain ideological presuppositions, social structure, historical factors and specific views of man as a communal being. The idea that a human being can only attain his or her value within the ethnic group, which exists in many traditional societies, is contrary to the philosophical foundations of human rights within the Western tradition, in which the foundations of law are laid in the human being as such, presupposing a universal idea of the human being (Scholze, 1992: 60). In particular, the human rights conceived during the period of ‘African Socialism’ ignored the
fundamental value of individuality in the idea of human rights, in the name of elite power-politics. This ambition, to produce a special ‘socialist conception of human right’, has contributed to neglecting the rights of individuals and the idea of human autonomy. In this socialist conception of rights, the state is to protect, develop and limit human rights.

Also important is the factor of political changes taking place in Africa. Previously customary political means, such as high-handedness or restrictions on democratic procedures in the name of socialism, have been discredited now (Scholze, 1992: 59). But because of the excessive gratification of the people in terms of their new experiences in the civil regimes, when compared with the extreme violations of human rights in the immediately past autocratic regimes, the majority of the people feel contented with the new situation. As much as the delivery of democratic dividends in the new civil dispensations still leaves much to be desired, human rights have better a chance of success in continental Africa and the Afro-Diaspora if there are more copious democratic dividends that directly improve the welfare of the citizenry.

There are other tensions that serve as obstacles to the realization of human rights in continental Africa and the Afro-Diaspora. As reported in the year 2000 Human Development Report (30), such tensions are those “between national sovereignty and the international community’s monitoring of human rights within countries; between the indivisibility of human rights and the need to establish priorities because of resource constraints; between the supremacy of international laws and that of national laws; between international norms and the norms set by regional human rights systems; between ratifying international treaties and enforcing them nationally”; and between universalism and particularism of human rights in a multicultural world.
The last of these tensions that stifles the smooth realization of the ideals of human rights is worthy of further remarks.

**Universalism, relativism and multiculturalism**

Universalism is the view that a thing, idea, concept, institution or practice validly transcends all cultural boundaries and holds true in all human societies. Universalism includes some presuppositions. Henk Procee underscores these in his comment that:

Universalism has unity at its centre: there is one reality, one method to acquire knowledge of this reality, and one sound system of moral judgment. In all the apparent variety it tries to find a basis which can function as a guideline for human existence and judgment (Procee, 1992: 48).

In opposition to universalism, relativism puts variety in the centre. In Procee’s (1992: 47) account:

Relativism implies that every historical epoch and every culture has the equal right to present its perspective on the world. In principle, they all have the same value. There are no standards independent of culture that proves that some perspectives are better than others.
From the above, relativism refers to the doctrine that time, place, individual and cultural diversities should be distinctively recognized as parameters for the institutional organization of human societies, validity of ideas, values and knowledge (Fayemi, 2009: 240). It implies the idea that each culture or ethnic group is to be evaluated on the basis of its own values and norms of behavior and not on the basis of those of another culture or ethnic group (Rosaldo, 1994: 4).

Cultural relativism does not imply that there is no system of moral values to guide human conduct. Nor does it advocate individual or ethical relativism. Rather, it suggests that every society has its own moral code to guide members of that society, but that these values are of worth to those who live by them, though they may differ from our own (Herskovits, 1973:31). There is usually a conceptual failure in realizing that the principle of cultural relativism only has relevance across cultures and not within one culture. It is a cross-cultural principle and not an intra-cultural one. Failure to recognize that cultural relativism is a cross-cultural principle, leads ethicists to envisage an intra-cultural relativism, where the validity of any one society having any moral standards is denied, resulting in moral chaos and ethical anarchy (Herskovits, 1973:64).

Cultural relativism, however, raises a problem for itself; it tends to view reality exclusively from its own narrow perspective. Bidney (1959) is right in his position that “as against the uncritical assumption of cultural relativism that culture is the primary determinant of human experience and that all reality as known is cultural reality,” it is important to realize “that culture is but one of the conditions of human experience” (Bidney, 1959: 55).

Because of the above shortcoming of relativism we may consider the basics of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism refers to the doctrine that cultural diversity should be recognized as a permanent and valuable part of the institutional organization of human societies
Cultural relativism is implied in multiculturalism. Within multicultural relativism, there are many realities which have diverse value orientations and moral systems. In view of this, we can be tolerant of all perspectives. Relativism dissolves into multiculturalism at the point of appreciating and promoting the realities, values and knowledge systems of different cultures within a society.

Notwithstanding the polarity between universalism and relativism, some inferences can still be drawn about the common areas of both. They share the same metaphysics. That is, they have the same preoccupation with stable fundamentals for interpreting the world. They have at their centers the quest for stable entities, which can function as the last resort for knowledge and morality (Procee, 1992:50). Where entities are understood as world-wide in universalism, they are taken to be culturally specific in relativism. At the level of multiculturalism, the specific differences between cultures and people are not seen as a goal, but as a starting point for dialogic interactions and about which new insights and ideas can be gainfully shared.

The dichotomy between universalism and relativism on the human rights question

When used in the discourse on human rights, universalism means the universal status of the claims of human rights as affirmed in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The preamble of the Declaration indicates that there is a common understanding of these rights and a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.

The idea of the universality of human rights is rooted in the European tradition. It is seen as a Western idea, which is being imposed upon other countries. The West has employed universalism...
in its efforts to justify its colonization and domination of the world. Ideally, universalism ought to have been an objective concept, but the reality which stares us in the face is that universalism has been undermined and intermixed with interest and power. The pretensions over universalism are seen under the critical lens of relativism as attempts to suppress specific forms of life. The reluctance of many African countries to accept European human rights standards is quite logical, in view of the fact that the former colonial powers have always refrained from applying human rights standards which were part of their own constitutions, to African people. In that way, the European powers denied the universality of human rights that they now so fervently proclaim (Scholze, 1992: 57). It is not at all certain that the claim to the universality of human rights, which is connected to the idea of innate or undeniable rights of human beings in ‘One World’, can be maintained in the face of cultural relativism and pluralism in this world (Erma Cora, 1983: 34).

Multiculturalism in human rights, however, states that the standards, and even the essence and forms of human rights, vary according to the culture and the background of the people concerned. It is claimed that cultural relativism exists, that culture among other things defines our background, who we are and what we are, and is thus the primary source of our identity (Oduwole, 2006: 60). To talk about universality is to neglect cultural identity, which is equally important in a discourse regarding human rights.

All human societies, irrespective of their level of sophistication or civilization, have some clear formulations of what constitutes human beings. In many instances, these formulations are communicated in the form of creation stories or accounts of the descent of humans from primordial times. These accounts show their understanding of the nature, meaning, goals, life, death, and the ultimate reality of humanity (Bewaji, 2006: 50). These diverse ideas on man’s nature from various cultural backgrounds around the world
were brought together on December 10, 1948, for the purpose of formal endorsement as a set of minimum rights to which humans are entitled, regardless of where they live in the world. This Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR] is often hailed as a document which has demonstrated a consensus on the fundamental values of human rights across the world’s racial and cultural frontiers. The document, accordingly, refers to “everyone,” all persons having various rights; that ‘no one’ shall be deprived of his rights, etc.

Article 3 of this Declaration emphasizes the need for the promotion of a ‘universal’ respect for and observance of human rights for ‘all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. The idea behind a universal conception of human rights is that it does not admit of limitations or derogation based on cultural factors. Such an admission of pluralistic input would amount to reducing the efficacy of the tenets of human rights. In more forceful terms, Paragraph 5 of the Declaration of The World Conference on Human Rights, 1993, further states that:

All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated. The international community must treat rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and regionally with the same emphasis.

The above line of argument anchors on the fact that, by definition, human right’, means the entire humanity. Even though human rights may have emerged from European history through the teachings of the philosophers of the Age of Enlightenment, those philosophers merely defined an instinct and built an ideology around it (Wiredu, 1995: 68). They did not invent the human drive
for freedom. Consequently, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are universal aspirations.

Protagonists of a Universalist approach to human rights further assert that the reproduction in various regional human rights instruments of major aspects of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is evidence that its interpretation does not differ even at these levels. For example, The African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, it is argued, even deferred to universalism when it stipulated that one of its objectives is to “promote international co-operation having due regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Right…..” (Bewaji, 2006: 50). A growing trend that may also be said to evince a universal conception of human rights is the increasing co-operation of international community. Nongovernmental organizations [NGOS] in the field of human rights, non-Africa NGOs, such as the International Commission of Jurists [ICJ], Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, commonly participate in and sponsor programmes of regional human rights organization and governments.

Also, the issue of an increasing number of universal problems besetting humanity is yet another justification offered for a Universalist approach to human rights. Such universal problems include challenges to human rights arising from technological advances in data processing, communication, genetics, space exploration, the environment and HIV/AIDS (Sidorsky, 1979: 88). Resolving these problems necessarily dictates co-operation and common perspectives.

Having established the universality of human rights on the foundational basis of multiculturalism in 1948, some problems started emerging. Noticeable on the front burner is the failure of the states which were parties to the treaty to fully incorporate the terms and clause in the Universal Declaration into their domestic constitutions,
in order to legalize them. The reason for this can be partly explained on the ground that some of their traditionally held rights of man in their cultural world were unrecognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And for many that were recognized in the universal treaty, it was impossible for many states to enforce them in their respective states because these human rights were generically termed as inalienable, but they ought not to be. In other words, there was no distinction between alienable human rights and inalienable human rights.

To the first problem, we can cite the American Anthropological Association (AAA)\(^5\) formal rejection of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the works of scholars such as Kwasi Wiredu (1996) on Akan conceptions of human rights, Tunde Bewaji (2006) on Yoruba conceptions of human rights and Francis Ogunmodede (2006) on ‘human rights in Ancient Egyptian state’ as characteristic and definitive expositions of some of the traditionally cherished human rights in African cultural societies, but which are ignored in the universal human rights declaration. For instance, Ann-Belinda Preis (1996:287), a member of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), sees the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as “culturally, ideologically and politically non-universal” and argues that the rights and freedom cited therein contain a Western, Judeo-Christian bias.

From an African vantage point, Kwasi Wiredu, the foremost African philosopher, recognizes the cultural relativity of human rights, using the Akan conception of a person as a basis for defending the Akan belief in human rights. Among the fundamental human

rights identified by Wiredu (1996: 158-173) for the Akan, but which find no expression in the universal declaration of human rights, are: the right to care, love and affection in early childhood days, the right to land from the ancestral lineage holdings, and the right of decisional representation in government based on the consensual principle.

Bewaji (2006: 53), in consonance with this point stresses that “the understanding of the nature of the human being in society determines the kinds of rights that are ascribed to the human being in the society.” In other words, what constitutes human rights is a function of the contextual understanding of the religious, metaphysical, epistemological, axiological, socio-economic, legal and political contents of the construct of human beings and meaning. Using the Ifa literary corpus in comparison with the contemporary Nigerian experience in the light of universal ideas and ideals of human rights at large, Bewaji unearths the theoretical and practical foundations of human rights in indigenous Yoruba culture. He argues that the meaning and content of human rights as seen in the universal declaration are enshrined in the traditions of civilized humans everywhere in the world. Even though he is quick at pointing out that social, cultural and other circumstances determine the capacity of societies to enforce, promote and assure human rights, he claims that wealth, status, pedigree or other accidental matters do not affect the nature of human rights in Yoruba culture (Bewaji, 2006: 64).

Unlike Wiredu, who highlighted some peculiar culturally relative rights of the Akan, in Ghana, in contrast to the universal human rights, Bewaji’s claim is that the known rights today, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration, are not foreign to the indigenous cultural Yoruba. He argues that the Yoruba indigenous understanding and practice of human rights, even in millennia past, is still more sophisticated than the universal understanding and practice of human rights (Bewaji, 2006: 71-72). The Yoruba understanding of human rights holistically takes into consideration the meaning of the
human person, the origin of persons, the relations between persons (living, dead and unborn), relations between persons and nature, relations between persons and the gods, and the factor of human connectivity. The fundamental problem with Bewaji’s analysis is that he fails to demonstrate and provide textual evidence for the truth of his assertions.

The point of the above is not only that human rights is a culturally relative concept, but also that it is only minimally a legal issue. While the universal declaration has been patterned after this minimal condition, it is instructive to note that human rights is more of an economic, cultural, social, psychological, epistemological, metaphysical and human issue that can best be appreciated and understood with reference to cultural relativism.

The fall-out of the above suggests a polarity between the universality of human rights and the polarity of human rights. The basic arguments of culturalists or relativists can be summarized as follows: that the present regime of human rights is Western-oriented and that the West’s ongoing attempts to universalize human rights should thus be treated with circumspection. They believe that the universalist argument is a subtle form of cultural imperialism. It is against this background that the newly emergent nations of the world, from Asia to Arabia to Africa, began to assert a determination to reflect their own cultures and values in the conception and practice of human rights.

It suffices to recall the emergence of the African Charter, with its Africanist character, on the nature of human rights. The African Charter on Human and Peoples reflects the traditional African philosophy regarding collectivities. As adopted in 1986, the Charter parts ways with the European and Inter-American human rights Conventions by providing for group rights in addition to individual rights (Udombana, 2003: 123). Viewing individual rights as a Western
import, the African Charter stresses the sanctity of the extended family in the African cultural set-up. Articles 19 through 24 of the *African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights* include the rights to self-determination, to the equality of peoples and the non-domination of one people by another, and to the right to dispose of natural wealth and resources in the interest of the people. Also, the provision includes the right to recover dispossessed property, the right to adequate compensation, to cultural development, to international peace and security, and to a general environment favorable to development. Additionally, the Charter distinguishes itself from its regional counterparts by enshrining individuals’ duties to society in addition to their rights. These duties are owed to the family, society, the state, and even to the international community. They include duties to respect others without discrimination, to develop the family, to serve the nation, to pay taxes, and to promote African unity (Note 4, Arts. 27-29, and ACHPR).

Consequently, the protagonists of cultural specificity of human rights argue that a society’s conception of human rights must have bearing and relevance to the culture from which it springs. Besides Africa, Asian and Islamic countries are also questioning the concept of universality. Women’s rights, for example, they argue, cannot be left open without being incongruent with Islamic injunctions, but must be stipulated only in the context of cultural limitations and religious injunctions.

**Understanding human rights in a multiculturalist world: Insights from a hermeneutic-reconstructionist study of Ifa**

Western philosophical study of law, legal systems and human rights is not the only possible jurisprudence. It is illusionary to think (as some scholars like Rhoda Howard have held) that Western discourse on the principles of human rights, law and the structure of a legal system is the only possible jurisprudence. Howard, for instance,
insists that pre-colonial African societies were ignorant of human rights as a concept. She would swiftly dismiss arguments by Africa scholars (such as Wiredu, Bewaji, Ogunmodede, etc.) that indigenous traditional Africans had a conception of human rights, and that those rights were held in a social and collective context. For Howard (1984: 77), while traditional Africans had an idea of human dignity, dignity in itself should not be equated with the notion of rights. Howard is not alone in this line of thought. Isaac Nguema (1990: 302) also assumes that there were no human rights in traditional African societies.

In showing the falsehood of the views of Howard and Nguema, we shall, in the rest of the discussion, argue (using extant sources from the Ifa literary corpus of the Yoruba of Southwest Nigeria) that the traditional Yoruba-African indeed had a robust jurisprudential notion of human rights (of which human dignity is necessarily a part), and that the thoughts from Ifa can provide some insights into a plausible resolution of the dichotomy between universalism and relativism of human rights. The methodological framework for our conception is hermeneutic-reconstructionism.

Hermeneutic-reconstructionism is a novel methodological model in African philosophy that rationally integrates the constitutive strength of the methods of cultural reconstructionism and hermeneutic methods with a view to balancing the dual challenge of harmonizing the traditional techniques of philosophy with the cultural challenge of authenticity of the philosophical ruminations that are African in orientation. The method of hermeneutic-reconstructionism entails the creation/formulation of a contemporary African philosophy that recognizes, identifies and explains the intellectual foundation of ancient African philosophies within which specific ideas, beliefs and principles in oral tradition can be demonstrated (and interpreted) as critical and rational, while at the same time it tries to explore some humanistic aspects of the techno-
scientific and philosophic resources of other cultural traditions in creating a contemporary decolonized African system. A significant aspect of African oral tradition, with which hermeneutic-reconstructionism identifies, is the Ifa corpus of the Yoruba ethnic group of South West, Nigeria.

Our primary philosophical concern in this regard is to discover relevant jurisprudential thoughts embedded in some verses of Ifa and to critically identify the goals, which the authors of Ifa verses aim at through their thought. Ifa corpus offers a veritable literature and database from which traditional African thoughts and notions of law, justice and human rights can be understood. These are examined closely on the following sub-themes:

**Respect for Human Dignity (Fundamental Human Rights)**

_Eru ku ni’ le won lo sin s’oko_  
_Omo ku l’oko, won lo sin s’ile_  
_Beeni bi o ju ibi, bi a se b’eru l’ a se b’omo_  
_Eru ni baba ona l’o jin_  
_Ma f’iya je mi nitori mo je alejo, bi iwo naa ba de ibomiran, alejo l’o o je._

A slave dies in the house and was buried on the farm. When the master’s child dies on the farmstead, the corpse was brought home for burial. People seem to ignore the fact that one birth is not greater than the other. The slave was born exactly the way the slave owner’s child was born. The slave, indeed, has a father. He is only far away. Do not ill-treat me because I am a stranger. When you get to another land, you too will become a stranger (Oluwole, 2007: 14).

The philosophical import in the above Ifa verse is the respect for human dignity, which is the core of human rights. Nevertheless, one major criticism that has been customarily leveled against the possibility of human rights in traditional Africa is that of the
prevalence of the practice of slavery, which even predated African contact with an experience of the Western trans-Atlantic slave trade. This criticism can easily be disposed of the basis of the distinction between the trans-Atlantic trade and the slavery of traditional Africa. The former was a total dehumanization of man by man. In the case of the latter, C. Williams (1976: 129) rightly noted that “the African slaves were considered as members of the community, they learnt crafts, had rights to farm, held important offices of state, and had virtually all the rights and privileges of a freeborn.” The truth of this position is well illustrated in the above verse of Ifa corpus.

Children’s Rights

The Yoruba give pivotal interest to children’s rights. Thus, they proverbially say:

_Omode o j’obi, agba o j’oye_

Adults who deny children their rights do not earn social respect

In the Ifa verse of Iwori Meji, it is stated that:

_Owo omodo o to pepe, t’ agbalagba o wo akeregbe, ise ewe be agba ki o mase ko mo, gbogbo wa ni a nise a jo n be ‘ra wa. A dia fun Orunmila eyi ti akapoo re o pe lejo l’odo Olodumare, Olodumare waa ranse si Orunmila pe ki o wa so idi naa ti ko le fig be akapoo re. Nigbati Orunmila de iwaju Olodumare o ni oun sa gbogbo agbara oun fun akapoo, o ni ipin akapooni ko gbo. Nigba naa ni oro naa to waa ye Olodumare yekeyeke. Inuu ree si dun wipe oun ko da ejo eekun kan. Ni Eleedaa ba ni lati ojo naa lo omo eda kan ko gbodo da ejo eekun kan. Anikandajo, o o seun: anikandajo, o o seeyan, nigba ti o o gbo t’enu enikeji, emi l’o dajo se?_

A child’s hand does not reach up to the mantelpiece that of an adult cannot enter into a gourd. When a child appeals to an adult for help,
she should not refuse; we all live to complement each other. This is the oracular message for Orunmila whose priest sued him before Olodumare. And Olodumare sent for Orunmila to come to explain why he refused assistance to his priest. When Orunmila came before Olodumare, he said he tried his best for his priest; but that it was the priest’s “nature” that was his problem. Then Olodumare was completely enlightened and he was happy that he did not give judgment after listening to the complainant alone. That is why the Creator made it a law from that day, that no human being should give judgment after listening to only one side. He who judges without hearing the other side does wrong; he who judges without listening to the other side is inhuman. When you have not heard the other side why did you give your judgment? (Oluwole, 1999: 94)

There are two ideas of jurisprudential relevance that could be discovered from this Ifa verse. One is that which expresses the complementary qualities and responsibilities that the adults and the young have to each other. Both have rights and obligations that must be respected and observed. Second, is the legal principle of Audi alteram partem. This principle states that parties involved in litigation must always be heard before a verdict is given.

Our above analysis thus far reveals that there are some ideas and principles of jurisprudence in Ifa corpus, which are congruent with the general conception of human rights, while concurrently, there are some others that are unrecognized in the Universal Human Rights Declaration. On this premise, it can be rightly argued that while there are universal human rights, there are equally some rights that are not culture-specific. The universalism perspective on human rights offers freedom and equality for all men in a humanly degraded world, while at the same time providing the basis for sustainable democracy and development. Relativism of human rights promotes tolerance towards other cultures, aids self-understanding, identity and easier enforcement of human rights. But only when the two are
conscientiously harnessed and integrated can the real essence of human rights be truly achieved and promoted.

One way of synthesizing these two perspectives on the nature of human rights is to see their essence, for which Ifa has some laudable insights.

Let us do things with joy. Those who want to go let them go. Those who want to stay let them stay. Surely, human beings have been chosen to bring good into the world. This is the oracular message for Orunmila whose priest, Morotan, interpreted the teachings of Ifa for Orunmila. He said the people of the world would come to ask him a certain question. He said that Orunmila should make a sacrifice. Orunmila heard and complied. One day all kinds of people, good and wicked, who do not respect human rights and goodness in other
peoples’ lives gathered and met with Orunmila. They complained of their tiredness of drifting between earth and the ultra-abode. Therefore, they sought for Orunmila’s assistance to allow them stay in the ultra-abode. Orunmila replied ‘you cannot avoid shuttling between the two realms, until you bring about the good condition that Olodumare has ordained for every human being. After that, you may then rest permanently in heaven’. They asked of what the good condition entails? Orunmila said: ‘the good condition is a good world of open possibilities; a world in which there is full knowledge of all things; happiness everywhere; without clashes of diverse interests; without fear of disease, litigation, losses, wizards, witches, or calamities; without fear of enmity, poverty or misery. Because of your wisdom, your compelling desire for good character and your internal strength. The things needed to bring about the good condition in the world are: wisdom that is fully adequate to govern the world; sacrifice, good character, spirit of common good to all and sundry, especially the needy, indigent, down-trodden and the impoverished. The eagerness and struggle to increase good in the world and harness divergent good interests. People will continue to experience the crisis in the world until the good conditions of the ultra-abode are satisfied. Thus, when the descendants of Oduduwa assembled in the ultra-abode, those chosen to bring good into the world are called human beings.

What it means to be human in the submission of the above Irosu ‘Wori verse (78:1) of Ifa is the proven ability to fulfill the essence of being. This condition cannot be realized with either universalism or relativism of human rights taken separately. The fundamental presupposition of this verse therefore, is that the goodness of human life is best consummated in the protection and observance of the complementary ideals inherent in both the universal and culturally relative human rights.

What emerges from the above is that human rights are prime matters of multicultural concern and no claim of universality can be totally based on them. Despite the fact that there are basic rights to
which all humans are entitled regardless of their cultural preferences and differences, i.e., universal human rights, there is still a place for cultural relativity of human rights.

To further buttress the point, consider the example of Eastern Europe where socialism is the order of the day. Socialism does not recognize rights to private property, which is enshrined in the universal declaration of human rights as inalienable. Socialism in Western Europe only recognizes a right to common property. This example shows that some claims of human rights are not universal in all cultures and that multiculturalism of human rights is possible and in fact persists.

The claims of multiculturalism can be substantiated when we realize that all civilized societies have some clear formulation of what constitutes human beings. And as Leslie Stevenson (1974: 3) rightly observes, the views that a society embraces regarding human nature determines much more about the society’s determination of modes of existence. In as much as there are variations in the understanding of the nature, meaning, goals, life, death and alternate reality by different cultural societies of the world, their conceptions of what constitute fundamental human rights may likely differ. Different views about human nature lead naturally to different conclusions about who we think we are, what rights we consider fundamental, and how we can institutionalize its observance and guard against its abuse.

Moreover, a distinction needs to be made between the nature of a person and the nature of a man. Such a distinction when located within the gamut of a cultural context will indicate the cultural relativity of human rights, while at the same time underscoring the commonness in human rights. Man, generally, is conceived to be a biological being having human features such as rationality, physical body frame and being capable of psychological (and spiritual) functions. This general understanding of the nature of man is the basis
upon which human rights, as evident in the universal declaration, is formulated and structured. Rights in this regard are understood to be inalienable, universal and equal for every one irrespective of status, gender, age, race and culture and among others. The conception of a person, however, is culturally defined because it has, in addition to being a man, some cultural features of identity, which qualify a man as a person. For instance, it is the total actualization of the positive use of salient human features—mental, physical, or psychological—together with evidential moral uprightness that make a being (man) a person (omoluabi) in the Yoruba cultural context (Ali, 1997: 55). Human rights, with respect to a person, are alienable and are culturally determined. This distinction between a man and a person reinforces further the distinction between inalienable and alienable rights. Where universal human rights emphasize the former, human rights within the purview of multiculturalism stress the latter.

In view of the above, it can be rightly argued that while there are universal human rights, there are equally some rights that are culturally relatively based. One way of justifying universal human rights in a culturally diverse world is to see its utility. The universal declaration on human rights offers freedom and equality for all men in a humanly degraded world, while at the same time providing the basis for sustainable democracy and development. Regardless of cultures, human rights have proved useful in solving problems of tyrannical leadership, and of women’s empowerment all over the world (Oduwole, 2006: 17).

CONCLUSION
There are undoubtedly certain peculiarities in human rights that make multiculturalism possible and meaningful. Human rights can be universal and relative without a crap in the true essence of human value. Human rights are not necessarily mutually exclusive both in theory and practice. The supposed dichotomy between universalistic and relativistic conceptions of human rights becomes insignificant
when we realize that human rights in both are geared towards the same goals: respect for cultures, human values and dignity, tolerance of ideas and beliefs, promotion of peace and human development. Human rights at the universal level spell out the highest ideals, while the multicultural diversifications give the universal standards a regional flavour that eases their acceptability and implementability. A multiculturalist attitude towards human rights is therefore “neither homogenizing nor subject to the errors of relativism” (Fox, 1998: 5). A multiculturalist attitude is necessary in seeing human rights as the heritage of humanity as a whole. Attempts to claim the exclusive ‘source-rights’ of human rights do not contribute to this multiculturalist orientation.

We urge that investigative archeological researches into the different aspects of the jurisprudential content of Ifa orature could help foster a better understanding of the nature of human rights and the mechanism for its enforcement, of customary law, justice, constitutionalism and democracy in 21st century Africa. Such an exercise, would at the end, be of immense relevance in the efforts towards protecting and observing the thrusts of the Universal Human Rights Declaration and the African Charter on Human and People Rights in our contemporary world.

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**ABSTRACT:**
This paper is an interrogation of the activities of the Boko Haram sect especially since the killing of its leader Mohammed Yusuf under very controversial circumstances in 2009. It examines how the activities of Boko Haram have threatened the security and well-being of Nigerians and how it seems to have in turn undermined the Nigerian government’s ability to justify the reason for its existence, namely, to ensure the security and welfare of her citizens. Boko Haram has with seeming ease unleashed an orgy of violence characterized by bombing and killing Nigerians, especially in the north. This paper argues that sects like Boko Haram are a reaction to perceived and real injustices perpetrated by the state and its agencies. This paper is also of the opinion that the activities of Boko Haram have stretched Nigeria’s delicate socio-political and ethno-religious divides to the limit. The paper makes the point that a political solution, a well-meaning engagement between the government and the Boko Haram sect, is a more probable solution than the current attempt to engage the sect militarily. A political solution is not to be seen as a sign of weakness on the part of government but is, on the contrary, a sign of responsibility. The need to explore such a solution in the face of the crisis cannot be overemphasized. As a corollary, the government needs to tackle the crisis of infrastructure in the country. Education for the teeming Almajiri population in the north should be given priority in order to reduce the number of would-be Boko Haram recruits. More importantly, there is a need to overhaul the country’s security network so that activities such as those by Boko Haram can easily be nipped in the bud and/or controlled.
INTRODUCTION
Modern society is premised on the existence of law and order. Law and order requires essentially that violence, crime and undue process are not allowed to thrive (Egwemi, 2009). The *raison d’être* for the existence of the modern state is the provision of the “common good” and “the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people” (Egwemi, 2007; 2009b). The modern state is a great departure from the “state of nature”. Political philosophers of the social contract school painted a grim picture of man in a hypothetical “state of nature”. Thomas Hobbes, who is perhaps the most popular of the social contract theorists, conceived of a “state of nature” in which men lived before the formation of civil society and the adoption of law. In his state of nature, there is war of every man against every man. In his famous phrase, man’s life in a state of nature is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.” (Enemuo, 1999:70) To avoid such an existence, man goes into a social contract in which power is transferred to an absolute authority, which ensures peace and security. The social contract is the beginning of law and order, the beginning of the modern state which from a utilitarian perspective exists to provide the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people (Bhatia, 1978; Mclean and McMillan; [http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/common.good](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/common.good)).

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that, theoretically speaking, the state exists to ensure the security and welfare of its citizens. This theoretical stipulation is given practical meaning in the constitutions of most countries of the world. For example, in Nigeria, the 1999 Constitution, in Chapter II Section 1 Subsection 2(b) under the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, states clearly that “the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government” (1999 constitution; LL 26).
In Nigeria’s recent past, the security of the citizens has been threatened by the activities of the Boko Haram sect. This paper is therefore an attempt to interrogate the Boko Haram sect and how its activities have threatened the well-being of many Nigerians and has called to question the capacity of the government to cater to the security and welfare of Nigerians. The paper attempts a review of Boko Haram activities up to the bombing of the police headquarters in June, 2011. The bombing of the police headquarters is taken here as a watershed in Boko Haram’s activities and the beginning of its bombing and related terrorist activities. After this introduction, the next section specifies the methodology adopted for the study. The third section attempts to historicize Boko Haram. This is followed by a chronicle of Boko Haram’s activities in the country. The next section examines the specter of terrorism in Nigeria. Terrorism is conceptualized in the sixth section while the following section isolates and discusses the implications of the activities of Boko Haram. The possible ways out of the Boko Haram debacle follows and the last section is the conclusion.

**Methodology**

This study is based entirely on secondary sources of data. These sources include relevant textbooks, journal articles and online materials on the state, terrorism and the Islamic sect, Boko Haram. Relevant data on the activities of Boko Haram from its earliest days to contemporary times were sourced through a random selection of Nigerian newspapers and magazines between 2009 and 2012. In this period, the news media was awash with reports on the activities of Boko Haram. The papers sampled include *The Guardian, Daily Trust, Nigerian Tribune, The Nation, Daily Sun, National Mirror, and Newsstar*. Three news magazines, *Newswatch, Tell*, and *The News* were also sampled. These newspapers were chosen because of their wide circulation across the country and because over the years they have
established themselves as credible media. These papers and magazines are also readily available offline and on the internet.

The data gathered relate to the activities of Boko Haram and its impact on various facets of the Nigerian polity. The views of arrested sect members and the press releases of sect leaders are also sampled. Also the views and opinions of Nigerians on the activities of the sect were also gathered. Popular perceptions about the country’s security services were also sampled. Furthermore the views of key government officials were also examined. And then, the views on how to deal with the challenge of Boko Haram were also gathered. The data is not presented in any particular order, rather they are presented in terms of the flow of issues raised and discussed in the paper.

Considering that the activities of Boko Haram have become almost daily occurrences, it needs to be emphasized that the sample covers the period between 2009, when the leader of the sect, Mohammed Yusuf, was killed, after which the activities of the sect became more inclined to violence, and May, 2012 when work on this paper was completed.

**A Short History of Boko Haram**
Shehu Sani has attempted to historicize the Boko Haram phenomenon in Nigeria. According to him, Boko Haram is an Islamic sect based largely in the North-Eastern part of Nigeria. It started as sahaba group in 1995 (Sani, 2011). At the initial stage one Abubakar Lawan was the leader of the group until he left for study at the University of Medina. The mantle of leadership then fell on Mohammed Yusuf who was reportedly killed by the police in 2009 (Sani, 2011). It was under Yusuf that the group was radicalized. It has been reported that Yusuf was quite close with many leading Muslim clerics because of his brilliance.
He, however, parted ways with his teachers as he grew more radicalized (Sani, 2011b).

According to Sani, available information indicates that the group emanated from an orthodox teaching slightly resembling that of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Their school of thought considers anything western as an aberration or completely un-Islamic. The group viewed the western influence on Islamic society as the basis of the religion’s weakness. Hence their declaration that western education and indeed all western institutions are infidel and as such must be avoided by Muslims.

At first, both clerics and the larger community ignored the gospel as they dismissed the preacher as ignorant, while others saw them as sheer propagandists who would not get the attention of the modern Muslims but events proved all wrong as the sect began to grow from strength to strength (Sani, 2011b). Shehu Sani has argued that at the initial stage of their growth, the sect was entrenched in Borno, Yobe, Katsina, Kaduna, Bauchi, Gombe and Kano states, but it has now covered virtually all northern states and is advancing its frontiers to other parts of the country (Sani, 2011b).

The Boko Haram sect has other names. In fact, the argument has been made that it is not clear if the sect actually calls itself Boko Haram. (Shinkafi, 2011) The other known names of the sect are Jamaatul Takfur Wal Hyra Ahlus Sunna, Yusufuya (Yusufiyah), Khawaarji and Jamaatul Ahl lissunan Lidda’awasiwal Jihad (Sani, 2011b, Shinkafi, 2011). By whatever name the sect is called, what is important is that “the movement is of recent history and the peak of their disagreement with the state was the confrontation between them and security agencies in Bauchi and Maiduguri during which their leader was killed while in lawful custody” (Shinkafi, 2011:56)
A chronicle of Boko Haram’s violent activities

Shehu Sani has attempted a chronicle of Boko Haram’s activities since the sect gained national prominence in 2009. This chronicle is reproduced verbatim below:

- 26 July 2009 – First clash with security agencies in Bauchi State after an all-night attack on Dutsen-Tanshi Police. 39 members, two policemen, one soldier killed.

- 27 July 2009- First attack in Yobe State during an invasion of Potiskum Division Headquarters, leading to the death of three policemen, one fire service officer.

- 29 July 2009- Confrontation with security men at Mamudo Village, along Potiskum/Damaturu Road, Yobe. 33 Boko Haram members killed.

- 29 July 2009- An all-night battle with combined security operatives at Railway Terminus, Maiduguri, Borno State. Scores killed and operational base destroyed.

- 8 Sept. 2010 – set ablaze Bauchi central prison and freed members of the sect who were jailed there.

- 29 January 2011- Killed governorship candidate of the Borno State chapter of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP), Alhaji Modu Fannami Gubio and six others at Lawan Bukar ward, Maiduguri.

- 2 March 2011- Killed two policemen attached to the residence of a Divisional police Officer (DPO), Mustapha Sandamu at Rigasa area of Kaduna State.

- 30 March 2011 – Bomb explosion in Damaturu injuring a policeman.

- 2 April 2011- Bombed Dutsen-Tanshi police station injured two policemen.
□ 4 May 2011-Shot dead a prison warder at Maiduguri prison on Kashim Ibrahim Way

□ 5 May 2011-Shot Duty Officer at Maiduguri Government House, Umaru Shehu, at his Abuja Talakawa residence of Maisanadami ward killing a 13 year-old boy and injured another.

□ 9 May 2011 – Killed two Islamic clerics, Sheikh Goni Tijani and Mallam Alhaji Abur, at their residences in Maira and Bulabulum wards of Maiduguri.

□ 9 May 2011 – Killed Bauchi State Chairman of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Ibrahim Dudu Gobe and injured his son, Mohammed.

□ 13 May 2011-Two people killed by bomb explosion at London Chinki, Maiduguri.

□ 15 May 2011 – Planted bomb at Lagos Street, Maiduguri which injured two soldiers, three policemen. A policeman was also shot dead same day in the city.


□ 31 May 2011 – Shot dead Shehu of Borno’s brother, Alhaji Abba Anas Garba Elkanemi.

□ 1 June 2011 – Four people killed at a drinking joint in Bulumkutu, Maiduguri.

□ 16 June 2011 – Four children killed in a bomb explosion at Damboa town, Maiduguri.

In the next section of the paper we will undertake a full scale analysis of the June 16, 2011, bombing of the police headquarters by the Boko Haram sect. However, after the attack on the police headquarters, the sect has continued its attacks across Northern Nigeria with seeming ease. The next major target was the United Nations building in Abuja. The attack was carried out on August 26, 2011 by a suicide bomber who breached the security at the facility. The toll at the time of the attack was put at about 23. Some of the injured died later.

The attack on the UN house was a strategy in the opinion of this paper to draw the attention of the international community to the cause of the sect. It also drew attention to the fact that Boko Haram was not just a local Nigerian group. Probes into the attack have revealed that Al-Qaeda, a known terrorist group, had a hand in the event (Agbaegbu, 2011; Agbo, 2011; Alli and Ikumola, 2011). While many condemnations trailed the attack, the facts demonstrate that the Boko Haram phenomenon has become a real challenge for Nigeria.

By far the most devastating attack carried out so far by the sect was on the city of Kano on January 20, 2012. In a coordinated bombing and shooting attack, many police stations in the metropolis and the office of the State Security Service (SSS) were hit by the sect. The death toll in the attacks is in the neighbourhood of 300 (Alli and Adeyemi, 2012; Umar, Aliyu and Habib, 2012; Rasheed, Oyelere, and Daniel, 2012; Abuh, 2012).

The irony and tragedy of the Kano attacks is that Boko Haram had precisely a month earlier warned about the attack. The sect had threatened that it would carry out the attack if the Kano state government did not stop arresting its members (Ola, 2011). Investigations after the attack indicate that it was so successful because of intelligence failure on the part of security agencies (Madu-
West, 2012). This illustrates the extent of collapse of Nigeria’s security network (Editorial, National Mirror January 24, 2012).

Boko Haram has attacked and set primary schools ablaze in Maiduguri. Such attacks have affected the turnout of pupils in Maiduguri in particular and Borno state in general (Ola, 2012).

The media has also come under attack by Boko Haram. The attacks on some media houses in Abuja and Kaduna was, according to the sect’s spokesman, Abu Qaqa, because these media houses `had taken sides with government or security agencies or both(Emewu and Anumihe, 2012:5).

While most of the attacks have been in Northern Nigeria, other parts of the country cannot afford to take security for granted as it has been reported that Boko Haram has threatened to attack Lagos and other parts of Southern Nigeria (Anucha, 2012). They have threatened that unless President Jonathan meets with the group personally they would carry out their threat.

At this point it should be made clear that it has virtually become impossible to keep tabs on the activities of Boko Haram, whose attacks have been regular and persistent.

Boko Haram and Terrorism in Nigeria
On June 16, 2011, a bomb rocked the car park of the Nigerian Police Headquarters (Louis Edet House). That singular event was an indicator of the state of (in)security in the country. Indeed, it was a clear indication that the country’s security is lax and uncoordinated (Daily Sun Editorial, 26 June 2011). Boko Haram claimed responsibility for the bombing. Over the years since 2009, the group had carried out many attacks, but the June 16 attack has been the most audacious as it
seemed to have struck the very nerve of the country’s internal security apparatus and, most significantly, caught the police literally napping (Adegboyega, 2011 Bashir, Yakubu and Mutum, 2011.)

The bombing of the police was a major watershed in the activities of Boko Haram. It introduced a major security challenge to the country namely suicide bombing and terrorism. In an interview with a weekly tabloid Blueprint, the spokesperson of Boko Haram Abu Zaid is reported to have said that the alleged suicide bomber Mohammed Manga “agreed to sacrifice his life for Allah’s sake and also wished others would follow his step” (Suleiman, 2011:56). But more worrisome is Zaid’s claim that “so far we have screened nearly 100 persons for suicide attacks for this year alone in Nigeria while more than this number is getting ready for next year” (Suleiman, 2011:56) While there are arguments about whether the attack on police headquarters was a suicide attack or not (Suleiman, 2011), the attack on the Police headquarters tells a lot about the state of insecurity in the country. That an event of such magnitude could happen right inside police headquarters tells the whole story.

Even more worrisome is the spectre of terrorism which seems to be rearing its ugly head in the Nigerian polity. It has been reported that Boko Haram is linked with al-Qaeda and maybe operating with the support of al-Qaeda’s African branch and the al-Shabab terror group in Somalia (Adeyemi and Chukwu, 2011).

**Conceptualizing Terrorism**

Terrorism has become an everyday occurrence across the contemporary world, yet putting a finger on what constitutes terrorism is still a very difficult enterprise. T. A. Imobighe has echoed this dilemma in the following words:
Although terrorism has become a daily phenomenon of the global landscape, getting people to agree on a common definition of the phenomenon has been extremely difficult... efforts to define the concept have aroused discord among members of the international community (Imobighe, 2007:14-15).

The phenomenon of terrorism is extremely sensitive. It is usually approached from a subjective perspective. This dilemma is encapsulated in the phrase, `one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter (Carlton and Schaerf, 1981; Ochim, 2011).

Terrorism, in the opinion of Oduah-Bozimo is “calculated use of violence and non-violence or both to intimidate, to frighten, oppress and suppress people into submission usually for purposes of achieving certain goals...”(Oduah-Bozimo,2010:2). Terrorism “is the deliberate and systematic murder, maiming and menacing of the innocent to inspire fear for political ends” (Ojukwu, 2011:373).

Terrorism, according of the Oxford Dictionary of Law, is “the use or threat of violence for political, religious or ideological ends (Martin and Law 2003:532). It is, according to the Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics, a term used “most frequently to describe life-threatening actions perpetrated by politically motivated or self-appointed sub-state groups (Mclean and McMillan, 2003:532) Be that as it may, the term has no agreed definition but is used in most cases in a pejorative sense (Mclean and McMillan, 2003) Terrorism evokes different emotions and reactions across cultures, peoples and divides.

T.A. Imobighe has attempted to provide a basis for an acceptable definition of terrorism. He suggests that four critical
elements of terrorism must be investigated in this quest: the environment of terrorism; the nature of the actions associated with terrorism; the target of terrorist actions; the objectives for such action (Imobighe, 2006:18). He argues further that a critical look at these four elements will reveal the following:

- Terrorism occurs in an environment of conflict and discord, and hence it is a product of conflict escalation.
- Terrorism is a violent mode of response to a conflictual relationship.
- The target of terrorism is not limited to the parties directly involved in the conflictual relationship, but includes everybody directly or remotely associated with the principal actors or combatants.
- The objectives of terrorism are varied and not always political (Imobighe, 2007:15)

When all these essential elements are factored into any attempt to define terrorism, what one constructs is a definition such as:

…the indiscriminate and random use of different levels of violence against an opponent or ancillary interests of such an opponent with whom one has an adversarial relationship, in order to strike fear (into) the latter and impose one’s will on (the opponent) or tailor (the opponent’s) action towards a desired goal (Imobighe, 2007:15).
Whatever one’s opinion of terrorism, the truth is that terrorist attacks leave in their wake destruction and death. The attack on the police headquarters left its own share of destruction and death. Other implications of terrorism will be discussed.

Categorizing Terrorism
According to I.S. Ogundiya and J. Amzat “there are various typologies of terrorism (Ogundiya and Amzat, 2008:171). Following the Wilkenson typology, they identify three categories: revolutionary, sub-revolutionary and repressive. Revolutionary terrorism is aimed at bringing about political revolution. Sub-revolutionary terrorism is employed for political motives other than revolution. Repressive terrorism is government directed at restraining certain groups, individuals or forms of behavior considered undesirable.

In Madunagu’s opinion, two categories of terrorism exist: state terrorism and civil society terrorism. The former is directed at the civil population while the latter is directed at the state (in Ogundia and Amzat, 2008). There is also inter-state terrorism and intra-civil society terrorism: the former relates to a state divided against it and the latter relates to communal/inter-ethnic frictions.

Other categories of terrorism identified by Ogundiya and Amzat are:

- State-sponsored terrorism
- National terrorism
- Religious terrorism
- Left-wing terrorism
- Right-wing terrorism, and
The activities of Boko Haram fall in the religious and domestic terrorism categories. However, whatever the category, three elements are important to note about terrorism and terrorists: (Amaraegbu, 2011:211-212).

1. Terrorists are normally triggered by some form of oppression - real or imagined - which precedes the terror act that allows the perpetrators to rationalize their actions.

2. The victims or objects of a terrorist attack have little intrinsic value to the terrorist but represent a larger human audience whose attention the terrorist seek.

3. Terrorism always pleads a political cause, and involves committing terrible acts intended to cause political change.

Explaining Boko Haram Terrorist Activities

As it has been noted earlier in the paper, Boko Haram began like every other normal Islamic sect in 1995. Although from the beginning it had radical tendencies, it was not initially associated with violence. The late founder of the sect had to relocate first from Kano to Maiduguri and later to Chad because other clerics in these places did not tolerate his radical posture (Adisa, 2012)

It has been alleged that many politicians used the sect for electoral purposes between 2002 and 2007, especially in the North East | (Adisa, 2012; Herskovits, 2012). Be that as it may, the group remained a relatively peaceful entity until 2009. It was only after the killing of its leader, Mohammed Yusuf, in controversial circumstances that the group embraced violence as its modus operandi (Herskovits, 2012; El-Rufai, 2012). In the words of El-Rufai, after the killing of its leader, Mohammed Yusuf, Boko Haram evolved from a largely
peaceful, fringe Islamic organization to a vengeful sect and currently an anarchist threat to the Nigerian nation’ (El-Rufai, 2012)

Boko Haram has given many reasons for its attacks. In Kano it was because its members were arrested by the police in Kano (Umar, Aliyu and Habib, 2012). The attack on media houses was premised on the alleged one-sidedness of reports and alleged misinformation about the sect (Ndahi, 2012). Schools have been attacked to show their disdain for western education (Edet, 2011; Bwala, Oyelere and Oladipo, 2012). They have attacked prisons to set their members free (Ukpong, Ola and Adeyemi, 2012; Alabelewa, Ola and Alofetekun, 2012). They have attacked churches and Christian places of worship to push for an Islamic state in Nigeria (?) (Yusuf and Ugwu, 2012; Alli, 2012; the Nation April 13, 2012). In fact, there are speculations to the effect that Boko Haram is a Northern/Muslim reaction against a Southern/Christian president (Olagunju, 2011). Or could it be the much-talked-about grand conspiracy to destabilize Nigeria as has been predicted? (Abimboye, 2012; Umar-Yusuf, 2012; Abdallah, 2012)

Today it is difficult to determine which faction of Boko Haram is responsible for the attacks across the country since the group is now said to have factions (Daily Sun, February 1, 2012; The Nation, July 21, 2011; Bwala, Usigbe and Shoboyo, 2011). Whatever the reasons for the attacks and whichever faction is responsible for them, the attacks have very dire implications for Nigeria!

The Implications of the Boko Haram Crisis
The first implication of the Boko Haram crisis is that it is a demonstration of the extent of discontent in the polity. As one analyst has argued “at the bottom of the Boko Haram onslaught is injustice” (Andesine 2011:56). In July 2009, when Mohammed Yusuf was murdered in an extra judicial fashion, the culprits were not immediately brought to book. This no doubt angered members of the
sect and they have literally been on a rampage since then. In spite of the security personnel deployed to deal with the sect, especially in Borno State, they seem to be waxing stronger. The belated effort to try the suspected killers of Yusuf may have come late but is still a step in the right direction (Bashir, 2011.) What has happened since the killing of Yusuf up to this moment has been an attempt to suppress justice. This was a bad strategy, for, as Adesina has argued, “you don’t suppress injustice, you address it, if you ever want peace” (Adesina, 2011:56).

In the effort to achieve peace and then sustain it, the government must devise means of engaging the Boko Haram sect in order to identify their grievances and then attempt to redress them. Many Nigerians have advocated for such an engagement with Boko Haram. For now the two sides do not seem to have made up their minds on whether or not to negotiate. (Ola, Ojo, Ukpang, Paulinus, Tyem, Ajjah and Nwosu, 2011: Ajayi, Ndahi and Dennis, 2011, Sheme 2011) Yet the government must go in to such an engagement seriously. As a corollary, the sect must also come to such an engagement with realistic demands which should be in tandem with extant Nigerian laws.

The second implication of the crisis is that Nigeria’s internal security network is far from efficient. The ease with which the sect seems to have struck across the country exposes the failure of the country’s intelligence network (Adegboyega, 2011; Bashir Yakubu and Mutum, 2011; Salaudeen, 2011; Olaoye, 2011.) As a matter of fact, the sect has continued to taunt the security agencies, claiming that since their activities are in tandem with the wishes of the people, they do not have any fear of these agencies (Ebiye, 2011). The fear of Boko Haram has become the beginning of wisdom and two state governors penciled down for assassination by the group are said to have apologized to the group already (Alfa, 2011; Olaoye, 2011.) Also, the
fact that some governors are reported to be anxious to meet Boko Haram is a pointer to the strength of the group. Again, the bringing in of experts to help with investigations shows how ill-prepared the police and other security agencies are. (Sunday Sun Editorial. Jun 26, 2011:6; Akhaine, Shadare, Okafor and Coffie-Gyamfi, 2011: Ifoh, 2011)

Another implication of the Boko Haram crisis is that it has the tendency to fan the embers of religious crisis in the country. Boko Haram, an Islamic sect, apart from attacking the police and drinking places across the country, has also targeted Christian places of worship, thus giving their activities an anti-Christian outlook. Of course such a situation is bound to generate tension. For example, the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria recently issued a statement in which it said “violence, under any guise, is not the exclusive right of any particular group of people and Nigeria as a nation is greater than any religious or political group forbidding any one from committing a crime with impunity without being called to order”(CSN 2011:42). The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the umbrella body of Christians in Nigeria, has called the Boko Haram sect terrorists and has called on the government not to negotiate with them (Igbintade; Abraham, Oyefeso and Msue, 2011; Yusuf and Ugwu, 2012). The implications of these positions for inter-religious harmony in the country are not hard to see.

Boko Haram has continued to target Christian places of worship and it is needless to say that Christians now perceive themselves as targets. Some of the churches that have been attacked with dates are:

- St. Theresa’s Catholic church, Madalla, on Sunday, December 25, 2011(see Alli, Odunuga, Ehikioya and Anofi; Editorial, Daily Trust, January 3, 2012).
St. Finbarr`s Catholic church, Rayfield, Jos, on Sunday, March 11, 2012 (see Shoboyo, Usigbe and Babajide, 2012)

A place of Christian worship at the old campus of Bayero University, Kano, was attacked on Sunday, April 29, 2012(Adamu, 2012; Madu- West and Ndahi, 2012)

Many people lost their lives in these attacks. On Easter Sunday (April 8, 2012), about 40 people were killed in a suicide bomb attack in Kaduna (Akowe, 2012; Alli, Akowe and Abiodun2012; Ibrahim, Okeke, Bwala and Muhammed, 2012; Msue and Madu-West, 2012). The attack may be construed as an attack on Christians even though many of the victims were non-Christians. The irony of the attack is that the Joint Task Force (JTF) and the SSS had earlier warned Nigerians about the likelihood of attacks during the Easter celebrations. That the attack was not prevented and still took place says a great deal about the laxity of Nigeria`s security network (Adamu and Khalid, 2012; Williams, Msue and Oluwalana, 2012).

Closely related to the above is the fact that the Boko Haram crisis will further put a strain on already tense ethno-regional relations in the country. Most Nigerians will recall that in the aftermath of the 2011 presidential elections, ethno-religious tensions and violence literally enveloped many Northern states. The country has not really come to terms with the full implications and impact of this situation. Already some Nigerians are suggesting that Boko Haram is only a Muslim/Northern reaction to the victory of Jonathan at the presidential polls. (Eya, 2011, Sampson, 2011, Olaoye, 2011) Furthermore, as a consequence of Boko Haram activities, many Southern states have evacuated their citizens from the North (Onojovwo, 2011; Sean, Ndahi, Madu-West and Oyefeso, 2011; Norah et al 2011; Jimi, Abiodun, Akowe, Emmanuel Adenoma, Therese-Peter, 2011). Also, many Southerners in Borno have left on their own
to save their lives. (Ola, 2011; Iris and Ibrahim, 2011) Since Boko Haram commenced its violent activities in 2009, many Southerners, especially Igbos, have come under attack and have lost lives and property. After the January 2012 attacks in Kano, and also in response to an order from Boko Haram for Southerners to leave the North, many Igbos decided to do so (Editorial: Nigerian Tribune 20 January 2012; Abubakar, 2012) This mass exodus of the Igbo from the North brings to clear relief the precarious security situation in the North in particular and the country in general. The Southeast governors and some prominent Igbo leaders have appealed to the Igbo to remain in the North but this call has hardly been heeded (Fafowora, 2012; Onwukwe, 2012; Agbo, 2012; Ossai, 2012; Mgboh, 2012; Abuh, 2012a, 2012b; Editorial, Saturday Sun, February 4, 2012). In reaction to the treatment meted out to Southerners in the North, radical southern groups like MASSOB, MEND and OPC have threatened to react appropriately to the Boko Haram menace (Folaranmi, Ola, John and Onwughalu, 2011; Okara, 2012; OPC factions, 2012). For a country that is technically not at war, the implication of people moving to their own regions is clear. It shows how divided the country has become as a result of the activities of Boko Haram. Also the stance of MASSOB and OPC has the potential of charging up an already heated polity.

Another closely related implication is that the Nigerian polity has been unusually heated. The tension created by the activities of the Boko Haram sect is palpable across the length and breadth of Nigeria but more so in Northern Nigeria. As if the tension created by the bombings and killings that have taken place already is not enough, the sect has continued to issue threats of more serious attacks (Ebije, 2011 Onwughalu and Omidire, 2011, Editorial: Nigerian Tribune 20 January, 2012). The consequence of the new threats has been panic across the length and breadth of Nigeria (Adeyemi, Tyem and Adefulu, 2011; Agbana, 2011; Omyewudu, 2011; Uweru, 2011; Musa and Ebiri, 2011 Musa, 2011). Some Nigerians have even said that the
activities of the sect may lead to another civil war in the country (Adams, 2011; Ejoor, 2012). As extreme as such a view is, it points to the danger of allowing the activities of Boko Haram to continue unchecked. The Nigerian president seemed to have captured the mood of the nation when he opined after the police headquarters bombing that every Nigerian was a target (Ikuomola, 2011).

Given the above scenario, it is clear that all is not well in Nigeria as a country. The tensions generated by the activities of Boko Haram have stretched Nigeria’s famed resilience to the limit. The acts of terror carried out by the sect have negatively affected education (Edet, 2011; Taiwo, 2012; Bwala, Oyelere and Oladipo, 2012; Ibrahim, 2012). It has tellingly impacted on commerce and the economy (Abubakar, 2012; Onuorah, Sunday and Godwin, 2012; Adekoya, 2012; Tolu-Kusimo, 2012; Ola and Molomo, 2012; Musa, 2012). It has affected the work of the judiciary (Ige and Ajayi, 2011). It has hindered the work of the legislature (Ndahi, 2011). Generally, it has put the lives of many Nigerians on the brink (Omoniyi, 2011; Ijediogor, 2012; Johnson, 2012). Emergency rule has been declared in some parts of the country (The Nation, January1, 2012). More significantly, the tension across the country has called into question Nigeria’s capacity to guarantee the security of her citizens. In this direction an Inspector General of police was removed from office because of his apparent inability to tackle the Boko Haram menace (Ikumola, 2012; Fadeyi and Msue, 2012). Will this change improve the nation’s security? Will it stem the tide of the Boko Haram onslaught? (Ezea, 2012) These are posers for conjecture! In light of the above scenario, what can be done? This question is addressed in the next section.
What can be done about the Boko Haram Crisis?

Any government confronted with a challenge such as the one posed by the Boko Haram sect must devise means of tackling it. There are two issues involved. The first is to look for a way of dealing with the menace at hand and the second is to devise means of stemming the growth of groups such as Boko Haram.

On the first issue, the government must engage the sect. Even though the government seems to be hesitating on negotiating with Boko Haram and vice versa, engagement between government and Boko Haram has to be undertaken (Akhaine, Nzeh, Musa; 2011; Sheme, 2011; Ola, 2012). Many Nigerians have also advised the government and the sect to embrace dialogue (Seteolu, 2011b). Dialogue is not a sign of weakness on the part of the government. On the contrary, it is a sign of responsibility! The government needs to engage Boko Haram in order to understand their grievances. A military solution is definitely out of the question (Ebije 2012; Hammagam, 2011). So far it does not seem to have achieved much. More importantly, the problem with a military solution is brought into clear relief with Mohammed Zagga’s rhetorical question: ‘Is there a military solution in dealing with a man who is ready to die for his course?’ (Zagga, 2012:51). That members of the sect are willing to die in their struggle is clear from a YouTube address posted on April 12, 2012 (see The Nation April 13 2012). They even pray to Allah to have the privilege to die for Him. A political solution to the Boko Haram issue is possible.(Editorial: The Guardian May 14, 2012; Omojolomoju, 2011; Fadeyi, 2012; Iredia, 2011).

Even the government appears to realize the futility of a military solution and is in fact desirous of a political solution. Nigeria’s senate president, David Mark, had this to say recently:
There is no government that would fold her arms and watch innocent citizens being murdered in schools, markets, churches as well as mosques. This carnage has to stop. As brothers and sisters, we must listen to each other’s grievances. I believe that the government in line with this has expressed readiness for dialogue and I urge the members of Boko Haram, their representatives, sponsors or sympathizers to key into this dialogue. (Folashade-Koyi, 2012:3)

As a corollary to the above, government must realize that the quick dispensation of justice rather than attempts to suppress justice is more rewarding. The refusal as it were by the government to bring the killers of Mohammed Yusuf to justice seemed to have strengthened the resolve of the sect to fight the government and its agencies, especially the Nigerian Police. In the future, such extra-judicial killing should be handled expeditiously to avoid the tragic events that have trailed the failure to prosecute the killers of Mohammed Yusuf (El-Rufai, 2012).

Secondly, the government must improve the security and intelligence capacity of the country. Boko Haram activities over the past two years have exposed the vulnerability of the nation’s internal security. In the past Nigeria has been listed as a failed state (The Guardian Editorial June 30, 2011:14, Seteolu, 2011a; Adegbamigbe, 2007; Okei-Odumakin, 2011 Ezirim, 2009). One of the indices for measuring a failed state is insecurity. No doubt the activities of a group like Boko Haram may be some kind of corroboration of
Nigeria’s failed state ranking (Ciroma, 2012; Ijediogor, 2012; Oshunkeye, 2012). Nor can it be said in the face of unrelenting Boko Haram attacks as (Obijiofor rhetorically poses) that President Jonathan is on top of national security (Obijiofor, 2011; Mordi, 2012).

The second approach to the Boko Haram crisis is to nip the activities of groups like that in the bud. Already, there are reports of similar sects springing up across the country (Dennis, Salihu and Idakwo, 2011; Akowe, 2011)

Shehu Sani has made the following suggestions in the above regard:

- Reform and enhance Almajiri.
- Create effective poverty alleviation policies and enforcement by the government.
- Isolate and address grievances of all interest groups as fairly as possible.
- Initiate government regulation of preaching in religious gatherings.
- Effective job provision and sustainability by the government
- Enhance criminal intelligence by the security agencies
- Implement effective police reform policies reducing the high turnover of the inspector general of police and establishing a legal procedure to elongate or fix tenure of, perhaps, five years for them.
- Enhance border patrol and regulations of the influx of immigrants or aliens.
- Put in place good policies to promote effective and efficient leadership, good governance, transparency and a mechanism to check, prevent and totally eliminate corruption.
- Put in place an effective mechanism for conflict mediation and resolution and also an alternative dispute resolution.
Enhance the citizen security agencies relationship towards maintenance of internal security and stability. (Sani, 2011c:38)

In a similar gesture, the Government of Borno State has proposed “to adopt a holistic approach, enveloping all the socio-economic challenges confronting us” (Shettima, 2011:51) This approach, which has interim and long term measures incorporates among other strategies, compensation of all victims of the Boko Haram crisis, provision of jobs, improved health care delivery and education and the revamping of the agricultural sector (see Shettima, 2011) If the government at all levels in Nigeria adopt such pro-active measures, it would be easy to deal with challenges such as those posed by Boko Haram.

Considering the enormity of the Boko Haram challenge, the government should collaborate with countries that have the expertise to deal with such problems. There are already indications that some countries are willing to partner with Nigeria in this direction (The Nation, February 24, 2012; Ehikioya and Chiejina, 2010). Government needs to tap into these opportunities. (Editorial: Nigerian Tribune 21 February, 2012).

Lastly, the government needs to muster the necessary political will to deal with known sponsors of the sect. Since the beginning of the Boko Haram saga, a number of high profile Nigerians have been identified as their sponsors and/or collaborators (Ojiabor and Ogundele, 2011; Balal, 2011; Fadare, 2012; Adisa and Ibrahim, 201; Ifoh, Okemi and Msue, 2012; Nigerian Tribune, 14 February 2011 Editorial: National Mirror December, 1, 2011). The government needs to expeditiously prosecute all the cases that have been brought against such elements and appropriate measures taken against them. Such a resolve on the part of government will show it is indeed ready to tackle the Boko Haram challenge.
CONCLUSION
The menace of the Boko Haram sect has impacted negatively on Nigerians. In specific terms, it has compromised the security and welfare of many Nigerians. It has called to question the capacity of the Nigerian state to meet one of her constitutional obligations to the people. Yet the Boko Haram challenge is not an insurmountable one if the government focuses its efforts for this purpose. As this paper has contended, the government needs to engage the sect meaningfully so that the causes of the crisis are isolated and steps are taken to address them. The government will also need to provide functional infrastructure—schools, hospitals, roads, jobs and the like—so that other groups like Boko Haram do not emerge. The establishment of a school for the almajiri in Sokoto by the federal government is a step in the right direction (Suleiman, 2012; Editorial: The Guardian, May, 3, 2012; Editorial: Sunday Sun, May 20, 2012). The states, especially in Northern Nigeria, should borrow a leaf from the federal government to reduce the number of would-be Boko Haram recruits. They also need to address the dearth of infrastructure in the region. For members of the Boko Haram sect, the words of Afghan president, Hamid Karzai, at the burial of his brother in July 2011 are apt: “My message for them (Taliban) (and in the case of this paper, Boko Haram) is that my countrymen, my brothers, should stop killing their own people. It is easy to kill and everyone can do it, but the real man is the one who can save people’s lives” (in Shettima, 2011:50). If the members of the Boko Haram sect can embrace dialogue with government and stop the bombing and killing of (often times) innocent Nigerians, then the country may be on its way to peace. On the other hand if they continue their bombing activities and government cannot checkmate them, then the country could indeed be tending towards state failure.

Be that as it may, most of the work needed to stem the tide of terrorism has to be done by the government and many practical
options are available to the government in this direction (Appendix and Sani, 2011 c: 38).

Sunday, May 6, 2012
The Sun Security Summit Communique

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<td>The Sun Publishing Limited, in collaboration with CUE Communication Limited, organized an International summit on the current security situation in Nigeria between April 17 and 19, 2012. It took place at Transcop Hilton Hotel, Abuja. The theme of the Summit was: <strong>Making Nigeria Safe for Lives and Investments.</strong> It was endorsed by the Office of the National Security Adviser and chaired by Sir Mike Okiro, former Inspector General of Police (IGP)</td>
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Renowned scholars’ experts, heads of key government institutions and various security agencies presented papers. These were: Terrorism in the Eye of the Law by Prof. Akin Oyebode, Faculty of Law, University of Lagos; Defining Counter-Terrorism Strategies in Nigeria by Maj. Gen Sarkin Yaki Bello from the Office of the National security Adviser; Training security Operatives in Intelligence Gathering and handling of Improvised Explosive (IEDs) by Mr. Chris Moghalu, US-based counter-terrorism expert and The Mass Media and National Security: Dilemma of Balancing “The Doctrine of the Public Right to Know” and magnifying the Propaganda of Terrorist Groups by Dr. Stanly Ngoa, Head of Mass Communication Department, Covenant University, Ogun State.

Others were: Aviation Industry and Global War Against Terrorism and Emerging Trends and Challenges for Airlines Operators and Stakeholders by Dr. Harold Demuren, Director-General of Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA); National Security and Nigeria’s Maritime Assets: Growing Incidences of Piracy in Exclusive Economic Zones by Mr. Patrick Akpobolokemi, Director-General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and Pathways to National Security by Prof. ‘Soji Adelaja of the Office of National Security Adviser. There was also an executive presentation by the governor of Borno State, Alhaji Kashim Shettima, titles: Poverty Alleviation and Wealth Creation as Panacea for Peace and Development in North Eastern Nigeria.

Through plenary, presentations and discussions, issues around the present security situation in the country were analyzed.
OBSERVATIONS

1. To Nigerians, terrorism was, until recently, thought of as a distant phenomenon. Today, it has come upon the country in all its sinister details. Therefore it has become the most potent challenge confronting Nigeria today.

2. Terrorism thrives on publicity and feeds on peoples’ fear. Terrorism germinates, takes root and fester in an environment of abject poverty, mass illiteracy, corruption and a yawning gap in socio-economic parity.

3. Terrorism is given impetus by bad governance, weak socio-political and economic institutions and absence of fair credible elections.

4. Unemployment is a prime trigger and sustainer of terrorism. It was observed that where there is a preponderance of the unemployment, there is infestation of disenchantment. Profoundly, these idle hands make ready and easy recruits.

5. All the paradigms in 3, 4, and 5 are present in Nigeria.

6. Two of the major issues hobbling security in Nigeria are MEANS and SYNERGY.
   (a) MEANS: there is gross under-funding of all the security agencies. With routine poor budgetary allocation on security, performance is at best consolatory and at worst dismal. Nigeria vacillates between the two.
   (b) SYNERGY: There is manifest lack of fusion among security agencies. Specifically, agencies hardly corporate and collaborate in intelligence sharing. Rather, they compete much more than they collaborate.

7. Selection and/or recruitment process and procedure into security services have been compromised. As testified by serving and retired officers across the service, the integrity of the process is no longer guaranteed. The result is that mediocre and those whose dedication to their job and allegiance to the country are half-hearted find their way into the services.

8. There are many brilliant and competent men in the services and they are doing their best. If there are gaps, it is only because they cannot perform beyond their present capacity and the tools available to them.

9. There is a general lack of awareness amongst the populace of what constitutes insecurity. When people are ill-informed or are careless about what to look out for in order to effectively secure their environment, they are left vulnerable to criminal activities.

10. Nigeria’s borders are not only extensive, they are also very
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<td>porous. Their porous nature has made it possible for criminal elements to come in and go out of the country with ease.</td>
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<td>11. Proliferation of arms and ammunitions in the country has empowered and strengthened the present state of insecurity.</td>
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<td>Globalization should also be blamed for the wave of high insecurity profile-such as terrorism, as the country is experiencing today. It is even more so in the face of the unbound information technology phenomenon.</td>
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1. Security is a collective responsibility, involving every Nigerian. Therefore, there should be sustained programme for public awareness on security issues. That way, all Nigerians will be conscious of and sensitive to their environment in this regard.

2. Government should, as a matter of urgency, address the socio-economic and political triggers of insecurity, thus:
   a) There should be a programme for mass employment so that the army of the unemployment will be positively engaged.
   b) The unacceptable level of poverty in the land should be realistically addressed.
   c) Corruption and the uneven distribution of national wealth should be reserved.
   d) Equality of all Nigerians, as contained in the principle of The Rule of Law, must be made to work.
   e) There should be good governance; those in positions of authority must know that they are there to serve and not to be served.
   f) The integrity of our elections must be protected.

3. Since publicity is the oxygen that sustains terrorism, the media should be circumspect on the quantum and context of publicity given to terrorism and terrorists.

4. There must be deliberate and enhanced inter-agency collaboration. There is also urgent need for all the agencies to work/operate at the same pace to make fusion possible.

5. There must be adequate funding and provision of appropriate equipment for the agencies.

6. There should be training and re-training of security personnel, especially on latest developments, to enhance capacity for effectiveness.

7. There should be intelligence-based response to security threats and timely sharing of sensitive information among security agencies.

8. International/regional co-operation is crucial, just as it is incumbent on the Nigerian government to sanitize, fortify and effectively police the nation’s borders.

9. Security agencies need the support of the populace for information and informants must be protected and the information treated with absolute confidentiality.

Sir (Dr.) Mike Mbama Okiro, CFR, NPM, MNI
Former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Summit Chairman
Source: Sunday Sun May 6, 2012:37
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MASS DECEPTION OR REALITY: REFLECTIONS ON THE POLITICS OF SANCTIONS IN ZIMBABWE, 2000-2012

RICHARD S. MAPOSA, TASARA MUGUTI & DAVID TOBIAS

KEY TERMS: Deception, justice, peace, reality, sanctions, crisis, MDC, ZANU (PF).

ABSTRACT:
Discourses on the politics of sanctions continue to be lauded in Zimbabwe and even beyond, largely because of the contentious land reform programme which has sent diplomatic shockwaves across the globe. The ‘Zimbabwe crisis’ that ensued after 2000, and that manifested itself through economic meltdown, social misery and political instability, has also made the quintessential thrust and goals of sanctions prickly to understand to many people of different political and ideological across the divide inside Zimbabwe. This study examines the ZANU (PF) and MDC perceptions on the politics of sanctions in the light of the international (western) responses to the Fast-Track Land Reform programme in Zimbabwe. In essence, the study is addressing whether the issue of sanctions is real or is a matter of mass deception. Accordingly, the study posits that the subject of sanctions warrants serious examination as it may offer practical insights for the prospects of political reconciliation and economic reconstruction in Zimbabwe. In our conviction, the study recommends that the government, in full faith, must engage the international community in effort to restore durable peace and justice which will sustain integral development for Zimbabweans.

INTRODUCTION
Critical discourses on the politics of sanctions continue to grow both in Zimbabwe and internationally. Beginning from the time of chaotic land seizures in February 2000, Zimbabwe has been subjected to the imposition of sanctions, whether they are targeted individuals or the
country as a whole. The study posits that the subject of sanctions deserves serious interrogation as it may provide some useful insights for strategic short-term and long-term planning for the re-construction of Zimbabwe. In many ways, sanctions on contemporary Zimbabwe are unique. That uniqueness has been enunciated by Michael Register and Judy Larkin in their book Risk Issues and Crisis (2004) in which they posited that every national crisis or tragedy, whether it is real or simply based on mass deception, costs real value for humanity. Accordingly, it must be noted that over the ensuing years after 2000, sanctions have negatively affected the reputation of Zimbabwe in the eyes of the international community. It was mainly the Anglo-Saxon countries which agitated for the sanctions and eventually persuaded other Western nations to join and apply the embargo against Zimbabwe (Mahoso, 2011).

An understanding of the historical context is critical in order for one to appreciate the predicament in which Zimbabwe finds itself. It must be mentioned that Zimbabwe has been slapped with stringent sanctions twice in the last fifty years of its history. First and foremost, sanctions were applied against Ian Smith’s White Rhodesia after he enacted the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) on 11 November 1965. The purpose of the UDI was to sever political and constitutional relations with the United Kingdom, the colonial mother at that time. The international community imposed sanctions on Rhodesia to force Ian Smith to grant majority rule to the Africans. This action isolated Rhodesia from the international world for the next fifteen years until 1980 when independence was attained under the black Zimbabwe African National Union, Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) government of Robert Mugabe. During the UDI era, the sanctions were maliciously crafted and applied to cripple the Rhodesian economy. The perception then was that if sanctions were properly done, white Rhodesia would be brought back to legality as a British colony (Ellert, 1993:161). However, the sanctions seemed to be very
'soft' for they were unable to stop white Rhodesia from becoming the second most industrialized nation in sub-Saharan Africa after Apartheid South Africa by the mid-1970s (Mamdani V30/n23/ mahmood - mamdani / lessons -of-Zimbabwe). In fact, the Ian Smith regime was able to withstand the western onslaught through sanctions busting and import substitution to sustain white minority rule for fifteen years until 1980.

Secondly, sanctions were also imposed on Zimbabwe by Britain and United States and their allies towards the end of the 1990s as a response to the Zimbabwean involvement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) war in August 1998. Zimbabwe’s involvement in the DRC war was not well received by the West. It is interesting to note that although Zimbabwe’s intervention was under the Southern African Development Community (SADC) operations, which also included Angola and Namibia, only Zimbabwe was punished for having played a leading role. However, a critical analysis of the circumstances leading to the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe will reveal that the issue at stake was that Zimbabwe was blocking the USA’s proxies, that is, Uganda and Rwanda, from deposing Laurent Kabila and thus opening the Congolese resources to western exploitation. The Western countries like the US had vested interests in the civil war and they supported the rebels fighting against the Kabila regime in Kinshasa. Zimbabwe’s involvement in the DRC war was part of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC)’s endeavour to bring about stability in the sub-Saharan region.

It is important to note that the involvement also offered economic opportunities to several Zimbabweans who wanted to be entrepreneurs. The presence of Zimbabwe in the DRC was seen as a threat to the European economic objective especially given the fact that the Zimbabwean government encouraged its people to penetrate
the DRC market, which was believed to have been established by the Zimbabwe Defense Forces (Raftopoulos, 2009). The operation in the DRC was financially expensive and fraught with many difficulties. The distance from Harare to Kinshasa was more than 1,500km across the northern country of Zambia. War supplies had to be transported by air. In that regard, parastatals such as Air Zimbabwe and the Forestry Commission were used to ferry war materials and expertise at the expense of the taxpayers’ money at home. Yet, when the DRC war was over, the proceeds of that external operation did not seem to benefit the taxpayers in Zimbabwe. Neither could such proceeds be indicated in the national fiscal records. In January 2000 Zimbabwe’s then Finance Minister, Simba Makoni, admitted to Parliament that the country’s military cost in the DRC had exceeded Z$10 billion dollars, equal to US$240 million dollars. This was being done at a time when Zimbabwe’s health budget had been slashed to a point where hospitals had run out of basic drugs (Hill, 2003). Thus, the cost of being involved in this war compounded the failures of ESAP. It is against such a background that the Zimbabwean government, led by ZANU (PF)’s Robert Mugabe, was criticized of economic mismanagement. Accordingly, the study posits that sanctions in Zimbabwe have roots in such developments where the West also joined discourses on the alleged economic mismanagement and human rights abuses by the government of President Mugabe. In addition, serious opposition politics began to emerge by the end of the 1990s. In order to deal with the situation, the ZANU (PF) government crafted pieces of legislations such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (2002) and Public Order and Security Act (2002), amended in 2007. These legal instruments became very repressive and confrontational to stakeholders in the democratisation processes such as students, civil servants, intellectuals and human rights organizations. Thus, the repressive and dictatorial tendencies of Mugabe’s government played a part in inviting sanctions in the late 1990s. Yet, if the truth be plainly told, the contemporary sanctions
nagging Zimbabwe must be understood in light of the controversial historical land question.

As a number of historians, social scientists and politicians have concurred, the land question is of critical significance to the political history of Zimbabwe. According to Kanyekanye (2011), re-dressing the imbalances in the land ownership systems and its distribution patterns was a key objective of the Second Chimurenga (war of liberation). In order to facilitate the Lancaster House Conference agreement reached in London in December 1979, the negotiators eventually agreed to maintain a willing-seller and willing-buyer approach to land re-distribution. The approach was to occur step by step during the first ten years of Zimbabwe’s independence. It must be noted that Mugabe’s government adhered to the principles of the Lancaster House Conference Agreement on the nature of redistributing land, especially the former white commercial farm lands. Subsequently, at the expiry of the 10-year clause, the ZANU(PF) government further agreed with then Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, to postpone any radical land reform programme in order to avoid derailment of the transition to democracy in South Africa (New African, 2007).

Therefore, it is clear that the Zimbabwean government exercised enormous political and constitutional patience on the contentious land question. However, it must be noted that the Zimbabwean government was disappointed by the new stance taken by the British government in 1997, which stated that the U.K believed that it had no special responsibility to meet the costs of purchasing prime land from white commercial farmers in Zimbabwe (New African, 2007) By disavowing special responsibility, the U.K failed to fulfill its historical contractual obligations as agreed to at the Lancaster House Conference Agreement. Therefore, Zimbabwe had, what some scholars would argue, a genuine historical grievance with
the U.K regarding the land reform programme. It can be argued that this was the first form of sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe. The sanctions were further re-enforced in 1999 when the International Monetary Fund stopped budgetary support to Zimbabwe. This was in response to Zimbabwe’s intervention in the DRC war and the introduction of the Fast-Track Land Reform programme in 2000, which resulted in the compulsory nationwide acquisition of white commercial farm lands.

Whether one approves or disapproves of the way the land reform programme was finally conducted in Zimbabwe, what is clear is that the situation was far more complex than the simplistic view that was taken by the Western media and some local independent newspapers. Therefore, in the light of the above historical context, a widespread perception is created that, in fact, sanctions are usually perceived as punishment for undertaking the land reform programme. This impression, that sanctions were unfairly imposed on Zimbabwe, is not only held within certain quarters in Zimbabwe but is also widespread in Africa and beyond. This impression is re-enforced by the fact that certain countries, even objectively less democratic than Zimbabwe and with objectively poorer human rights records, do not have similar sanctions imposed on them by the West. The impression created is that the West is particularly against the ZANU (PF) government and that even if ZANU-PF’s Robert Mugabe achieves a fair victory in the polls, his government would remain unacceptable to the West.

The incessant discourses on the sanctions regime led by the US and Britain were quite elaborate. The Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) became law in December 2001. Part of the Act was a formal injunction on US officials in the international financial institutions to ‘oppose and vote against any extension by the respective institution of any loan, credit or guarantee
to the government of Zimbabwe’. In autumn 2001 the IMF had declared Zimbabwe ‘ineligible to use the general resources of the IMF’ and removed it from the list of countries that could borrow from its Poverty and Growth Facility. In 2002, the IMF again issued a formal declaration of non-cooperation with the government of Zimbabwe and suspended all technical assistance. The US legislation also authorized then President of the USA, George W. Bush, to fund ‘an independent and free press and electronic media in Zimbabwe’ and to allocate US$6 million for promoting ‘democracy and good governance programmes’. A close analysis of the post-2000 sanctions politics will reveal that there was a paradigm shift in sanctions application from the isolation mode of the UDI period to a new interventionist model which was meant to punish the ZANU (PF) regime and at the same time provide assistance for the opposition political formations in Zimbabwe. Section 2 of the ZIDERA reads, ‘It is the policy of the United States to support the people of Zimbabwe in their struggle to effect peaceful, democratic change, achieve broad-based and equitable economic growth, and restore the rule of law’ (ZIDERA, 2001). One may question whether the US government was genuine or if was mere rhetoric and deception of the people of Zimbabwe and the rest of the international community.

Contested Perspectives
The sanctions issue has generated an emotive debate among Zimbabweans of all walks of life, different political persuasions and the international community at large. The debate hinges on the circumstances that led to the imposition of sanctions, whether sanctions affect the rank and file in general or whether they are targeted at specific individuals or institutions in Zimbabwe. In fact, so intense has been the debate that sanctions have deeply divided people both inside and outside Zimbabwe. In certain extreme cases, the sanctions issue has resulted in jambanja (excessive violence) among
people of different political persuasions in Zimbabwe. It is interesting to note that in the Zimbabwean context, a person’s political affiliation determines one’s perspective on the discourses concerning the imposition of sanctions. Broadly speaking, it will be noted that perspectives on sanctions are broadly represented by the ZANU (PF) and MDC, the two main political parties which have scrambled for political power for the last twelve years in Zimbabwe.

**The ZANU (PF) Perspective**

ZANU PF’s perspective has been that sanctions were imposed by Britain, America and their allies as a reaction to the 2000 Fast-Track Land Reform programme which targeted and embattled the former white commercial farmers in Zimbabwe. So many sordid events took place in the process of the acquisitions of the prime land which Africans had been deprived of owning on account of colonial imbalances (Moyana, 2002). For instance, properties were burnt to render the resisting white farmers powerless and destitute. Some white farmers and black farm workers were maimed, tortured and even burnt to death by the black invaders, popularly known as *mwana vevhu* (son of the soil) in the Zimbabwean political discourses. The new invaders were the war veterans of the Second Chimurenga of the 1970s and the landless peasants from the arid rural communities. These new invaders suddenly were transformed to become ZANU (PF) political functionaries who openly asserted that the war on land was ‘an unfinished business’ since the days of colonial occupation in 1890. Thus, the Fast-Track Land reform programme was politicized from February 2000 to date. ZANU (PF) protagonists have argued that the sanctions were imposed to bring about ‘regime change’, that is, to see that President Robert Mugabe could be ousted out of office in Zimbabwe. ZANU (PF) politicians have perceived that the sanctions are illegal and constitute an act of white racist war upon Zimbabwe to perpetuate white supremacy in a country which has been sovereign.
since 1980. The effects of the diabolic sanctions have not left anyone destitute in the country. As posited by Dr Tafataona Mahoso, the ZANU (PF) ideologist and strategist:

‘The illegal sanctions are a cowardly substitute for illegal military invasion and they must be understood as a heightened form of comprehensive devaluation of the entire economy intended to facilitate foreign corporate cannibalism, foreign corporate takeover of the assets of the nation devalued by sanctions. The milder forms of devaluation attempted through structural adjustment failed to produce the desired economic and political results, as happened in Zambia in 1991. So sanctions followed Zimbabwe’s abandonment of structural adjustment in 2001’. (Sunday Mail, March 20-26, 2011).

Thus, according to ZANU (PF) rhetoric, the 2000 Fast-Track Land Reform programme, was necessitated by the fact that Britain had reneged on the promises it had made during the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979. That there was now need for a constitutional review on the issue was unquestionable. The social realities of independent Zimbabwe remained embedded in an earlier historical period in which some 6 000 white farmers owned 15.5 million hectares of prime land, 39 per cent of the land in the country, while about 4.5 million farmers (a million households) in ‘communal areas’ were left to subsist on 16.4 million hectares of the most arid land, to which they had been removed or confined by a century of colonial rule. In the middle, were 8 500 small- scale black farmers on about 1.4 million hectares of land (Mamdani, pg. 2) According to ZANU (PF) thinking, this was not a sustainable arrangement in a country which had been won through a protracted armed struggle supported by a large peasantry in which the land issue occupied a centre stage. The Lancaster House Conference provisions’ inadequacies on the de-
colonization of land meant that the land issue remained the focus of politics almost twenty years later in independent Zimbabwe.

The politics of land relations and land reform in independent Zimbabwe has been well articulated by historians and social scientists like Henry Moyana (2002), Lloyd Sachikonye (2005) and Sam Moyo (2007). The British and Americans, so the argument goes, were not happy that their kith and kin had lost prime commercial farmlands as a result of the Land Reform Programme which started in February 2000 in Zimbabwe. The ZANU (PF) functionaries further argued that the Fast-Track Land Reform programme was necessitated by the fact that the former white commercial farmers had failed to relinquish land to the landless blacks in post-independent Zimbabwe under the willing-buyer and willing-seller basis as stipulated in the Lancaster House Conference Agreement (1979). Therefore, ZANU (PF) politicians have consistently believed that the sanctions were meant to force the ZANU (PF) government to reverse the Fast-Track Land Reform Programme which was designed and undertaken to empower the landless black people through forceful acquisition and re-settlement. Thus, the ZANU (PF) argument was that the British and Americans wanted to remove a legitimate government from power to protect white interests by keeping their white kith and kin on prime farmlands and other investments in the country. The ZANU (PF) party viewed the imposition of sanctions as an attempt to re-colonise Zimbabwe through an arduous process leading to regime change. It was believed that the sanctions were invited by the MDC party as a tool to expedite regime change in Zimbabwe.

It must be noted that calling sanctions as ‘targeted sanctions’ was viewed by ZANU (PF) functionaries just as a way of camouflaging. ZANU PF party believes that the sanctions are targeted at all Zimbabweans, the living and also the unborn. Finally, there is a strong conviction among ZANU (PF) politicians that the sanctions are
being bankrolled out in response to Zimbabwe’s independent foreign policy and its land redistribution with the aim of crippling the economy so that the ensuing economic chaos could be attributed to land reform itself. In this regard, President Mugabe further sees the sanctions as a British agenda to challenge Zimbabwe’s sovereignty. Accordingly, Mugabe sought to use the sanctions as a strong political weapon to canvas for support in preparation for the 28 March 2008 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. In this consideration, ZANU (PF) asserted that sanctions are neither targeted nor smart; instead they are punitive and illegal because they were deliberately crafted in Britain, America, Europe and Eurasia. For example, it was the USA government which crafted the abhorrent Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) which was signed in December 2001 by George W. Bush. ZIDERA specifically directs the Secretary of Treasury to instruct the US Executive Director to each international financial institution to oppose and vote against any loan credit or guarantee to Zimbabwe or cancellation of reduction of indebtedness. ZIDERA says ‘Until the President makes the certification described in sub-section(d) and except as may be required to meet basic human needs or for good governance, the Secretary of the Treasury shall instruct the US executive director to each international institution to oppose or vote against any extension by the respective institutions of any loan, credit or guarantee to the Government of Zimbabwe or any cancellation or reduction indebtedness owed by the Government of Zimbabwe to the United States or any international financial institution’. This targeted all Zimbabweans including the inclusive Government obtaining now. ZIDERA has also interfered with the RTGS transaction payments for diamonds dug in the rich Marange diamonds field in the eastern Zimbabwean province of Manicaland meant to pay civil servants and boost Government revenues. The argument is that the operations of diamonds are not transparent and so the EU has imposed sanctions on the Zimbabwean diamond companies.
For President Mugabe, the sanctions are meant to topple the indigenous Zimbabweans from the pedestal of freedom and independence won through the armed struggle. In fact, during the heat of the armed struggle in the 1970s, Robert Mugabe as a guerilla leader was on record in claiming that ‘the justice of our cause is the justice of our gun’. The MDC party further went as far as South Africa, Mozambique accosting to impose fuel, electricity and trade sanctions against Zimbabwe all on behalf of Britain and her allies. Since then these extensive sanctions by Europe and America have been renewed yearly all in a bid to break the back of Zimbabweans by crippling their economy and destabilizing their independence. Sanctions have been a vehicle by the hostile Western nations to cause unprecedented misery in the country hoping to build people disaffection with ZANU (PF) and then to mobilise for the MDC party. In fact, President Mugabe saw Tony Blair, the former British Labour Prime Minister, as the creator of the MDC party. On the 4th of June 2004, Tony Blair openly told the House of Commons that the British government ‘works closely with the opposition MDC on measures that (the British Government) takes in respect of Zimbabwe.’ The British position is also affirmed by the US President, Barack Obama, who maintained that the internal policies of Zimbabwe ‘pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States’. Nevertheless, Mugabe’s government has not been cowed. Instead, Mugabe used this as a weapon to canvass support the world including SADC and called for the immediate removal of the obnoxious sanctions (ZANU PF: The Peoples’ Manifesto, 2008 :31) For instance, on 2 March 2011, President Mugabe launched the ant-sanction petition which had been signed by more than two million ordinary people across the country.
The MDC Perspective

The sanctions have been viewed by the MDC party as a way of trying to facilitate political change in the form of ‘regime change’ in Zimbabwe. The MDC politicians have widely accused the ZANU (PF) party of mismanagement of the national economy, breakdown of the rule of law, abuse of human rights and deepening of social alienation in Zimbabwe. The MDC politicians have argued that sanctions constitute the best approach to bringing about good governance and democratic space in Zimbabwe. The MDC party and different other civic organizations are of the opinion that the sanctions were a result of the breakdown of law that accompanied the land invasions of early 2000. Initially, the business community took an indifferent attitude towards the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe. The business leaders initially thought that the sanctions were purely political in nature and as such there was no way they were going to harm business. The propaganda among Western governments, journalists and scholars is that there have been no broad-based, economic sanctions imposed upon Zimbabwe.

The MDC’s logic of argument was based on the reckless modalities in which ZANU PF had carried out the land reform programme since 2000. For instance, the land invasions through jambança (coercive force) caused several white farmers to lose their farming properties without compensation and forced some of them to live as émigrés abroad despite the fact that they are Zimbabwean citizens by birth. In addition, MDC politicians singled out the manner in which ZANU (PF) manipulated the constitutional reform process and referendum in 2000 and later violently conducted the 2002, 2005 and 2008 parliamentary and presidential elections. Notably, the June 2008 Presidential “re-run” elections sent diplomatic shock waves across the globe due to the unprecedented extent of jambança that was caused by ZANU (PF) militias and which came to engulf the whole country. Whilst ZANU PF was blaming Zimbabwean social, economic
and political ills on the sanctions, the MDC party was of the view that the challenges confronted by the country were a result of President Mugabe’s aggressive policies which were undertaken to justify the land reform programme at any price.

It must also be mentioned that the MDC party perceived sanctions as targeted at specific and selected individuals and firms which propped up the ZANU (PF) regime in Zimbabwe. The sanctions were perceived to have originated from land reform exercise which came to solely benefit the top ZANU (PF) politicians, top military officers, top police officers, top civil servants, ambassadors and selected war veterans. Those ordinary landless peasants, who got land, were lucky to be parceled with mere pieces of less fertile land in order to justify the whole reform gimmick. Thus, the perception of the MDC politicians was that sanctions did not affect the rank and file because sanctions were believed to be specific and well-calculated against certain individuals and institutions aligned to President Mugabe’s regime. Given that the sanctions were only targeted, the MDC politicians posited that sanctions had very limited impact on ordinary people because they were aimed at only punishing or pushing for regime change in Zimbabwe. The MDC politicians further argued that the sanctions were being manipulated by the ZANU (PF) politicians to divert the people’s attention from the fundamental bread and butter issues and from causes of the economic meltdown which hinged on re-distribution of land grabbed from the white commercial farmers were parceled out to thousands of indigenous Zimbabweans. In fact, the MDC party has been very sympathetic to the former white commercial farmers in Zimbabwe, so logically its perspective was in tandem with the Western position on sanctions in Zimbabwe. It must be noted, that in principle, the British and Americans imposed arms, financial and other forms of economic embargoes on Zimbabwe to cripple its participation in the DRC war. Zimbabwe was perceived to be following an aggressive foreign policy
to undo a neighbor’s sovereignty, that of the DRC. The US position was aptly summarised in Section 4 of ZIDERA which noted that

‘Through economic mismanagement, undemocratic practices, the costly deployment of troops to the Democratic Republic of Congo, the government of Zimbabwe has rendered itself ineligible to participate in International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) and International Monetary Fund [IMF] which would otherwise be providing substantial resources to assist in the recovery and modernization of Zimbabwe’s economy. The people of Zimbabwe have thus been denied the economic and democratic benefit envisioned by the donors to such programmes, including the United States’.

However, there were some US Congressmen who were opposed to the Bill even before it was signed into law in December 2001 to effect regime change in Zimbabwe. For example, Cynthia McKinney, one of the few African-American politicians in the US Congress at the time, spoke against the Bill. In fact, McKinney noted ‘Can anyone explain how the people in question who now have the land in question in Zimbabwe got title to the land? These sanctions are against land reform, nothing more. This is an act in defense of white privilege, by white supremacists.’ (http://maravi.blogspot.com/2007/05/zimbabwe-democracy-and-economic_24.html)

**The impact of sanctions: Some reflections**

It is instructive to state that Zimbabwe has been under sanctions by the West since the late 1990s to the present. While there has been a slight relaxation of sanctions in the post-GNU since February 2009, the bulk of the sanctions remain in place and it is worthwhile to examine their impact on the country. Though people of different political
persuasions hold different views on the legality and or illegality of sanctions in Zimbabwe, it is indisputable that they have had a negative impact on the economy. There is no doubt that the sanctions are hurting every Zimbabwean but of course not in the manner ZANU (PF) politicians have propagated in the last decade.

As observed by Huni (Sunday Mail 5-11, June, 2011) the sanctions have widely been condemned from many quarters including SADC and the African Union( AU) for causing untold suffering among Zimbabweans and for undermining economic recovery efforts while crippling the private sector by denying it access to international credit. Sanctions have broken the economy and made the ordinary people to endure a lot of unprecedented hardships countrywide. When, for instance, the Zimbabwe electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) fails to fund viable power projects and people have been under load-shedding: who is affected? Everybody suffers. Specifically, the rank and files who cannot afford to buy coal or electricity generators bear the brunt of the ZESA’s failure to distribute electricity. In addition, business is acutely affected as well. It should be noted that most parastatals were actually incapacitated due to electrical outages and so have not rendered the desired services to make the economy tick. Therefore, one can argue that the generality of the Zimbabwean population has been severely affected by these sanctions.

In that context it should be noted that President Robert Mugabe appealed to Britain and her western allies to remove the sanctions citing and emphasizing the fact that they had caused untold suffering to the people of Zimbabwe. In this regard, at one time President Mugabe embarked on an Anti-Sanctions campaign which was meant to lobby for the removal of sanctions by the international community. People were made to sign the Anti-Sanction forms which were distributed countrywide. Those anti-sanction forms were availed
to civil servants in their offices, schools, colleges and universities. In addition, the forms were sent to embassies across the globe for people in the diaspora to sign as a patriotic gesture for the survival of Zimbabwe as a sovereign country. Nevertheless, many people inside and outside Zimbabwe perceived the strategy as a very desperate move aimed at canvassing political support for the beleaguered ZANU (PF) party in Zimbabwe.

It should also be noted that the sanctions have polarized the political situation, resulting in the creation of a highly unstable macroeconomic environment in Zimbabwe. This has ultimately caused a social and economic meltdown. It is this economic decline and the collapse of the democratic process, among other factors, greatly affected the way people had to vote particularly in the 2005 and 2008 Presidential elections and later during the one-candidate Presidential re-run election in June 2008. Those elections became a vote of no confidence for the ZANU (PF) party. Those elections came at a time when the relationship between Zimbabwe and the West were at their lowest ebb (Eustinah, 2011). In fact, ZIDERA talks of targeting sanctions on individuals, but the truth is that the business firms that deal with the commercial life line of Zimbabwe are targeted too. The result has been the mass retrenchment of workers, that is, job losses due to the effects of sanctions that are hurting Zimbabwe. In a situation where jobs are lost through this way, or where jobs are simply scarce because the economic environment is unsecured for foreign firms to operate, there is social frustration and political instability in society. It is only safe for someone who has never worked in life who has no idea how valuable employment is. The stark reality is that no industry or sector, private or public, has been spared from the scourge of sanctions. The social safety-nets that used to cushion the society’s vulnerable groups have consequential fallen off, leaving them precariously exposed to harsh economic environment in Zimbabwe. A convincing outcome of the sub-human
conditions brought about by sanctions has been the consequent airlifting of white pensioners of the British origin at the peak of the inflationary era during the infamous 2008 fiscal year.

In addition, the World Bank used to offer subsidized housing materials for housing construction. Nevertheless, it has stopped as a result of the politics of sanctions. The World Bank has funded maternity, sanitation, power projects, women’s rights to almost everything in Zimbabwe and most developing countries. Our criticism of the World Bank is that it has generated odious debt while the IMF is often cited as popping up with finance to prop up poor economies in the developing world. The IMF is meant to supply emergency funding to countries in need of such assistance. The World Bank and IMF have also afforded debt relief to several countries such as Tanzania and Burkina Faso. A 2004 World Bank Report shows that poverty reduction doubled with debt relief. But, ZIDERA prevents this debt relief and even stifles IFC interventions in the Zimbabwean private sector. More often than not, academics argue that there is no debt that is not payable on the basis that any country, except Zimbabwe under ZIDERA, can re-define its debt through the IMF and World Bank. ZIDERA thus acts as frontal machinery for championing sanctions to all Zimbabweans living and those to be born! The use of a unilateral sanctions list heightens country risk and invariably increases the costs of borrowing, beyond targeted companies and individuals. Market price risk and having your country on the US and EU sanctions list certainly increases risk beyond internal security risk, thus scaring both multilateral and private equity funds from Zimbabwe. The queue to borrow at rates over 20 per cent per annum in Zimbabwe points to a dangerous lack of competitiveness that is being foisted on business, invariably forcing them to seek a large margin in excess of normal global margins of 5 per cent seen in the West. Only in the last year some businesses in Zimbabwe can secure letters of credit with an EU country. This remains a difficulty with
banks such as HSBC refusing currently to accept Zimbabwean traveler’s cheques as per instruction from the head office in London. The CZI President experienced this directly in Beijing.

AGOA did not benefit Zimbabwe. In fact, there are such countries such as Botswana which did not have features that qualified them but negotiated entry and accessed the benefits of AGOA, while Zimbabwe failed largely due to the extension of sanctions imposed by the US (Sunday Mail, 20 March 2011). The ZEDERA Bill of 2001 sought to deny the government of Zimbabwe any financial assistance by international organizations. IMF and the World Bank were asked not to extend loans, credit or guarantees for ‘Reconstruction and Development’. The major reason was that Zimbabwe had restored people’s sacred birthright through land reform.

Moreover, it must be noted that the pangs of the reality of the sanctions are much noticeable in the rural areas in Zimbabwe. Rural peasants became the most vulnerable class of people who have borne the brunt of the sanctions. This is true when evaluated in the light of the status and position of women, children and widows living with HIV and AIDS disease in society. Clearly, these groups form a trinity of the most marginalised people in Zimbabwe. For instance, these people suffered most in the sense that they were deprived of the right to proper education, the right to a sound health delivery system and the right to decent shelter. They literally experienced the conditions of destitution and homelessness due to an ailing economy which was and continues to be sanction-induced. It can therefore be asserted that the United States legislators aimed at creating an economically-deprived population which could be manipulated to remove ZANU PF off from political power through its much-touted policy of ‘regime change’.
It is important to note that while the Western world and the United States of America have declared that the sanctions do not affect ordinary Zimbabweans but few individuals and companies aligned to ZANU (PF), the wording of ZIDERA (2001), Canada’s Special Economic Measures (Zimbabwe) Regulations or the European Union (Zimbabwe) (Financial Sanctions) Regulations is very specific on the objectives of sanctions on Zimbabwe. Section 6 of ZIDERA specifies that sanctions are targeted at individuals responsible for the deliberate breakdown of the rule of law, political motivated violence and intimidation in Zimbabwe. These individuals are subjected to travel bans and economic sanctions. The EU and Canada regulations are even more specific about military trade with Zimbabwe. That the government fails to have access to privileges at the IMF and Multilateral Development Banks is because of the deleterious sanctions which are being used as a form of punishment or, perhaps, a form of neo-colonialism by the western nations. Section 49(a) of ZIDERA articulates the circumstances that led to the enactment of this law. Yet, our critical assessment would question the reason why the US government has maintained ZIDERA if it has no intention to stifle efforts by Zimbabwe to deal with its debt and secure funding for development.

According to Kanyekanye (2011) of the Zimbabwe Confederation of Industries, Zimbabwe has failed to access the international debt market largely because of the sanctions. Zimbabwe only gets funding from the Africa Development Bank, South African Development Bank and China Development Bank. Industry needs a lot of money to be revived but since ZIDERA formalized the sanctions which have effectively blocked access to debt relief and balance of payment support from international financial institutions, nothing is good for Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the EU and other Western nations have also imposed their own forms of sanctions (Kanyekanye, 2011) Several international financiers have always maintained that the
Zimbabwean government in Harare should sort out the political issues first in order to get funding. Even the MDC’s leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, acknowledged this at an opening speech on 8 March 2011 at the European Investment Conference. Tsvangirai conceded the need to remove sanctions while pointing out the difficulties faced in this endeavor. The Zimbabwean Minister of Finance, Tendai Biti, echoed the same sentiments at the same conference when he indicated the stark reality that Zimbabwe is one of the few countries that are driving growth exclusively on domestic resources, that is, without overseas development assistance (The Herald, 2011). That sanctions are harming everyone is also tainted by the fact that Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) abandoned projects they were setting up in most rural areas before their completion at the height of the Zimbabwe crisis in 2008. It is reality that the ‘targeted’ sanctions are harming the ordinary people since the so-called ‘targeted’ individuals themselves in society do own very big companies and other properties in Zimbabwe today. ZANU (PF) party has used some of its own parastatals and companies, state enterprises, such as ZISCOSTEEL, and ZUPCO, to fund activities which advance President Mugabe’s hold onto power in Zimbabwe.

It has been argued that it is not the intention of those who imposed the sanctions on Zimbabwe ‘to see innocent Zimbabweans suffer, rather the pain we go through is the same pain that we go through when a syringe enters your buttocks to enable medicine to target disease-causing organisms residing within the body!’ (File://G:\Sanctions on Zimbabwe, 2011) Thus, the problem with sanctions is that the ordinary people are victims who suffer problems similar to under the proverbial fight of elephants. With the advent of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in February 2009, it was hoped that the sanctions were going to be removed once and for all. However, the sanctions have remained in place lock, stock and barrel because their Western sponsors argue that the circumstances that
necessitated them in the first place have not changed significantly and that there is little improvement on the ground in Zimbabwe. In the Western view, the continued violence, breakdown of rule of law, harassment of opposition political supporters, treason trials, shrinking of democratic space do not seem to warrant the scrapping off of the sanctions in Zimbabwe. On the question of the effectiveness of the so-called targeted sanctions, one is compelled to argue that even if ZANU (PF)’s behavior has not significantly changed, there are indications that sanctions have done enough to limit the economic activity of ZANU PF-linked enterprises, eventually forcing them to enter into a GNU with the two MDC formations. This is critical in that it has limited the ability of ZANU PF to fund its activities, which have at times translated into bloody efforts meant to exterminate political opponents, especially of the two MDC formations.

This brings us to the issue of whether sanctions are evil or otherwise. Again, the answer is circumstantial and reflects, in a way, the nature of the contested perspectives on sanctions on the ZANU (PF) and MDC political divide in Zimbabwe. On one hand, one major website source for the study had the audacity to declare, ‘So to ZANU PF plunderers sanctions are evil, but those of us who wish to see the country’s wealth exploited transparently and to the benefit of everyone we say that they are helping to reduce plunder. In the face of rogue elements going about killing people and maiming defenseless people simply to cling onto power there are only two options; either to do something or to do nothing. In doing something there are two options; either to confront the regime militarily or use other means to weaken it’ (File://G:\Sanctions on Zimbabwe, 2011). Nevertheless, as happened during the Ian Smith regime, ZANU PF has put in place elaborate sanctions-bursting mechanisms that involve China. Though ZANU PF-linked enterprises have failed to benefit from transactions with the Western block, they have been able to use Chinese banks to access financial assistance and also to clear money
acquired from diamond sales. For that reason, the debilitating effects of sanctions have been limited to some extent and the ZANU party has been able to soldier on, sailing through the turbulent political terrain in Zimbabwe.

In order to deceive the world, the Western countries and their US counterparts have deliberately employed massive propaganda everywhere. Benito Mussolini, the Fascist Italian leader, would often say, if you have to lie, you should tell repeated lies, and not only repeated lies, but tell very big lies in order to convince the masses. The Western agenda is to try to minimize the impact of sanctions in order to convince the world that all the challenges Zimbabwe is facing are interrelated due to mismanagement, bad governance, lawlessness and the folly of the land reform programme since 2000. Whilst the ZANU (PF) government was to blame for Zimbabwe’s predicament, the sanctions, which, according to their western sponsors and supporters were meant to stop the rot by instigating regime change through the establishment of a democratic regime, they have had no small part in exacerbating the Zimbabwean meltdown. This, then, heightens the suspicion held in some quarters that to say that sanctions are targeted is nothing but fallacious as the impact reverberates across the economy and the different sociological profiles of the Zimbabwean society at large. As noted by Mahoso (2011), ‘Supporters of the view that sanctions are minor inconveniences that punish a few powerful leaders expect us to believe that the leaders of major powers are simpletons who devise ineffective sanctions policies and that they persist despite their sanctions playing into the hands of the sanctions targets.’ That there was a lot of deception in the sanctions world view, particularly that the sanctions have not torpedoed the Zimbabwean economy ‘to the deep end,’ was reflected in the legislation proposed by US Senator James Inhofe. The title of the Bill, the ‘Zimbabwe Sanctions Repeal Act’ of 2010, clearly acknowledges that, indeed, Zimbabwe was under sanctions which adversely affected the
economy. The Bill noted that there was need to repeal the sanctions in order to restore fully the economy of Zimbabwe since the MDC party was now part of the Zimbabwe’s GNU, an Inclusive Government which is currently running Zimbabwe. The implication of Inhofe’s Bill is that sanctions have negatively affected the Zimbabwean economy hence economic recovery necessitated their repeal. However, the US maintains that the sanctions must remain in place in order to force President Mugabe to embrace the SADC election roadmap and to commit him to relinquish power to a successor (The Sunday Mail, 5-11 June 2011).

In the Sunday Mail of March 20-26, 2011, Mahoso posited that sanctions worsened the de-valuation of African lives through war and sanctions. In particular, sanctions have led to the devaluation of the things Africans need to sustain a normal life. Their job skills and labour power are devalued especially when they try to go to other countries in order to run away from hyperinflation, economic depression, the collapse of wages and diminishing livelihoods. But even those who stay put and remain loyal and patriotic have their skills and labour drastically devalued. Today, some three years after the formation of the Inclusive Government and the glowing promises of a quick improvement in wages and work conditions, civil servants are still grossly underpaid in Zimbabwe. The fact that their wages and salaries are still so low is a lingering reflection of the devaluation that emanates from the ugly effects of the illegal sanctions in Zimbabwe. The fact is that the low paid civil servants continue to soldier on, working patriotically together with some officials in that Inclusive Government lobbying at the IMF and World Bank to scrap sanctions reflect the long-term impact of the sanctions that are nagging Zimbabwe. But one may ask: why is the business corporate world almost silent about the condemnation of illegal sanctions inside Zimbabwe? It would seem that the business fraternity is taking a liberal position. In the minds of some of the people in business, it was
up to politicians to fight against sanctions because sanctions are political in terms of their origins. So, in the past twelve years, most business organizations have viewed sanctions as an exclusively political matter and thus ought to be tackled by politicians. It is a paradox that almost all the Anglo-Saxon countries still have huge investment while keeping the illegal sanctions regime intact in Zimbabwe. The devaluation of the Zimbabwe currency, which escalated with the structural adjustment, helped to enrich those with foreign currency. So also the devaluation of all the remaining assets of Zimbabwe by maintaining sanctions helps foreigners to weaken the resolve to insist on full control of Zimbabwe’s economy. As one eminent politician in the Zimbabwe government has conceded, ‘If we are made desperate for credit, for machinery, for skills which left the country due to sanctions, we become easier to manipulate. We settle for less than our real value for small investment being offered. In fact, we lose the proper sense of what we are worth and even the method of determining our real value’ (The Herald, 2011). As a result, the sanctions have affected almost every aspect of Zimbabwean life, that is, cultural, legal, social, political and economic (mining, industry, manufacturing, commerce, agriculture and tourism).

Nevertheless, it must be noted that in the post GNU period after February 2009, there has been a gradual relaxation of sanctions. A number of supermarkets and individual shops whose shelves were empty or stocked with chunks and tissue paper, especially in African dominated areas, are now fully stocked and the shortage of commodities is now a thing of the past. The NGOs are once more on the ground doing relief, advocacy and developmental work in the country. Industry, agriculture and mining are beginning to tick and slowly showing signs of recovery from the sanctions-related debilitating economic crunch. Perhaps, it is only in the post-GNU era that sustained debate may be conceded on whether the sanctions are targeted or not. What is real for sure is that a number of the assets of
highly placed officials who are linked to ZANU (PF)’s Robert Mugabe continue to be frozen abroad, and with travel restrictions remain intact, among others. This, in our view, does not affect the ordinary men in the streets and rural communities at large. Ordinary citizens do not have assets abroad, they do not even go for shopping trips or sprees overseas; they get medication at home and their children attend ordinary schools inside Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, a few ordinary Zimbabweans can now afford to drive sikorokoros (second hand cars), which was unheard of at the height of the Zimbabwe crisis around 2008. Today, the existential landscape has dramatically shifted, with the chiefs crying the most for a variety of reasons and ordinary people able to access basic commodities in the open market hitherto unknown at the zenith of the Zimbabwe crisis.

CONCLUDING REMARKS
Zimbabwe’s current economic woes are sanctions-related, irrespective of the initial circumstances that led to their instigation. In our trajectory, the country underwent stringent sanctions at critical phases of her existence after 1965. First and foremost, the study noted that sanctions were applied when Ian Smith enacted UDI between 1965 and 1980. Secondly, independent Zimbabwe under President Mugabe has been slapped with sanctions due to a number of factors. It should also be noted that sanctions were first imposed on post-independent Zimbabwe towards the end of the end of the 1990s. This was a result of Zimbabwe’s participation in the Democratic Republic of Congo’s civil war. Secondly, sanctions were vigorously imposed on a country due to ZANU (PF) which had embarked on a Fast-Track Land Reform after February 2000. At any rate, the dynamics of the resettlement patterns which caused sanctions to be heavily contested in terms of their essence, thrust, goals and overall impact inside Zimbabwe.
A significant number of scholars perceive sanctions as a manifestation of neo-colonial abuse by the western nations, particularly Great Britain and the US, who tend to dominate the Third World countries. When this is viewed against the western indifference about the much more catastrophic Rwanda genocide, when western NGOs pulled out and no one intervened, the justification that this land reform in Zimbabwe has to do with human rights is often doubted in a pan African lens. This heightens the suspicion that Zimbabweans are being punished for undertaking the gigantic land reform programme which was meant to correct the past historical imbalances brought by account of colonialism. This may appear to be an erroneous perception but it is a reality with a large following in the contemporary Zimbabwean discourses. Nevertheless, this study established that the West, together with the internal civic groups, have viewed sanctions as an attempt to force the ZANU(PF) party to respect the rule of law, respect human rights and uphold democratic values. They argued that President Mugabe’s leadership was becoming too repressive and intolerant towards its citizens.

The European Union’s concern that its sanctions against Zimbabwe have been motivated by a sincere concern for the human rights of the Zimbabweans is thus questionable. Sanctions have been used as a threat for economic collapse and socio-economic deprivation to make ordinary Zimbabweans not support President Robert Mugabe’s government. The ulterior motive has been to bring about the much-touted notions of ‘regime change’ in Zimbabwe. Therefore, sanctions are carefully calculated string of measures meant to continue neo-colonialism and sustain globalisation. In the light of this assessment, sanctions are meant to intimidate and thereby stopping Zimbabwe, as a sovereign nation, from pursuing Article 2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Article 29 of the African Charter on Human Rights and People’s Rights (The Herald, 2011).
While a number of conclusions can be drawn from the foregoing, there is one point which is indisputable: that the sanctions are there for real. That they were targeted at specific individuals and firms is mere rhetoric, fallacious and a mirage. Even ordinary Zimbabwean citizens have been caught in the crossfire. The commonly held view that the sanctions are smart and do not affect the rank and file of Zimbabweans is pre-mediated propaganda being deliberately churned by the Western nations together with some liberal-minded and independent local media, the purpose is to deceive the local and international community by minimizing the damage the sanctions have caused to the Zimbabwean society. Of course, this is not withstanding the post-GNU developments after 2009 which have resulted in a softening of attitudes by the West, especially in issues that involve humanitarian assistance.

The study, however, indicated that the 'Zimbabwe crisis' cannot be explained in the context of sanctions alone. Other factors will need to be removed from under the carpet as well. It is also a truism that if the sanctions were meant to resolve a political dispute emanating from governance issues, there is no doubt that Zimbabwe is slowly but painstakingly moving towards democratic reforms which may result in free and fair election in the near-foreseeable future. The United Nations’ Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights has been quite clear in showing that sanctions have violated human rights. Sanctions have severely interfered with the functioning of basic health and education systems and have undermined the right to proper work. Despite all that has been articulated, it should be asserted that sanctions have violated Zimbabwe’s human rights record. In fact, sanctions are real, not a myth, as is witnessed by the consequent trail of economic ruin and social disengagement in Zimbabwe. Against this background, there is an irony concerning ZIDERA. It claims to be legally constituted to assist Zimbabweans in achieving equitable economic growth, yet at
the same time, this sanction law denies the Government of Zimbabwe access to the financial assistance to enhance and sustain economic growth that has the potential to benefit the majority of Zimbabweans. By barring the Government of Zimbabwe access to such financial institutions, ZIDERA is impeding the road to economic recovery. It is prudent that the study concludes by suggesting some recommendations, thus:

- Zimbabwean political parties are called upon to work together to restore the rule of law and agree on a roadmap for a transition to democratic governance.

- The Zimbabwean Government needs to properly constitute a broad-based organ for national healing and reconciliation as the basis of durable peace and justice.

- The Zimbabwean government should engage the International Community in the process of its economic reconstruction.

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Towards a Fusion of Western and Traditional African Educational Systems in Zimbabwe’s National School Curriculum

Dennis Masaka & Agrippa Chingombe

Abstract:
This paper argues for the fusion of worthwhile elements of Western and African Traditional concepts of education in Zimbabwe’s National School Curriculum. First, the paper notes that the concept of education is notoriously difficult to define because it tends to mean different things to different people. Second, the paper posits a case for the existence of traditional African education even before the coming of white colonial settlers in Zimbabwe in 1890. Third, the paper seeks to explore the impact of Western Education on traditional African education. Fourth, the paper tries to establish the similarities and differences between the two concepts of education. Using philosophical analysis, it shows that there are no significant differences between the two systems of education that justified colonial settlers’ resolve to replace indigenous systems of education with Western education. Finally, the paper proposes a fusion of worthwhile aspects of these educational systems in Zimbabwe’s National School Curriculum. Such an exercise would help Zimbabwe’s current National School Curriculum to reflect worthwhile aspects of traditional African education while at the same time ridding it of aspects of Western education that are not relevant to local needs and requirements.

Introduction
Education is a concept that is notoriously difficult to give a precise and concise definition. It has tended to mean different things to different people. For example, the dominant understanding of the concept of education from the Western worldview is that education
must be formal and systematic, meaning that it has to be guided by well-defined and written syllabi and must be administered by people trained to impart knowledge to others. From the African worldview, education is seen as entailing more than attending schools. It is understood as a wholesome process of human learning by which knowledge is passed on and people trained in a number of arts and skills that are beneficial to them and others. However, the tragedy of the human race is that those who are materially, militarily and economically powerful have, throughout history, been at liberty to ascribe meanings to concepts such as education to the extent that they themselves consider what education is and what it is not. What is well captured is the belief among white colonial settlers in colonial Zimbabwe that indigenous people did not have a concept of education (Zvobgo, 1997; Kanyongo, 2005: 65), which justified the imposition of a colonial education that was not in line with the challenges and aspirations of the local people.

The controversy surrounding the legitimacy of traditional African education as an ‘education’ dates back to the coming of the white settlers into Africa under the guise of civilization (ter Haar, 1990: 16). White colonial settlers denied that Africans had a way of life, let alone a system of education, and if they had one, it was ‘primitive’ and ‘informal’. It is in light of these misconceptions about traditional African education that Marah (2006: 15) remarked that:

Because there were no permanent school walls in traditional African educational systems, as in the case of the Western countries, some European writers on African education tended to be blinded by their own cultural paradigms and viewed traditional African educational process as mainly informal.

As a result, the task was undertaken to ‘educate’ the untutored Africans by introducing what they termed ‘formal
education’. However, the assertion that Africans had no concept of education is sterile and misplaced because it was predicated on a faulty and arbitrary assumption that education must be formal and universal for it to be education per se. It is our considered view that wherever there is a way of life, there is education that is an agent of its transmission and perpetuation. Therefore, the Western contention that what was going on among African societies prior to colonialism was not proper education is controversial and a subject of intense debate.

However, if one delves into the crux of the concept of education, one can note the key elements of education from a Western perspective, in some cases, are equivalent if not inferior to the traditional African systems of education (Gwaravanda and Masaka, 2008a; Gwaravanda and Masaka, 2008b). This paper, therefore, seeks to problematise the concept of education, highlighting how attempts to define it have tended to be either too wide or too narrow. The paper notes that some elements of both Western education and traditional African education are essential for post-colonial Zimbabwe’s national school curriculum.

**Understanding the Concept of Education**

A number of attempts have been made to define the concept of education albeit without noticeable success because it has tended to mean different things to different people. Hence, it is notoriously difficult to come up with a universally appealing definition of education that is exhaustive and unalterably true (Makuvaza, 1999: 66). For this reason R.S. Peters (1966) contended that modern philosophers have since abandoned the attempt to define education (Schofield, 1972: 30; Frankena, 1973: 4). However, the failure of scholarship to come up with a precise definition that is universally
appealing does not mean that the process of education ceases to take place.

A cursory look into history shows that man has always possessed and imparted knowledge, skills and customs that are a result of deliberate teaching done both formally and informally (Wilson, 2003: 105; Nyota and Mapara, 2008: 190). Education is, therefore, as old as man. Education was used as a tool through which the young were inducted, socialized and integrated into the way of life of a community through, among others, the family, peers and the community at large. This form of socialisation had a functional dimension of passing on knowledge and skills that were regarded as worthwhile to the next generation. Such a form of education stabilised the society and ensured homogeneity among its ranks because it was primarily society-oriented (Ocitti, 1994: 22). Thus, education had both practical and theoretical dimensions that ensured that students were initiated into bodies of knowledge that were useful to themselves and others. For instance, in traditional Zimbabwean societies, well-defined roles were put in place commensurate with one’s age, sex and position on the social scale. Home economics was the province of women while hunting and defense of the clan was the responsibility of men. In view of the above, it is illogical to envisage an epoch in the history of the human race which did not have a concept of education. Therefore, attempts by the white colonial settlers to bracket out Africans as an untutored race are futile and devoid of substance.

Plato defines education as a form of training that is given by suitable habits to the first instincts of virtue in children, when pleasure and pain are rightly implanted in non-rational souls (Schofield, 1972: 31). Education becomes a form of training which leads the student to hate and love what he ought to hate and love. Since Plato understood that education has a moral emphasis, it can be
universally appealing in that every human society inculcates virtues into children and adults and dissuades them from pursuing vicious acts. However, the shortcoming of this definition is that education cannot be properly said to be primarily concerned with inculcation of virtues only. Hence it can be dismissed for being too narrow.

Milton seemingly proposes a definition of education that is broader than that of Plato (ibid) in that it covers a significant number of humanity’s efforts to comprehend the self and all dimensions of life. He defines education as that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully and magnanimously all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war (ibid; see also Peters, 1973: 85). This concept entails that education is the acquisition of substantial knowledge that can be put into use for the benefit of the self and others. Education should enable man to acquire both theoretical and practical knowledge for one to be called an educated person. Milton believes that a person who is educated is capable of executing his duties effectively and efficiently in various situations that are of importance to all and sundry (Schofield, 1972: 31). His view is also shared by Comenius who saw an educated person as a person who exhibits unparalleled knowledge (Schofield, 1972: 31). Although it is linguistically possible to speak of an all-around person in terms of having knowledge, it is logically impossible, since man is fallible, for one to be a “know-it-all.” The position of Milton and Comenius could have been valid during their era since the body of knowledge was much smaller than it is today as a result of a monumental expansion of knowledge through, among other factors, globalization, improved technology and research.

Scheffler (1960) reflected on the controversy surrounding attempts to define education and noted that a number of definitions
have been proposed (Schofield, 1972: 34). For instance, there are both
descriptive and prescriptive definitions. Descriptive definitions focus
on that which has been standardized and accepted as explaining
adequately what something is (ibid: 34). Thus, a descriptive definition
tells us what we have to think and does not allow arbitrary ascription
of meaning to terms. On the other hand, a stipulative definition
arbitrarily states what a person considers to be the case (ibid). An
instance of a descriptive definition is that which is prefixed with
‘education is…’ while a stipulative definition is often prefixed by the
phrase ‘education as we shall understand it…’ Some
misunderstandings, therefore, arise when education is defined
descriptively and stipulatively as no consensus is reached. We argue
that it is not profitable for humanity to expend much effort in trying
to come up with a universally binding definition of education.
Almost all definitions are either too narrow or too wide in that they
may fail to capture all that which can be properly called ‘education’.
It is our contention that education permeates all human endeavours
and therefore is present wherever there are a people.

The failure of scholarship to come up with a universal
definition of education is understandable because it is now a truism
that the content of any educational system is, by and large, influenced
by the aspirations and challenges that confront a given society. For
Makuvaza (1999: 68), an African conception of education can only be
meaningful and relevant if it is determined and influenced by its
historical and existential situatedness in Africa. Therefore, the factors
that inform any educational system are, to a greater extent, particular
to individual societies, cultures, and nation-states as they gear
themselves to respond to the challenges of their life situations. These
factors, therefore, influence how the concept of education is to be
understood. In this regard, education can defined as a process
through which a people’s way of life is made known, perpetuated,
reoriented, and transformed to meet the existing life situations of a given people. Such a characterization is broad enough to encompass African systems of education.

A Vindication of traditional African Education

African Traditional Education refers to indigenous education systems before colonialism. During the colonial period, indigenous education in African societies was not seen as an education. The Westerners actually saw it as ‘socialization’ or ‘child-rearing’ (Ocitti, 1994:14) where apprentices were taught to conform to the way of life of their society. H. J. Baker (1913) aptly expresses this skepticism about indigenous education in Ocitti (ibid):

The children of this land (Rhodesia) are nonentities. Nothing at all is done for them. They feed, sit about, and sleep and in this manner they grow until the time comes for themselves to do something...They have no nurseries, no tea parties, no birthdays and no instruction from their parents. They are there, and that is all. Their lives are one big nothing.

Ocitti calls this a myth because it is unrealistic to say that indigenous education is not education qua education. The basis for our case for traditional African Education is that education is found wherever there are a people. Since every society has a culture that is transmitted from generation to generation through the means of its education system, it is undeniable that Africans had a concept of education even before the coming of colonial white settlers in the 19th century. For Ocitti (ibid), education is the humanization of man in society and is a universal process and therefore part and parcel of every human society. Thus, understanding education as a universal process that existed in the past and still exists today will help in debunking the myth that indigenous education in colonial and post-
colonial Zimbabwe was/is not education. In light of this Westermann as quoted by Ocitti (ibid: 15) reflects that:

“Education is not something which the African has received for the first time from the white man. The “primitive” African is not uneducated. Many Africans, men and women who have never been to school or in contact with Europeans, show such dignified and tactful behavior, and reveal so much refinement in what they say and do, that they well deserve to be called “educated...”

Westermann’s understanding of education transcends schooling to include all that helps one to be conversant about his surroundings and make use of this knowledge for his own benefit and that of his clan and society in general. Makuvaza (1996: 76) regards traditional African education as ‘genuine and relevant’ in that it was education for self-reliance and service to the community and that whatever was imparted to the learner contributed positively towards the survival of the community. It was an education that had social utility: its graduates employed the knowledge and skills learnt to live productively for the benefit of the learner, clan and society in general. For example, the one who was taught the art of hunting, basketry and carving always found such arts quite useful they helped him to improve his life, as well as that of his clan and society in general.

Peresuh (1999: 7) notes that traditional African education was both informal and formal and was a lifelong process. While the teachers who imparted knowledge did so outside conventional schools and were not salaried, there was a properly laid out practical and oral syllabi that was used to initiate the young and inexperienced into the way of life of their society. The initiation was gender and age-specific. The young were taught the values and skills that were commensurate with their stage of development. Marah (2006: 15)
concurs with Peresuh when he noted that the education imparted to the young:

...fitted the group and the expected social roles in society were learned by adulthood. Girls were socialized to effectively learn the roles of motherhood, wife, and other sex-appropriate skills. Boys were socialized to be hunters, herders, agriculturalists, blacksmiths, etc., depending on how the particular ethnic group, clan or family derived its livelihood.

Traditional African education is, therefore, primarily a community responsibility and uses children’s work experience gained from their parents and other members of their social group for the benefit of the community in general.

This type of education instilled purpose and direction into the lives of indigenous people of Zimbabwe as it properly situated them as part of their social group. Through this educational system, people were taught to extol the ontological primacy of the community as a whole. A typical African had a communalistic mode of production since the means of production as well as the products were collectively owned. More importantly, traditional African education was a community’s responsibility and the knowledge and skills gained by the children from their parents and other elders were crucial for them to be able to play their part in society. Thus, it was an educational system that was able to meet the learning needs of all and of the society in general. On the other hand, Western colonial education was, by and large, an education meant to alienate and subjugate the African so that he became totally disconnected from the past that was disparagingly dismissed. Thus, unlike traditional African education, Western colonial education lacked utility and relevance for the present-day realities of the indigenous people of Zimbabwe because it sought to inculcate an attitude of self-denial.
and, therefore, a lack of confidence in their traditional systems of education.

**Western Education and its Impact on Traditional Education in Zimbabwe**

When white colonial settlers came to Zimbabwe and elsewhere, they promoted the idea that indigenous people did not have a concept of education and if ever they had one, it could best be described as primitive and worst as archaic and redundant. They, therefore, banked on this misplaced view to justify the imposition of the Western educational system and to denigrate traditional African education as not education *qua* education. Since “the curriculum is a reflection of the power struggles which characterises all societies” (Zvobgo, 1997: xi), the colonial curriculum designed for indigenous Zimbabweans was meant to create a situation of helplessness and to encourage them to worship a way of life foreign to them thereof. The rejection of the presence of a system of education in Africa was a grave distortion of reality it was predicated on a narrow and arbitrary understanding of education leaving traditional African education from the realm of education. Western colonial education was carried out in specially built institutions, such as schools, colleges, universities and vocational centers; what was taught was well structured, and teaching was often supervised by external administrative bodies (Farrant, 1964: 18). Comprehensive syllabi and timetables were important to give purpose and direction to the education of the students, and those who successfully completed given levels of education were awarded certificates and good paying jobs.

It is, however, doubtful whether Western colonial education was really education in the proper sense. For Rodney (1982: xii), Western colonial education was aimed at the subjugation and exploitation of Africans as well as under-developing Africa for the
benefit of Europe. In this regard, Peresuh (1999: 15) notes and, rightly so, that formal Western colonial education, aided by military subjugation, has successfully alienated African societies from their own ways of life. This was possible because colonial education was meant to promote and perpetuate the doctrine of white supremacy (Braman, 2000) where by the African was taught to be a good worker, uncritical, loyal and subservient to the whims of colonial masters. So, Western colonial education primarily aimed at dehumanising the African so that one lost a sense of self-esteem and direction in life. Mazrui (1978: 4) describes it as cultural imposition. Pre-colonial traditional African education was quite in sync with the life situations of learners thereby making learning effective, and the method of instruction that included riddles, proverbs and folk tales sharpened the intellectual abilities of learners (Gwaravanda and Masaka, 2008a; Gwaravanda and Masaka, 2008b). Since every member of society was an instructor or a teacher, traditional African education was all-inclusive, free and, therefore unavoidable for all in a society.

Colonialism, however, commercialised education, mystifying the acquisition of knowledge through, among others, restrictive enrolment procedures, such as the need to rationalise the teacher-student ratio as well as screening based on intellectual abilities. This tended to bracket out the majority of learners who were regarded as not ‘good enough’ from the school system. For Southard (1997: 1), colonial education was a form of mental control “...through a central intellectual location, the school system” and which, therefore, aided the process of political subjugation and alienation of Africans. The school system of colonial education alienated the African from his pre-colonial past that extolled his culture. Since the process of traditional African education was “...intimately integrated with the social, cultural, artistic, religious and recreational life of the ethnic group” (Marah, 2006: 15), Western colonial education estranged the African from his way of life through a well-calculated move to
denigrate all that was part of the African’s culture and to extoll the virtues of a culture that was alien and foreign to him. Traditional African education was dismissed as a vestige of a primitive life that needed to be urgently wiped out in preparation for a ‘civilised life.’

Though Western colonial education severely denigrated and falsified traditional African education, it is futile for African countries to think of completely doing away with Western colonial education in their school syllabi since it had some positive contributions to traditional African education and way of life in that it, among other things, led to the docketing of traditional African knowledge and belief systems for posterity. Thus, there is a sense in which certain worthwhile aspects of traditional African education can be integrated with certain worthwhile aspects of Western colonial education in post-colonial Zimbabwe’s National School Curriculum.

Comparison: Western and Traditional African Education

The feature that is cited as paramount in showing the superiority of Western colonial education over traditional African education is that the formal was formal with properly structured syllabi, schools and objective ways of recognizing the performance of students by awarding them certificates, diplomas and degrees (Peresuh, 1999: 7; Marah, 2006: 210). On the other hand, traditional African education had a peculiar method of education that emphasized the involvement of everyone in the community in the transmission of knowledge. In the current system of education, only formal schools are the agents and reservoirs of knowledge. We would agree with Bantock (1970: 88) when he says that “schools are doing for society what society should do for itself.” As a result, we can easily aim for more and accomplish less than our grandparents”. In the traditional set-up, the concepts of ‘educated’ and ‘half-educated’ are unheard of since everyone received functional education and was expected to do what he could for the
benefit of himself and the community. Scanlon in (Marah 2006:17) argues that “the education of the African before the coming of the European was an education that prepared him for his responsibilities as an adult in his home, his village and his tribe.”

Education, however, does not necessarily mean attending schools (Farrant, 1964: 18). Most people would like to equate education with schooling, but the two are not the same. A person need not have gone through formal schooling to be said to be educated because they can gain education even without going through one. At the same time, it does not follow that all those who have attended schools are educated. Therefore, there are no monumental differences between the virtues of Western colonial education and traditional African education that could have justified the colonial white settlers’ resolve to obliterate the traditional African education and replace it with their own. It can, therefore, be contended that it was illegitimate for colonial settlers to deny the presence of education among the indigenous people of pre-colonial Zimbabwe because education is present wherever there is a people with a way of.

Towards a Fusion of Traditional African Education and Western Colonial Education

Though colonial Western education had considerable negative impact on traditional African education, it is important to note that it also contributed positively to the refinement of the methods of preserving and imparting knowledge among Africans. Content to be learned became, to a larger extent, uniform. The uniformity of the content imparted to students was important in that it promoted objectivity in assessing what had been learned. The syllabi were well documented and lasted for a long time in the same form unlike the
oral syllabi of traditional African education that was prone to distortion as a result of misrepresentations through oral transmission. However, no civilization, whether of the written word or an oral tradition, is immune from distortions and misrepresentations. From Vansina (1981: 142):

*It would be wrong to reduce the civilization of the spoken to a merely negative absence of writing and to perpetuate the inborn contempt of the literate for the illiterate which is found in so many sayings such as the Chinese ‘The palest ink is to be preferred to the strongest world’. To do so would show total ignorance of the nature of these oral civilizations.*

The introduction of formal schools where reading and writing was the core helped in the preservation of vital African oral literature for the sake of posterity. It also meant that aspects of African culture were properly docketed with a higher degree of accuracy and minimal chances of corruption since Africans themselves were involved in the process of writing their own history.

Though traditional African education also had some problems, notably being overly conservative, as Gatawa (1990), Zvobgo (1994) and Ocitti (1994) would argue, it nevertheless had some positive attributes such as inculcation of unhu (humanness) that ensured that graduates of indigenous education exhibited commendable character traits, such as faithfulness, obedience and loyalty. Despite the lapse of time, we argue that these attributes should still be included in the Zimbabwean educational system because of their positive contribution to a stable social order. Another crucial aspect of traditional African education is African Traditional Religion (ATR). Religion permeates all aspects of life of the African to the extent that it is dehumanizing to strip him of his religion through Christocentric religious teachings at formal schools. Therefore, it is a
tragedy for the Zimbabwe National School Curriculum to trivialise the centrality of ATR in favour of Christianity or other religions in the intellectual development of an African student in the contemporary school system.

Though it is undeniable that Christianity can contribute positively to Zimbabwe’s education system through, among others, its sound ethical teachings, it is also crucial that its apprentices give precedence to a thorough study and understanding of their own local religion and its worthwhile attributes that would help in the development of responsible African citizens. Only by so doing can we have school graduates who are not alien to their own way of life, but who are appreciative of the worthwhile aspects of their culture. Marashe, Ndamba and Chireshe (2009: 38-39) argue, and rightly so, that ATR “…as a cardinal cultural tenet of [Zimbabwean] society could be used to champion and consolidate a genuine Zimbabwean identity.” Since Western Colonial Education syllabi had a prominent Christocentric flavour, it tended to downplay the importance of ATR in the African way of life. For this reason we call upon post-colonial Zimbabwe’s educational system to show a positive attitude towards ATR at both the curriculum planning and implementation stages. In this endeavour to fuse worthwhile aspects of both Western Colonial Education and African Traditional Education, we have to recognise that traditional African Education has its own faults and limitations (ter Haar, 1990) that must be discarded in the design of a postcolonial school curriculum in Zimbabwe.

An instance of the faults of traditional African education was its rigidity and dogmatism in knowledge acquisition and generation whereby the elderly are regarded as the fountains of knowledge from which the less knowledgeable must ‘drink’. This system tended to dampen innovation and critical thinking among the less knowledgeable beyond the boundaries of experiential knowledge of
the sages. Thus, the fusion of only those worthwhile aspects of the
two educational systems is essential if Zimbabwe is to create a
powerful educational system that is inclusive of the valuable aspects
of the two.

Farrant (1964: 34) notes that there is a confusing mixture of
Western and African educational systems in most African states.
Every country that was formerly colonised inherited a colonial pattern
or system of education that more often than not conflicted with and
contradicted the local systems of education. Emphasis was on the
history of great poets of the West such as Homer and Shakespeare and
extolling the virtues of battles, wars and figures of Western countries
while neglecting all that was part of their way of life. For one reason
or another, local systems of education were degraded and vilified so
much that Western Colonial Education in colonial Zimbabwe was an
agent of alienation because it entrenched denial of the African way of
life.

Farrant, however, (1964: 34) questions the feasibility of
blending African form of education into formal Western education on
the grounds that traditional African education may not require
schools, school heads, lessons and classrooms. These attributes that
Farrant cites were found among traditional societies though with
different nametags. Elders and parents in traditional African societies
shepherded the young through the process of acquiring knowledge
and belief systems of their society by providing the necessary
guidance and direction in all their stages of knowledge acquisition.
Lessons are also present in traditional African education though they
are primarily conducted at community and family levels in the form
of, among others, games, riddles, music and proverbs. These aspects
of traditional African education deserve a place in Zimbabwe’s
National School Curriculum if we are to produce a student who is not
only appreciative of his way of life, but also equipped with an
education that makes him worthwhile in a globalising world. Therefore, there is no justification to deny the possibility of integrating these two educational systems whose inherent differences are not as pronounced as previous scholarship has claimed.

The legacy of the Western colonial educational system is quite evident in Zimbabwe through the methods of teaching, training, infrastructure and curriculum that are predominantly western in orientation. Zimbabwe’s colonial educational system was a Western imposed super-structure that sought to promote individualism, consumerism and material gain at the expense of the community. It was the complete opposite of the traditional African way of life that views education as a shared enterprise irretrievably integrated with other aspects of a social group’s way of life. Such a system was crafted to exploit the African. Thus, the African does not find any solace in it. Mudzamba (1982), Mhundwa (1982) and Gatawa (1990) all concur that the educational system in Zimbabwe is based on a colonial foundation that was not adapted to the life, ideas, resources and aspirations of indigenous people. It is an education that has created conflicts between school and society since it does not promote social harmony but places a dividing wall between the two. African school graduates who have taken a huge dose of Western colonial education normally view their culture with scorn given that their education is, among others, flavoured in Christocentric teachings. Therefore, it must be overhauled to reflect the true identity of the African in the globalising world without necessarily obliterating worthwhile aspects of the Western colonial education in Zimbabwe such as a properly laid out syllabi, national and international examinations, centralised schools and documentation of material so that local knowledge is integrated into the growing body of universal knowledge.

It is, therefore, important that Zimbabwe draw a new educational model that underlies the need for uniqueness and
relevance. It must also be a system that strikes a balance between Western colonial education and traditional African education, an educational system that adapts to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations and traditions of the various peoples, which conserves all sound and healthy elements in the fabric of their social life. In this regard, the traditional way of sharpening mental abilities of students, such as riddles (zvirahwe) (Gwaravanda and Masaka, 2008b: 196), proverbs (tsumo) (Gwaravanda and Masaka, 2008a) and folk tales (ngano), must be integrated with Western aspects of education, such as mathematics and other sciences. Since it has been proven that the very aspects that Western colonial education denied Africans are actually conceptualized in their folklores, it is crucial for curriculum designers to take cognisance of the presence of these aspects in traditional African education and find ways by which they can assert their position in Zimbabwe’s National School Curriculum.

If colonial educators used education to impose their values and way of life, post-colonial Zimbabwe and other African states in a similar situation can use the same method to reassert the African way of life and some elements of its educational system. Moyana (1989: 20) argues that dependency complex that was entrenched by Western colonial education creates a sense of non-being in the individual whereby those from without his life form compromises his ontological independence. For as long as the Western educational system is alienated from the way of life of the people upon which it is imposed, it ceases to have relevance. Even though Africans who attended mission schools could not completely discard their beliefs, being a believer in the African value systems had a social stigma to the effect that some African students gradually lost their traditions and assumed Western value systems (Pwiti and Ndoro, 1999). Not only did the colonial educational system eventually create a sense of distain for the native heritage, but it also affected the individual and his sense of self-confidence. Therefore, it is important for curriculum
designers to integrate the good aspects of both Indigenous and Western colonial education so that the curriculum used in Zimbabwe also adequately captures the content of traditional African education. While acknowledging that we are now living in a global village, it will be unwise to condemn traditional African education completely as something of the past. Neither can we totally throw away aspects of Western colonial education from our syllabi. Phasing out formal schooling would be futile given the enormous investment during and after the colonial period. Doing so would be to the disadvantage of African societies in a globalising world.

CONCLUSION
The paper argued for the fusion of worthwhile elements of both Western colonial education and traditional African education in Zimbabwe’s National School Curriculum. In order to strike a balance between these two systems of education, aspects of the indigenous way of life, such as religious beliefs and values, riddles, proverbs, music and games could be integrated with aspects of Western colonial education, such as well-structured syllabi, internationally accredited school examinations and quality assurance at learning institutions to develop a student who not only appreciates the utility of Western colonial education but also values African education. The paper, however, argued that since education is a universal practice, it follows that pre-colonial indigenous Zimbabweans had a system of education. Both systems of education had both worthwhile and non-worthwhile aspects. The paper, therefore, advocated for the fusion of worthwhile aspects of these educational systems in Zimbabwe’s National School Curriculum. Such an exercise would help the current National School Curriculum to reflect worthwhile aspects of indigenous education while at the same time ridding it of aspects of Western colonial education that are not relevant to national needs and aspirations.
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Urban Myths Pertaining to Road Accidents in Zimbabwe: The Case of Chinhamo Service Centre Along Seke Road Linking Harare and Chitungwiza

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Key Terms: African worldview, urban myths, road traffic accidents, traffic regulations, Christian worldview, Shona people.

Abstract:
The paper explores urban myths concerning road accidents that occur between the 16 kilometre and 17 kilometre pegs along Seke road linking Harare and Chitungwiza in Zimbabwe. We argue that there exists a range of views with regard to the exact causes and nature of the carnage that occurs on the one kilometre stretch from Koala to Chinhamo service centre. Some people argue from a rational standpoint that contributing factors to the high accident rate include the bend in the road, the state of disrepair of the vehicles, and the condition of the road. However, this does not explain the mysterious events often believed to take place on the Koala to Chinhamo stretch of the road. Within Shona traditional belief systems, a place where accidents usually occur is haunted by the spirit(s) of a person or people who were murdered. The murdered people then come to haunt the living until the living atone for the murder. This paper considers the range of interpretations given to the accidents on this road, and argues that further accidents can only be prevented if all interpretations are recognized as valid.

Introduction

There are various interpretations of the causes and the nature of accidents that occur at Chinhamo Service centre, specifically the one kilometre stretch from Koala to Chinhamo along Seke Road. These
interpretations are made by a broad spectrum of people, including ordinary citizens, traditionalists, the clergy, scholars, media practitioners, and the police and, above all, people who frequently drive along the highway. In this paper, we argue that the interpretations that one might dismiss as mythical may not necessarily be regarded as such by individuals who have witnessed the carnage firsthand and who think scientific explanations are insufficient. We derive the definition of myth from Isidore Okpewho who views myths as the basic imaginative resource from which larger cultural values derive. Myths are indicative of a society that is constantly engaged in creative imagination and which also engages in “abstract philosophical speculation”. In his seminal text, *Myth in Africa*, Isidore Okpewho defines myths in Africa, “not as tale, type or genre, but as a quality, that quality of fancy which informs the creative and configurative powers for the human mind in varying degrees of intensity”.(Okpewho, 1983, 219). We suggest that non-scientific responses to road accidents are such an instance of “fancy” and should not simply be dismissed.

From the 1st of May 2008 to the 31st of May 2009, 32 fatal accidents at the one-kilometre stretch were recorded; there were 100 injuries and 14 fatalities in nine of these accidents. (Traffic Accident Book (TAB) Register, ZRP Hatfield. 2008-9). Prior to this period, a bus from Harare to Chitungwiza overturned in unexplainable circumstances and many people were injured on the same stretch of road; the confusion was worsened when a Good Samaritan who was assisting in carrying the injured into ambulances had his car rammed into. People started speculation concerning the possible supernatural causes of the accident.

Road accidents at Chinhamo Service centre along Seke road are a cause for concern for any who would care to give consideration to the frequency and the toll of accidents, bearing in mind that the Harare to Chitungwiza highway is among the finest of Zimbabwe’s
roads, boasting of a dual carriageway that it is in relatively good condition. Chitungwiza residents who use the highway on a daily basis often witness fatal accidents and at times the wreckage takes time to clear, creating massive traffic jams that often lead to more accidents. Chitungwiza is a satellite town located 30 kilometres to the south of Harare and has an approximate population of 600 000 according to the census of 2012 (Pilot census, Central statistical office, 2012). To alleviate the transport problems within the satellite town, the government has since mooted the idea of having a railway link between Harare and Chitungwiza, but this has not yet materialised. The Chitungwiza residents do not know about the developments and the challenges the government is facing concerning the railway. A few industries are on the western flank of the town, which barely employ 15,000 people, and the major business is retail, which is often carried out by informal traders. A greater percentage of the working class people work in Harare and some go there for their personal business.

**Methodology**
Collection of data for this study was done through questionnaires and interviews on randomly selected respondents. Among these respondents were commuter omnibus drivers (45), police officers (90), passengers (150), private vehicle drivers (55), and traditionalists (100), religious congregations (Roman Catholics (50), Anglicans (50), Methodists (45), Apostolic Faith members (71), Pentecostals (55), religious leaders/elders (50), and pastors/ministers/priests (45) Actual data on the number of accidents that occurred between May 2008 and May 2009 as well as the number of deaths and the number of injuries, were collected from the Hatfield police station with the approval of Police General Headquarters. The sample varied from group to group on a sliding scale. From the three police stations in Chitungwiza, questionnaires were responded to by about 30% of officers on each station. Drivers and passengers of commuter omnibuses were
interviewed at convenient bus stops along the road, private motorists were interviewed at the service station on this bad stretch, and religious people were interviewed at their usual places of congregation.

**Analysis of Data and Research findings**

Responses from the questionnaires and verbal interviews, about the causes of the accidents can be categorized under the following headings: Shona religious and cultural beliefs, Christian beliefs, and references to the road traffic regulations and laws.

In the Chinhamo debacle, various views and opinions were expressed by many people; some of them can easily be dismissed as make-believe stories. However to those who have witnessed some of the carnage and to people who believe in Christianity or Shona cosmology, there is nothing unreal about the stories: they are real, and their causes, these people feel strongly, need to be addressed urgently, as failure may only lead to further deaths. Asked about the main cause of accidents at the place, one respondent, Tawanda Zvinairo pointed out (NOTE: These are not the people’s exact names, nor are they the exact place names. Each has been changed for ethical reasons):

“People say, two people were run over by a car on their way back” (the respondent could not remember when exactly) “and from that moment, accidents began to occur but I don’t know how far true it is.” Another respondent, Maiden Jammu, had this to say: “That is a tricky place because people testify seeing people or figures on the way and if they try to avoid them they get off the road and an accident occurs.” Another version of the latter response goes, a beautiful woman wearing a wig is often seen at night, smiling and beckoning to individual motorists and those who know that she is a visitation simply run over her. They only hear “Wigi yangu, wigi yangu!” (“My wig, my wig!”), as the woman disappears into thin air. When such
stories are exchanged by commuters passing by the place, some women do not take them lightly; at times they point out that actually babies are seen crawling, and as drivers try to avoid them, they get involved in fatal accidents. To further confirm this, the arguments go, that is why the place claims a lot of children. One driver testified that he, of all people, did not believe that there was anything amiss at the place until, in one of his evening drives he felt his hand clasped and the steering wheel get twisted as the vehicle made for the ditch. He only survived, as he tells it, by shouting “Jesus!” and stomping on the clutch and brake pedals. He argued that, usually, the visitations target lone drivers and even where there are many people in the vehicle the visitations may only present themselves to the driver.

Another story goes: A kombi was travelling from Harare to Chitungwiza, and there was a man, who was wearing a hat that almost rendered his face invisible seated next to the driver among other passengers. When the Kombi got to Koala, a woman seated at the back seat went into a trance and all of a sudden ordered the driver to stop the vehicle immediately as there was an accident about to happen that would kill some passengers. Other passengers asked the driver to comply and truly the Kombi came to a screeching halt. The woman belonged to an apostolic sect, and claimed that she had been instructed by the Holy Spirit. She asked every man to take off his hat before they passed along the Chinhamo area, and the men who had hats in the Kombi complied except for the one seated next to the driver. It was rumoured he was not keen about it, and this invited vitriol from other passengers who claimed they were behind time. One daring passenger snatched the hat off only for everybody to realize that there was no head. At this juncture the man disappeared into thin air, for it was an apparition. The woman, still in a trance, took charge, singing “Hosanna,” and everybody else in the Kombi began singing, chanting prayers as the Kombi moved slowly past the stretch of the road adjacent to Chinhamo service centre. Takawira
Kazembe (2012) shows that the leading spirit mediums in Zimbabwe, who were consulted about similar phenomena, say that when a person dies, he goes into a state of existence where he or she join his or her ancestors. They examine his/her life activities before they accept him/her into their ranks. If there are outstanding issues, the ancestors order him/her to go back and rectify them. For example, if the deceased was murdered, they will order him/her to go back and ensure that restitution takes place. Otherwise, the soul of the deceased will attempt to obtain restitution, which will wreak havoc on the murderer(s). If, for some reason, the murderer does not pay up, the deceased will play tricks to gain the attention of those ignoring it. These tricks may include harassing people who pass by the scene of murder.

The question people ask is whether these visitations are real or whether they are merely diversionary statements by reckless and drunk drivers who would be keen to shirk criminal liability. There are stories of drivers who see forests in front of them on the road and apply emergency brakes to avoid hitting trees, only to realize there were no trees. There are other stories of drivers trying to avoid herds of cattle on the road. The drivers in turn employ all possible avoidance manoeuvres against nonexistent cattle only to get involved in accidents. There is a story of a man who was developing a property in Borrowdale, in the eastern suburbs of Harare, but who lived in Harare’s western suburbs. He visited his Borrowdale property on a Friday afternoon and was there until sunset. On his way to the western suburbs, he stopped at the shopping center close to Borrowdale Police Station and met two friends. The man did not drink alcohol but he sat with his drinking friends at a restaurant. At about 8:00 pm he told his friends that he was going home. The friends asked for a lift to their home in the area. After dropping them off, the man decided to drive towards a road he knew well, and while driving in that direction, he saw a forest ahead of him. Suddenly, there was no
road and he felt as if he was hitting trees. He finally stopped the car and got out to inspect for damages. Finding none, he opened the driver’s door to proceed on his journey home. He suddenly heard a woman’s voice: “Are you all right?” The man answered: “Yes, I am OK. But I am not sure about the car.” Confident that there was a person to share the experience, he went round the car again, lighting a cigarette in the process. The woman said “You are lucky because many people have died here!” He suddenly realized that the very tall white lady had vanished. He proceeded home traveling between five and ten km per hour, very scared. He was due to fly to Kenya at 11:00 am the following morning. On the way to the airport, he stopped to visit the scene of his ordeal. There were no trees. All he saw were the skid marks. On his return from Nairobi three weeks later, his friends told him that he should have followed their advice and followed the directions they had given him. They said a man of significant importance had killed his wife at that spot. A few months later, a prominent businessman had a fatal accident on the same spot.

Writing on the causes of a string of terrible crashes on the Harare to Masvingo highway in Zimbabwe, in an article entitled, “Zimbabweans say angry ancestors behind road accidents” posted on 11 December 2009 Robyn Dixon reports that some people point out that those traditional rituals to appease the dead have not been performed for years. Among some visitations reported by ordinary people, it is said that there are “pedestrians crossing the road at night, dressed in black, walking so slowly that drivers are forced to swerve—ghostly figures not made of skin and bone are reported as walking at the place. In addition, it is said that the mermaid in the Pimbi River got angry at the blood and gasoline spilled when a bus crashed into the water two years ago and went on to cause more accidents.(ibid). As is clear from this report from Dixon, there are cultural interpretations for the phenomena. In Zimbabwe, leading spirit mediums point out that places like the one kilometre peg
between Koala and Chinhamo need to be cleansed ritually by spiritual practitioners. They will plead with the spirit to leave the innocent people alone and obtain restitution from the murderer himself. The practitioners will also plead with the ancestors of the spirit to assist the suffering souls. According to the mediums, there is no other way to solve the problem of avenging spirits except restitution, and many Zimbabweans hold this view as well.

A further dimension to this the belief by many that the deceased will entice the perpetrator(s) to commit more murders, as if to say, you killed me, so kill others to give me company. When the soul of the deceased is sent back to achieve restitution, it is believed that it goes back to the scene of death and tries to locate the perpetrator. It tries to attract attention and causes unexplainable events to occur, including some which lead to further accidents. Further accidents then lead to increased numbers of spirits needing appeasement and the location becomes a black spot. Unexplainable events will be occurring at the scene of the murders; unreal people will be observed doing many different things: loitering, drawing people’s attention, grabbing moving cars’ steering wheels, sitting on bonnets of moving vehicles, running alongside moving vehicles, etc. The problem will cease, many believe, only when restitution is paid. When the murdered are compensated, leading spirit mediums say, the situation normalizes. Commenting on these viewpoints, Michael Bourdillon (1998) argues that the Shona believe avenging spirits are terrifying and can attack harshly and suddenly. There is also a less positive side to this as “an angry spirit is not easily appeased. Thus the angry spirit of a man murdered some 80 years ago is believed to have caused the death of the two brothers who plotted the murder, their father and six of their children, and yet still occasionally claim victims from among their descendants, while the surviving relatives are trying to raise the large fine in cattle necessary to appease the spirit.” (Bourdillon, 1998: 233)
In the above, Bourdillon reports that this belief is only redressed when the perpetrator’s family atones for his misdeeds through payment of cattle and a virgin girl, as the deceased victim’s family demands. This view is corroborated by Takawira Kazembe (2012) who reports that members of the perpetrator’s family, nuclear and extended, are believed to fall victim to purges by the spirit of the deceased victim and do not have viable options other than paying the victim’s family. Whereas it is true to say that human rights pressure groups and the Girl Child Network in Zimbabwe have been on the forefront fighting against the practice of atoning with an innocent virgin girl alongside a herd of cattle; in many instances the practice still happens and goes on unreported. This shows the significance attached to the fact that the carnage is understood to be caused by the ngozi (the deceased avenging spirit). Thus, along at the Koala to Chinhamo stretch, it is not uncommon to hear drivers who believe in these visitations talking to themselves whenever they have near misses to accidents: “Siyana nenii, handina ukama newe uye handina mhosva newe”. (“Leave me alone, I am not related to you and I do not have any crime against you.”).

Respondents to the questionnaire, men and women randomly selected by the researchers, also relayed their fears of foul play by business people who operate commuter omnibuses, buses and kombis. Generally, respondents expressed their belief that business people are in the habit of sacrificing innocent people to enable their businesses to flourish. The practice, known as kuchekeresa in Shona, is often exaggerated to such an extent that it is held to be the norm, in accusations against greedy entrepreneurs suspected of using body parts of victims to create strong charms that, in turn, make their businesses flourish. In one of the accidents that occurred at Chinhamo, it is rumoured that one child’s corpse was found beheaded and the head was never recovered. Tendai Madhuveko, whose cousin was killed in one fatal accident in a minibus that claimed nine lives in.
Nyanyadzi, claimed that there were two children and a cousin of the minibus’ owner among the nine deceased. The omnibus owner, who is also a bishop of a certain ‘mysterious church,’ insisted that the funeral of his deceased children be held at a private location in Harare and only church members were allowed to attend the funeral, not relatives. The business owner is known to have bought a herd of 20 cattle and four new omnibuses some few weeks after the funeral. To Madhuveko, this example is indicative of the levels of greed and unscrupulousness prevailing in the society. Of course, the police dismissed such claims as mythical and not corroborated by evidence.

We argue that some of the stories and their interpretations are only too real in the minds of ordinary Zimbabweans, and that any response to these accidents cannot simply dismiss ordinary people’s understanding of events. The societal beliefs in the existence of such practices mean that ordinary people, at least subconsciously, draw connections between events and the lives of those whose bus, omnibus or kombi has been involved in an accident. When they discover that a certain business person’s buses or kombis are time and again involved in accidents, they may demand to have them outlawed and their permits rescinded, irrespective of the fact that the vehicles may be in good condition. The hidden text in the outcry is that the business person has bad charms that cost the public a heavy toll in terms of life. This practice is captured in some literary texts by Zimbabweans, notably Claudius Matsikiti’s *Akadzipwa neganda remhuru* (He, the expert, was choked by the skin of a calf), Bisset Chitsike’s *Wakandigona wena* (You Managed Me) and George Mujajati’s *The Sun Will Rise Again*. In the latter text, Mujajati gives readers insight into the mind of a certain wayward businessman, Nyati, who murders a child called Thabitha, contemplates:
My n’anga has promised that he can prepare me a lot more powerful charms if I could bring him the private parts and the heart of a young innocent virgin. That innocence would be the factor that would effectively blind anyone to any crime I would have committed... (Also)...the charm would bring me unbelievably immense wealth and political power. (Mujajati, 1999, p92)

The _kuchekeresa_ practice is believed by ordinary people to be rampant, yet these ordinary people barely provide substantive evidence of such cases. When they discuss matters to do with accidents where many people die, they often do not dare mention names of people they believe to be the perpetrators of the evil spell, as they risk being taken to court for contravening. The Witchcraft Suppression Act [Chapter 9:19] of the Zimbabwean Constitution makes it a crime to accuse anyone of witchcraft. There are times when it becomes a muffled public secret that x and y’s buses must not be boarded as they become renowned for claiming people’s lives through accidents. Thus, in Zimbabwe, buses servicing long routes have been subject to public scrutiny. One businessman had to change the paint colours of his buses because he was running out of business as the company became known for being involved in accidents which the government had declared were national disasters. The Zimbabwean government will assist the surviving families of the disasters victims with food, and coffins to bury their dead.

**Causes of Accidents according to the Christian World View**

In May 2009, various church denominations gathered to hold prayers and church services at the open ground that is near the place of the accidents. Commenting on the demography of religious groupings in Zimbabwe, Munetsi Ruzivo (2012) puts Christianity (including syncretic forms) at 85% of the whole population about 10,200,000
(Apostolic 33%, Pentecostal 17%, Protestant 16%, Roman Catholic 10%, other Christian 8%). The interdenominational gathering included people from a cross-section of African churches. A well-wisher also provided a tractor and mowers to clear the place of long grass and increase visibility. An interview with one of the pastors, Reverend Kachipapa King of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe who organised the interdenominational service, revealed that Christians view the place as a battleground where the Devil had been waylaying humanity. In Christian cosmology, the Devil is believed to be a rebel angel, Lucifer, who was thrown from heaven after disobeying God. It is also believed that the Devil is going to face judgment for his disobedience. As he awaits Judgment Day, it is believed that this renegade angel is busy causing havoc to humankind and also recruiting mankind to go with him/her to hell (a place believed to harbour an everlasting inferno). Commenting on the Chinhamo debacle, Reverend Kachipapa King pointed out that the place harbours territorial spirits which need to be bound lest the Devil’s kingdom flourish (Kachipapa King, 2010). The pastor went on to quote Ephesians chapter 6 verse 12, which states “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take the whole armour of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”(Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Ephesians 6, vs. 12)

Thus, having a church service at the place of the accidents was conducted in the belief that it was a way of fighting the evil spirits and chasing the demon that was frequenting the area. Reverend King further pointed out that there is a whole subject of demonology, and the type of demon that afflicts such places could be a district or provincial spirit, both of which are different from the continental spirits that afflict whole continents. Echoing the same
sentiments, Shamiso Nyamupachitu, who attended the service, pointed out that when things prove to be difficult to understand, Jesus is the answer; hence she subscribed to the idea of holding prayer meetings at the accident place. She insisted that the spirit of death itself needed to be cast away. Another respondent who attended the service, Edward Nyamapfeka, pointed out that what was happening at the place could only be interpreted as the Devil’s machinations and these can easily be detected because, prior to such serious accidents, it was not unusual to see dogs and cats run over by cars especially on the highway in the Hatfield area.

Christians were quick to dismiss the idea that spirit mediums could provide a solution by helping assuage the aggrieved spirits. There was general consensus among Christian respondents that the devil is the main culprit and no amount of recompense can satiate the devil’s desire for blood and evil actions. Collins Armah, a commentator on Christianity and spirit beliefs in Africa, writes that “the constant attribution of everything (including road accidents) to the work of the Devil or witches and wizards is (a) source of worry.” (2009) Armah argues that beliefs in superstition and prayer have hampered the development of science and technology in Ghana, and in Africa as a whole. He insists that the practice of attributing every misfortune to the work of either God or the Devil is commonplace in Africa and that this usually leads to the removal of human agency, a damaging trend. In his view, people must take responsibility for their misdemeanors and not blame the invisible. Armah argues further that (in Ghana, where he is located) it is retrogressive to blame road accidents on anything other than human failure to abide by rules and standards. He points out: “It is sickening to hear people call during radio phone-in programs attributing the trends of road accidents to witchcraft whilst our roads are not good; when most of the accidents are caused by our own negligence; when many police officers collect bribes instead of arresting drivers that flout the law; and many

While much of what Armah writes is useful and important, the present paper disagrees with his assertion that one needs to disregard the intervention of spirituality in road accidents. Acceptance of the idea that much of what occurs on the roads can be ascribed to spirituality does not amount to acknowledging that the devil (Lucifer or Satan as Armah puts it) would seem as if he/she was thrown from heaven to Africa. Armah’s own observations fail to convince especially when it comes to the analysis of accidents that occur at Chinhamo. The slight bend on the stretch is not the only slight bend on the Harare Chitungwiza road, nor is it the worst meandering bend. Also, it is not true to say that defective vehicles are the only ones that get involved in accidents along the one-kilometer stretch. The fact that police officers in Africa, whether in Ghana or Zimbabwe, take bribes and leave drivers for imminent death is true, though the exact impact of such behavior needs verification through a systematic study. Without such a study, we argue that, though cases of corrupt officers may not be uncommon in the media (both visual and audio), to describe these as the main causes of accidents could be an overgeneralization. From our findings in this study, we argue that, alongside these possible interpretations, it is also crucial to accept spirituality as an interpretation of these road accidents along the one-kilometer stretch. Ignoring this important aspect of people’s lives has a negative impact on the authorities’ ability to prevent further accidents.

Dongo Remi Kouabenan (1998, 246) argues that there are substantive studies which prove that the analysis of road accidents varies from people to people and “it is also linked to certain
characteristics inherent in the analyst and in the social group to which one belongs: beliefs, value systems, norms, common experiences, attitudes, roles, [and] social and technical practices.” However, according to police reports, excessive speed, inattentive driving and misjudging distance are the major contributory factors to auto accidents. (TAB Register, ZRP, Hatfield 2008-9). In an interview, a traffic officer argued that drivers have a tendency to underestimate the slight bend and the slight depression at Chinhamo hence they do not even bother to use extra care when passing through the place. Then they realize when it is too late that they have misjudged and, out of desperation, they panic and become a threat to other road users. Though the officer conceded that people talk a lot about spirituality and visitations at the place, these claims are not corroborated by evidence. In some cases expert accident evaluators are called and they report speeding in excess of 130 kilometres per hour. Given the fact that other road users will be travelling at speeds in the range of 100 kilometres per hour, dangerous overtaking will occur. When discussing the occurrences of accidents in Zimbabwe and Africa in general, it is imperative to point out that apart from what data can be gathered on the ground, the subject is highly emotive given the fact that it is also a fertile ground for the damning stereotypes of Africa created by the West. In addition it is pertinent to point out that the frequency of accidents is not a preserve for Africa, neither is it a uniquely African subject. Ashley Gilmour (2009) writes that “globally, road accidents kill around 1.2 million people a year and cause injury to about 40 times the people killed.” She goes on to enumerate various factors that cause accidents, among them bad roads, decrepit vehicles, bad weather, driver behavior and pedestrian behavior. Although the causative factors that Gilmour cites are critical in the understanding of road accidents, we insist that there is a spiritual dimension as pointed out by most of the respondents to questionnaires especially in the interpretation of accidents at the Koala to Chinhamo stretch. Any response to the road accident toll, we argue, needs to consider
spiritual understanding alongside those listed by Gilmour and commonly accepted by the authorities.

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THE ROOTS OF TERRORISM IN NIGERIA: EXPLORING THE POVERTY CONNECTION

IBABA SAMUEL IBABA

KEY TERMS: Nigeria, Terrorism, Poverty.

ABSTRACT:
Is there a link between poverty and terrorism in Nigeria? This paper is developed to answer this question. Using the frustration-aggression and horizontal inequalities explanation of violence, the paper argues that the paradox of wealth and poverty has created grievances that have undermined the stakeholder interests of citizens in the state, the solidarity and identity between citizens and leaders, and the social responsibility roles of citizens. This, the paper notes, has made citizens vulnerable to mobilization and recruitment for violence against the state, just as it has made them withdraw cooperation with and obedience from the state. Evidence of this is the complaint by security forces that cooperation of citizens in the fight against terrorism is low or poor. The paper thus concludes that although poverty may not have created terrorists or that there is no causal relationship between poverty and terrorism in Nigeria, poverty has created conditions for terrorism to thrive in the country. In this regard, it is critical for the Nigerian government to bring poverty reduction into its anti-terrorism engagement strategy. Budgetary reforms to ensure pro-poor budgeting and vigorous anti-corruption programmes will be crucial in achieving this. But the challenge might be the culture of impunity and politics which is characterised by the pursuance of private interests against the public good.
For over a decade now, Nigeria has been plagued by domestic terrorism, triggered initially by militia insurgents in the Niger Delta, who attacked oil production infrastructure, attacked security operatives, and engaged in the kidnapping of oil company personnel working in the region. Politics induced kidnappings across the country, and the Boko Haram insurgency in the northern part of the country that followed has now assumed talking points in national and international discourse. The major concern is how to curb terrorism in the country, yet the point of departure has been identification of the causes. Thus far three viewpoints can be identified. The first blames it on dissatisfaction with the country’s system or structure of governance, ethnicity-based political domination and discrimination, inequity in resource allocation, horizontal inequalities and ethnic nationalism (Naanen, 1995; Amuwo & Herault, 1998; Ibaba 2009). The second point is linked to failed expectations of improved living conditions underpinned by deepening poverty, dissatisfaction with the government, and the perception and/or conclusion that government policies only promote the private interests of the custodians of political power (Muazu, 2011; Bartolotta, 2011). The third explanation blames terrorism in the country on religious fundamentalism or extremism (Tribune, 2010). On this point, Bartolotta (2011) has identified unemployment and corruption as the roots of extremism, suggesting that poverty, a major manifestation of unemployment and corruption in Nigeria, lies at the roots of extremism. While not overlooking the other factors linked to terrorism, this paper explores the role of poverty.

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6 Although it is widely known as “Boko Haram” meaning “western education is forbidden,” the actual name of the sect is Jama’atu Ahlus Sunnah Lid Da’awaiti wal jihad, meaning “people committed to the Teachings of the Prophet and Jihad” (Muazu, 2011)
justification for this is the consistent rise in the poverty rate and increase in the population living in poverty.

The dominance of the poor in the membership of the protest movements that engage in terrorism, as evidenced by the poor socio-economic status of those arrested on allegations of terrorism and the concentration of these groups (protest movements) in poorer neighbourhoods, highlights poverty as a factor which should be investigated via terrorism studies in Nigeria. Using the frustration-aggression and horizontal inequalities (HIs) explanation of violence, the paper argues that poverty cannot be dissociated from terrorism in Nigeria. The thesis of the paper is anchored on two perspectives. Firstly, that the paradox of poverty and the resultant feelings of neglect by the citizens have fed into horizontal inequalities. Secondly, it has alienated grievance-filled citizens from mainstream society and undermined the solidarity between citizens and government. Significantly, conflict literature has linked “ideas, beliefs, and behaviours relevant to violence” to the social environment (Bogat, Leahy, von Eye, Maxwell, Levendosky, & Davidson, 2005), and the paper brings this into the discourse on terrorism in Nigeria.

The remaining part of the paper is divided into five sections as follows: (1) What is Terrorism? Conceptual Issues and Nigerian Realities; (2) Poverty-Terrorism Nexus: Contending Issues; (3) Paradox of Poverty: Incubation of Grievance and Dissenters; (4) the Geography of Terrorism: Interrogating the Poverty Connection; and (5) Conclusion.
What is Terrorism? Conceptual Issues and Nigerian Realities

The meaning of terrorism can be discerned from the international conventions on terrorism and the state anti-terrorism legislations that proscribe it. For example, Article 2 of the UN draft Convention on International Terrorism (2004) classifies acts of terrorism as unlawful and intentional means that result in:

- Death or serious bodily injury to any person; or serious damage to public or private property, including a place of public use, a state or government facility, a public transportation system, an infrastructure facility or the environment; or Damage to property, places, facilities, or systems (place of public use, a state or government facility, a public transportation system, an infrastructure facility or the environment) resulting or likely to result in major economic loss, when the purpose of the conduct, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international Organization to do or abstain from doing any act.

In broad terms, terrorism is seen both as a crime and tactic of warfare. As crime, it pertains to the use of violence to kill and destroy public infrastructure or personal property. As a tactic of warfare, it refers to a deliberate attack of the civilian population or non-combatants in times of war (Schmid, 2004). But the goals for using violence as strategy are also important in defining terrorism. Although the political objective appears most defining, other goals of violence are not overlooked in the description of terrorist behaviour. The definition of terrorism and

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7 This draft is still under negotiation and was submitted to the United Nations General Assembly in 1998 by India. The UN Ad Hoc Committee on Terrorism which deals directly with this issue was established by Resolution 51/210 in 1996.
the proscription of terrorist acts by the Nigeria anti-terrorism Act of 2011\(^8\) provide the framework for the identification of terrorist acts or behaviour in the country. This Act defines terrorism as:

An act which is deliberately done with malice, aforethought and which may seriously harm or damage a country or an international organization; and is intended or can reasonably be regarded as having been intended to (1) unduly compel a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; (2) seriously intimidate a population; (3) seriously destabilize or destroy the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organization, or (4) otherwise influence such government or international organization by intimidation or coercion.

The Act further lists terrorist acts as (1) “an attack upon a person’s life which may cause serious bodily harm or death; (2) kidnapping of a person; (3) destruction to a government or public facility, transport system, or an infrastructural facility, including an information system, a fixed platform located on the continental shelf, public place or private property likely to endanger human life or result in major economic loss; 4) the seizure of an aircraft, ship or other means of public or goods transport and diversion, or the use of such means of transportation to influence government or international organization by intimidation or coercion; (5) the manufacture, possession, acquisition, transport, supply or use of weapons, explosives or of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons, as well as research into and development of biological and chemical weapons without lawful authority; (6) the release of dangerous

\(^8\) The Nigerian Anti- Terrorism Act of 2011 is presently being revised for amendment by the National Assembly.
substances or causing of fire, explosions or floods, the effect of which is to endanger human life; (7) interference with or disruption of the supply of water, power or any other fundamental natural resource, the effect of which is to endanger human life; (8) an act or omission in or outside Nigeria which constitutes an offence within the scope of a counter terrorism protocols and conventions duly ratified by Nigeria; and (9), an act which disrupts a service but is committed in pursuance of a protest.

From the standpoint of the draft UN Convention on International Terrorism and the Nigerian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2011, the ongoing violent behavior and attacks of the Boko Haram Islamic sect on international and national institutions, such as the 2011 attacks on the United Nations building and Police Headquarters building in Abuja, the burning of homes and schools, and destruction of telecommunication infrastructure, qualify as terrorist activities. Although commentators and analysts suggest that the objectives of the Islamic sect are unclear, Bartolotta (2011) has indicated that the group has a “political goal which seeks to create an Islamic nation in 12 northern states of Nigeria.” This suggests, therefore, that the violent attacks by the group are intended to force the actualization of this objective, which captures a critical criterion of terrorism noted by the UN Convention on Terrorism and the Nigerian Anti-Terrorism law as noted earlier.

9 In this provision, demonstration and stoppage of work is not considered a terrorist Act if it is not intended to “unduly compel a government or international organization to perform or abstain from performing any act; seriously intimidate a population; or influence such government or international organization by intimidation or coercion.”
Similarly, pre-amnesty\textsuperscript{10} attacks on oil infrastructure and kidnapping of oil workers by ex-militia groups in the Niger Delta adequately come across as terrorist acts. Groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) used violence as a tactic to achieve the goals of self-determination, resource control and ownership and environmental protection. Between 2006 and 2008 alone, a total of 317 persons were killed in 66 attacks while 113 were kidnapped and taken as hostages (Ibaba, 2011, p.251). Oil infrastructure was badly damaged and oil production disrupted, leading to a drastic decline in oil production output and, by extension, oil revenues (Obi, 2009). This has been linked to the amnesty offer by the Nigerian government which helped to restore oil production to over two million barrels per day against under one million barrels per day before the amnesty was introduced (Joab-Peterside, 2010; Courson, 2011).

In like manner, non-oil related kidnappings across the country, seen by some as evidence of a failing Nigerian State (Adibe, 2012), fall within the description of terrorism. From using kidnapping as a tactic of achieving the goals of self-determination among others in the Niger Delta, it has spread to other parts of the country and has become a commercial enterprise or tool of political intimidation (Adibe, 2012). People are kidnapped and released after the payment of ransom and or making commitments to withdraw from political contest. Although the literature has yet to document politically motivated kidnappings, it has been related by some kidnap victims that the intention for kidnapping them was a strategy of political

\textsuperscript{10} The period before October 4, 2009 when the Amnesty which offered forgiveness to militia combatants ended
opponents to ruin their political careers by making them spend monies meant for electioneering or political campaigns on ransom payments. The act of kidnapping, in this case nonoil-related kidnapping, keeps an individual in illegal custody and a hostage against his will, and creates fear or intimidation in the victim and his relations and associates, with a view to making commercial or political gains. But what are the causes of terrorism? Table 1 attempts to provide some answers.

**TABLE 1: CAUSES OF TERRORISM IN SELECTED COUNTRIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause(s)</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communities struck by <em>poverty</em>, disease, illiteracy, bitter hopelessness</td>
<td>Armenia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social inequality, marginalization and exclusion</td>
<td>Benin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political oppression, extreme <em>poverty</em> and the violation of basic rights</td>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injustices, <em>misery</em>, <em>starvation</em>, drugs, exclusion, prejudices, despair for lack of perspectives</td>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequality and oppression</td>
<td>Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppression</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation of the young in situations of <em>economic deprivation</em> and political tension and uncertainty, sense of injustice and lack of hope</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejection of the West with all its cultural dimensions</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger, <em>poverty</em>, deprivation, fear, despair, absence of sense of belonging to the human family</td>
<td>Namibia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situations which lead to <em>misery</em>, exclusion, reclusion, the injustices which lead to growing frustration, desperation and exasperation</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Schmid, 2010, p.2*
Table 1 indicates that poverty is linked to poverty, but the literature sharply disagrees on this. Although the literature does not accept that there is a causal link between poverty and terrorism, particularly because empirical studies have yet to prove this (Schmid, 2010) or that poverty does not create a terrorist, it acknowledges that poverty promotes or enhances the achievement of the goals of terrorists. Furthermore, it recognises that poverty does not stand alone in encouraging terrorism, as it interacts with factors such as lack of political freedom, political repression, religion and ethnicity.

Poverty-Terrorism Nexus: Contending Issues
Does poverty cause terrorism? Whitehead (2007) answers no categorically, but adds that “poverty often makes the terrorists’ goals easier to achieve.” Similarly, Aftab (2008) concludes after an empirical study on the causes of militancy in Pakistan that “poverty, in and of itself, does not fuel extremism,” suggesting that although poverty may support extremism, it cannot stand alone; a view supported by Abadie (2004) who opines that the risk of terrorism is not high with poverty if other factors such as political freedom are addressed. Piazza (2006) demonstrates the denial of the poverty-terrorism nexus with data on economic growth and terrorism in 10 terrorism-impacted countries.
TABLE 2: TOP TEN COUNTRIES FOR TERRORIST INCIDENTS—GDP PER CAPITA AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Incidents: 1986-202</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Average GDP per Capita (USD)</th>
<th>2001 Human Development Index (HDI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2,358</td>
<td>115- Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5,615</td>
<td>62- Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>133- Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5,805</td>
<td>82-Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11,862</td>
<td>23- High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12,651</td>
<td>49-High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2,510</td>
<td>146- Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4,622</td>
<td>73-Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1,928</td>
<td>138- Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22,897</td>
<td>13- High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Piazza, 2006

In another study, Piazza (2011), reviewed the contending issues in the poverty-terrorism nexus and highlighted the following viewpoints: (1) “Economically developed countries are less likely to experience international terrorists attacks than developing countries; (2) Social welfare spending reduces international terrorists attacks; (3) Countries with higher levels of economic inequality experience higher levels of terrorism than

11 “GDP, a measure of total wealth produced and consumed in a country divided by the total population” (Piazza, 2006)
12 “HDI, an index that measures level of economic development considering income, literacy, and life expectancy, are widely used measurements for comparing levels of poverty and wealth across countries” (Piazza, 2006)
13 “Figures for per capita GDP and Human Development Index rankings are population-weighted averages for the State of Israel and Occupied Territories” (Piazza, 2010).
more egalitarian societies; (4) The selection regimes by terrorists which favour higher socio-economic status recruits, obscure the fact that pools of potential recruits are produced by poverty; (5) Economically developed countries are more likely than developing countries to experience terrorists attacks; (6) Increased income levels in countries reduce the probability that their nationals will launch terrorists attacks abroad; and (7) Countries with higher incomes and higher levels of political democracy and economic openness are more likely to be targeted by international terrorists” (pp.349-340).

It is discernible from the issues raised above that the poverty-terrorism nexus debate can be located in the context of international and domestic terrorism. At the international level clear doubts arise in relation to the linkage. For example, the point noted earlier that more developed countries are more likely to experience terrorist attacks. Understandably, such attacks may arise on account of other issues relating to religion or hate by nationals of other countries, for example, attacks on the United States of America and her interests abroad by groups such as al-Qaida and her associates. For domestic terrorism, however, the link with poverty can easily be appreciated in spite of the lack of empirical evidence. Piazza (2011) noted earlier that “countries with higher levels of economic inequality experience higher levels of terrorism than more egalitarian societies. Poverty is one measure of economic inequality, and it can be argued, therefore, that a country with a high population living in poverty is more vulnerable to terrorism than a country with minimal level of people living in poverty. Whitehead (2007), while dismissing the fact that poverty breeds terrorists, made the point that it can create conditions that will realize terrorist goals, just as Abadie (2004) suggested that poverty only influences terrorism when other terrorism-prone factors are left unattended to.
It stands to reason, therefore, that poverty can hardly be disconnected from domestic terrorism; however, it cannot stand alone. Thus, poverty without freedom and good governance can support terrorism. Equally, poverty within the context of a failed, fragile or falling state may trigger terrorism. Goodhand (2001) has noted two dimensional effects of poverty that can throw up violence. Firstly, the population living in poverty can easily “turn to organized banditry.” Secondly, poverty contributes to grievances, and this can turn to violence if poverty coincides with ethnic, religious, language or regional boundaries” (pp.34-36). Furthermore, poverty, particularly that which occurs in the midst of riches, can alienate citizens from the government leadership, break down the solidarity between citizens and the government, and undermine the stakeholder/proprietary interests of citizens in government and society. Such citizens tend to be vulnerable to manipulation by individuals seeking to attack the state. Significantly, too, they may not join to attack the state but may not cooperate with the state in the fight against terrorism. For example, they may provide hiding places for terrorists or refuse to pass on or share information on terrorists with security operatives, either to secure their daily living or simply as a demonstration of dissatisfaction with the state. The next section examines how this applies to Nigeria.

Paradox of Wealth and Poverty: The Incubation of Grievance and Dissenters
Without doubt, Nigeria is blessed with numerous mineral/natural resources that provide opportunities for sustainable development and wealth creation, as indicated in Table 4.
**TABLE 3: MINERAL RESOURCES FOUND IN NIGERIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geo-Political Zones and Component States</th>
<th>Mineral Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>South-East</strong> <em>(Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo)</em></td>
<td>Gold, Salt, Limestone, Lead/Zinc, Oil/Gas, Clay, Iron-Ore, Lignite, Glass-Sand, Phosphate, Gypsum, Coal, and Marcasite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South-West</strong> <em>(Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo)</em></td>
<td>Kaolin, Feldspar, Tatium, Granite, Syenites, Glass-Sand, Clay, Bitumen, Sand tar, Oil/Gas, Phosphate, Gemstone, Gypsum, Dimension stones, Coal, Bauxite, Gold, Talc, Tantalite, Tourmaline, Columbite, Marble, Silimanite, Cassiterite, Aquamarine, and Dolomite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North-West</strong> <em>(Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara)</em></td>
<td>Barytes, Sapphire, Kaolin, Gold, Clay, Serpentine, Asbestos, Amethyst, Kyanite, Mica, Aquamarine, Ruby, Rock Crystal, Topaz, Flouspar, Garnet, Silimanite, Tourmaline, Gemstone, Tantalite, Pyrochlore, Cassiterite, Copper, Glass-Sand, Gemstone, Lead/Zinc, Maoline, Marble, Salt, Silica-Sand, Gypsum, Laterite, Potash, Flakes, Granite, and Salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North-East</strong> <em>(Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe)</em></td>
<td>Kaolin, Bentonite, Gypsum, Magnesite, Barytes, Bauxite, Amethyst, Lead/Zinc, Uranium, Diatomite, Clay, Limestone, Gemstone, and Soda ash</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Sawyer, 2008, pp. 114-115*

In spite of these mineral resources, vast arable land that is suitable for agriculture and huge revenues derived from oil and gas, the country remains poor. These many resources
notwithstanding, the country has depended almost entirely on oil for its national revenues for the better part of its existence.

However, the huge revenues derived from oil have barely impacted on the poor. Although the country generated about USD 509.6 billion between 1960 and 2006 (Nafziger, 2008), the poverty rates provided by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) indicate the rates to be 28.1 percent, 46.3 percent, 42.7 percent, 65.6 percent and 54.4 percent for 1980, 1985, 1992, 1996 and 2004 respectively (UNDP, 2006, p.35). In spite of huge oil revenues which stood at USD 11 Billion in 2007 and USD 16.5 billion in 2008 (Ibaba, 2009b, p.561) and USD 59 billion in 2010 (Business Day, 2010), the poverty rate rose from 54.4 percent in 2004 to 69 percent in 2010 (NBS, 2010). The data indicates that the population living in poverty has risen consistently from 17.1 million in 1980 to 34.7 million in 1985, and later to 39.2 million, 67.1 million, 68.7 million and 112.5 million in 1992, 1996, 2004 and 2010 respectively (NBS, 2010). Why?

Although several factors, including ethnicity-based politics, political instability and lack of democratic institutions, have been identified as factors explaining this paradox, corruption is noted to be the major culprit. The former chairman of the Nigerian anti-graft agency Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) reported in 2004 that the country was losing 40 percent of her USD 20 billion oil revenue to corruption (REUTERS, 2004). Only recently, Obi Ezekwesili, former world Bank President for Africa, noted that Nigeria has lost an estimated USD 400 billion to corruption and misapplication of funds since 1960, and that 80 percent of the country’s oil revenue ends in the hands of just 1 percent of the about 160 million Nigerians (www.vanguardngr.com; Tobi Soniyi, 2012). The findings of Piazza’s (2011) study on poverty, minority economic discrimination and domestic terrorism, which highlighted the
fact that the countries whose minority communities are affected by economic discrimination are more vulnerable to domestic terrorism, is instructive. This draws attention to the role of economic discrimination in terrorism, and this paper makes the point that corruption in Nigeria ends in economic discrimination. Following Obi Ezekwesili’s claim as noted above, it would be correct to argue that the majority of the population is discriminated against economically. The point here is that on account of corruption only a small proportion of national revenues trickle down to address the goals and objectives of national development. Table 5 provides data on selected African countries to highlight the link between corruption and economic development. It shows that countries that are more corrupt are less developed.

**TABLE 4: CORRUPTION-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS: A COMPARISON OF 10 SELECTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>GDP Per Person (Purchasing Power Parity) USD</th>
<th>Anti-Corruption Rating %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>13,700 USD</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>13,300 USD</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>10,900 USD</td>
<td>67.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>4,500 USD</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>1,800 USD</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>1,600 USD</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1,500 USD</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>1,200 USD</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>900 USD</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR Congo</td>
<td>700 USD</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>World Average:</strong> 10,200</td>
<td><strong>Sub-Saharan Africa Average:</strong> 28.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Source: Atojoko, 2008, p.99_

But this comes with some costs. Corruption, one consequence of using the state to pursue personal gains by the
ruling elites, results in obsession with political power and alienation of citizens from the state (Ake, 2001). In Nigeria, this alienation has manifested as the government’s failure/inability to meet citizen’s needs and aspirations, citizen’s apathy to politics or elections, and the response of the political/ruling elites with election rigging or vote buying/commercialization of the entire electoral process. The outcome is that governance hardly improves the living standards of citizens who no longer have proprietary interests in government. Furthermore, the political ruling elites do not need the support of common citizens to win or retain power, or, at best, can manipulate them to get their support. In this regard, state institutions such as the judiciary have become weak and ineffective, making citizens lose faith in them and holding them in contempt. This is exacerbated by corruption with impunity, as indicated by the numerous celebrated cases of corruption trials of public officers and bank and business executives that have only resulted in plea bargain convictions or convictions that are widely seen to be a slap on the face.

This, in my view, has created grievances that can be located in the context of frustration-aggression. However I examine this from the perspective of implicit and explicit aggression. Implicit aggression here refers to withdrawal of obedience and support to the state. An individual in this category may not attack the state, but at the same time he may not prevent the state from either attacking or supporting it to contain its attackers or terrorists. The explicit category consists of those who are willing to attack the state, either covertly or overtly. These groups of citizens are vulnerable to manipulation, particularly when religion and ethnicity are implicated. The understanding of this will be enhanced by locating it within the
context of the frustration-aggression theory and the nexus between horizontal inequality and conflict.

The frustration-aggression explanation of conflict, pioneered by John Dollard, Leonard Doob, Neal Miller, O.H Mowrer, and Robert Sears in 1939 (Berkowitz, 1989), has been used as one of the dominant explanations of violence. This theory explains conflict from a psychological perspective and blames conflict on the inhibition or blockage of goal attainment. Faleti (2006: 47) explains this with the “want-get-ratio,” “expected need satisfaction” and “actual need satisfaction.” The explanation is that the gap between what people feel they want or deserve and what they actually get results in frustration, which culminates into aggression and violence. Although frustration does not always lead to violence due to intervening variables such as the fear of sanctions, the linkage cannot be disputed (Berkowitz, 1989). The targets of violence in this context are the individual, institution or organizations perceived to be the cause of deprivation, or those related to it (Faleti 2006: 47). Theories of aggression have supported this idea by noting that it occurs as an innate response to frustration, although the theories also acknowledge that it can be either instigated by instinct or may be learned. It does clarify that frustration-aggression is more systematically developed and has empirical backing (Gurr, 1968).

The point to discern here is that many poor Nigerians do expect that they should, and consequently blame their condition on the Nigerian state, suggesting that dissatisfactions with the government have created conditions which either trigger, support, or facilitate aggression and violence. This is, however, made prominent when poverty coincides with ethnic or religious boundaries. The horizontal inequalities (HI) explanation of
conflict makes this point clearer. The literature has defined HI’s as:

Systematic inequalities\textsuperscript{14} between ...... groups.... People can be grouped in many ways, and most people are members of many groups. There is a large range of types of group: national, racial, ethnic, religious, gender and age are some obvious important ways that people are categorised. Horizontal inequalities often have their origin in historical circumstances, such as colonial policies, which privileged some groups over others. Sometimes, however, horizontal inequalities are not caused by deliberate agency at all but simply become evident for example when traditional peoples on the periphery of modernizing societies are drawn into closer contact with the more powerful and technologically proficient groups. An initial advantage often leads to long-term cumulative advantages, as resources and education allow the more privileged groups to secure further advantages. Likewise, group deprivation tends to be reproduced over time. Horizontal inequalities affect individual well-being and social stability in a serious way, and one that is different from the consequences of vertical inequality\textsuperscript{15}. Unequal access to political/economic/ social resources by different cultural groups can reduce individual welfare of the individuals in the losing groups over and above what their individual position would merit, because their self-esteem is bound up with the progress of the group. But of greater consequence is the argument that where there are such inequalities in resource access and outcomes, coinciding with cultural differences, culture can become a powerful mobilising agent that can lead to a range of political disturbances. (Ostby, 2004; Stewart, 2001; Stewart, Brown & Mancini, 2010).

The above reference brings into focus the possibilities of group grievances arising from poverty and related factors.

\textsuperscript{14} Poverty is one of the characteristics that define inequality.

\textsuperscript{15} This refers to inequality among individuals.
The point to note is that “poverty magnifies underlying grievances such as ethnic and religious differences” (3PHS, 2007). Although poverty is widespread in Nigeria, ethnic and religious identity have been mobilised in the expression of dissatisfaction with governance or dissent against the state. It is important to emphasize that whereas ethnicity and religion play key roles in the mobilization of people against the state, the actual rallying point of is their poverty or a threat to the people’s material well-being. For example, in January 2012, Nigerians were united by a perceived threat to their material well-being because of the federal government policy of removing subsidies on petroleum products. In this case, persons from different social levels, from ethnic groups and from religious affiliations came together to protest against the policy. Yet a common thread that ran through the utterances of protesters was the paradox of wealth and poverty. Clearly, people were incensed with the widespread poverty in the land, and the government’s inaction on corruption was perceived to be the dominant cause of poverty in the country. Thus poverty, in the face of high level corruption among the political and ruling elites, appears to have incubated grievances and created conditions for dissent.

The Geography of Terrorism: Is there a Poverty Connection?
Is there a geography of terrorism in Nigeria? And is there a poverty connection? I think so. But I do not mean that there is a causal relationship between poverty and terrorism in Nigeria or that poverty has created terrorists in the country. The point is that poverty has supported terrorism, either by being a rallying point of mobilising violence against the state, as was the case in the Niger Delta before the 2009 amnesty, or developed a “no stakeholder” attitude among citizens as suggested by complaints
of security operatives that citizens were not supporting them fully in the fight against Boko Haram insurgency in the North. Although there is no data on ex-militants and Boko Haram’ members and citizens in the North to make an empirically-based argument on this, the paper explores this point by examining the points where terrorism-prone violence is concentrated in the country in relation to the poverty rate and the population living in poverty. Here is a presentation of the poverty rates in the States for 2004 and 2010.
### TABLE 5: PROFILING THE POVERTY STATUS OF STATES - 2004 & 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South-East</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abia</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>1,638,051</td>
<td>Benue</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>2,835,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anambra</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>2,400,486</td>
<td>Kogi</td>
<td>88.6</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>2,206,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebonyi</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>1,599,696</td>
<td>Kwara</td>
<td>85.2</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>1,470,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enugu</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>2,065,126</td>
<td>Nassarawa</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>1,125,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imo</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>1,997,528</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>1,339,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Zone</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>9,700,887</td>
<td>Plateau</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>2,374,497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FCT</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>781,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-South</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Zone</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>12,132,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akwa-Ibom</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>2,109,071</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayelsa</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>800,578</td>
<td>Adamawa</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>2,353,899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross River</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>1,528,263</td>
<td>Bauchi</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>3,418,510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>2,606,576</td>
<td>Borno</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>2,838,307</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edo</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>2,124,099</td>
<td>Gombe</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>1,746,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>2,623,812</td>
<td>Taraba</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>1,585,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Zone</td>
<td><strong>48.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>56.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,792,399</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>67.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>69.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,662,798</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 The population living in poverty rate was calculated with the 2006 population figures. Thus with the estimated population growth of about 2 percent, the total population, and by extension those living in poverty would be more than the numbers indicated here.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South-West</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North-West</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekiti</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>1,245,095</td>
<td>Jigawa</td>
<td>95.1</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>2,484,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>4,443,721</td>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>3,749,197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogun</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>2,468,905</td>
<td>Kano</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>6,193,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ondo</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>1,586,312</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>71.1</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>4,332,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osun</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>1,304,366</td>
<td>Kebbi</td>
<td>89.7</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>2,346,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>2,896,443</td>
<td>Sokoto</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>3,027,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Zone</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>14,043,842</td>
<td>Zamfara</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>2,324,269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All Zone</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>24,458,638</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A number of issues can be discerned from Table 5, in relation to the poverty-terrorism nexus, in particular, the concentration or frequency of terrorism-related violence such as kidnapping and bombings in the South-East, South-South, North-East and North-West geo-political zones. The first point to note is the increase in poverty by 25 percent, 7.2 percent, 6.5 percent and 1.8 percent in the South-East, South-South, North-West and North-East geo-political zones respectively between 2004 and 2010. The South-West and North-Central zones that experience very little of such violence recorded declining poverty rates of 6.9 percent and 3.6 percent respectively. Furthermore, the population living in poverty draws attention to the paradoxes that create grievance and aggression. The Niger Delta illustrates this point. The implementation of the 13 percent derivation principle has resulted in huge revenue inflows, but these have not impacted on poverty as indicated by the figures provided in Table 5. Between 2000 and 2008, states in the South-South geo-political zone received over three trillion naira (N3, 055,229,154,416.49) with revenues increasing from NGN 103,942,755,947.75 in 2000 to NGN 852,112,410,145.40 in 2008, an increase of about 28 percent. The comparison of the revenues received by the states of the South-South zone with other zones (as demonstrated in Table 8), and the meager development impact in the area can be explained as part of the poverty underlying frustrations which promotes violence.

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17 Although Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) that is in the North-Central zone, has witnessed some of the worst attacks by the Boko Haram sect, the attacks are widely believed to have originated from the strongholds of the sect outside the FCT.
18 Revenue figures were collated from the Federal Ministry of Finance website, www.fmf.go.ng
### TABLE 6: REVENUE ALLOCATION TO STATES, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE FCT FOR JULY 2011: A COMPARISON OF GEO-POLITICAL ZONES AND INDIVIDUAL NIGER DELTA STATES SHARE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geo-Political Zone</th>
<th>Component States</th>
<th>Amt Received=N</th>
<th>% Share Of Total Revenue</th>
<th>Niger Delta States</th>
<th>Amt Received=N</th>
<th>States With Highest Allocations In Geo-Pol Zones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South-East</td>
<td>Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo</td>
<td>58,197,059,062.79</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>Akwa-Ibom</td>
<td>53,306,124,568.94</td>
<td>Anambra State 12,623,612,932.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-South</td>
<td>Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers</td>
<td>211,654,649,857.26</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>Bayelsa</td>
<td>34,647,053,596.42</td>
<td>Akwa-Ibom 53,306,124,568.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-West</td>
<td>Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo</td>
<td>90,162,744,993.12</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>Cross River</td>
<td>12,669,685,403.20</td>
<td>Lagos 22,821,435,409.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-Central</td>
<td>Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger, Plateau, FCT (Federal Capital Territory)</td>
<td>74,456,298,995.49</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>45,135,728,733.04</td>
<td>Benue 13,616,448,796.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-East</td>
<td>Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe</td>
<td>74,770,928,152.15</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>Edo</td>
<td>13,709,711,061.89</td>
<td>Borno 15,597,584,329.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara</td>
<td>106,971,162,761.56</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>Rivers</td>
<td>52,186,346,493.77</td>
<td>Kano 22,906,019,625.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Adapted from Nigerian Tribune, 2011, pp. 1 & 53*
Similarly, although states in geo-political zones other than the South-South have received far less revenue from the Federation Account when compared with those received by South-South states, they have also experienced a quantum leap in revenue inflow from the Federation Account. Yet these have also not impacted adequately on poverty as the figures for these states indicated in Table 5. Table 7 provides some revenue figures to demonstrate this point.

The second point to discern from Table 5 is the coincidence of increasing poverty with groups that have the perception of marginalization or strong ideological views about their religion. The South-South is made of minority ethnic groups, and in the context of ethnicity-based politics, they link the poverty of the region to ethnicity-based political domination. Similarly the South-East, made of the Igbo ethnic nationality, have severally complained of marginalization by the Nigerian state and attributed to its their poor/low development. These standpoints triggered agitations, protests and mobilizations that laid the foundations for militancy and kidnapping. In the North-East and North-West, the coincidence of poverty with the preponderance of the Boko Haram sect appears to have facilitated mobilizations for violence.

Table 7: A Comparison of Revenue Inflow from the Federation Account to South-East, North-East and North-West Geo-Political Zones- August 1997, March 2000 and July 2011 Figures for States and Local Governments Only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geo-Political Zones</th>
<th>August 1997 Revenue Inflow NGN</th>
<th>March 2000 Revenue Inflow NGN</th>
<th>July 2011 Revenue Inflow NGN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South-East</td>
<td>616,813,713.97</td>
<td>2,627,084,268.89</td>
<td>58,197,059,062.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-East</td>
<td>1,013,861,387.99</td>
<td>3,562,702,661.34</td>
<td>74,770,928,152.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>1,117,769,294.75</td>
<td>4,350,998,946.77</td>
<td>106,971,162,761.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It may be argued that these huge revenue inflows over time barely impacted on poverty due to the expansion of public expenditure due to the increase in population. The point, however, is that public expenditure neglected the poor. The data on Bayelsa State, which vindicates this point and which captures the public expenditure pattern at all levels of government, is represented here:

### TABLE 8: TREND OF CAPITAL BUDGET ALLOCATIONS IN BAYELSA STATE:
**2007, 2008 AND 2009 BUDGETS ONLY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount Allocated to Selected Sectors (in NGN) and % of total capital Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Admin(^\text{19})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(in NGN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>16,715,820,000 (16.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10,652,227,482 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>19,496,148,754 (15.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 2008, Bayelsa State budgeted 11 billion on Miscellaneous for Government House, but budgeted NGN4 billion for agriculture, NGN4.4 billion for water supply, and NGN2 billion for rural development. These expenditures clearly neglect the poor in resource allocation, just as it provides avenues for corruption that benefits the ruling/political elites.

\(^{19}\)The point to note here is that the expenditure on general administration covers building and furnishing of government lodges; office equipment and furniture; renovation of government guest houses and liaison offices; consultancy services; and installation of internet facilities in Government House.
Conclusion
This paper examined the poverty-terrorism nexus in Nigeria and concludes that although there is no causal relationship between poverty and terrorism in the country, poverty has created an enabling environment for terrorism to thrive. While noting that poverty does not stand alone, the paper posited that concentration of terrorism-related violence in geo-political zones, such as the South-South, South-East, North-East and North-West that witnessed increase in poverty levels from 2004 to 2010, is an indication of how poverty is conducive to terrorism. Within the context of the frustration-aggression and Horizontal Inequalities explanations of violence, the paper argued that the high incidence of poverty amongst those who live in the country despite enormous mineral resources and huge oil revenues in the face of high level corruption by the political and ruling elites, have created grievances among them.

The high level of corruption among the political and ruling elites has the consequence of undermining the solidarity between citizens and leadership, as the Nigerian State has alienated the citizens from it. In the opinion of the paper, this has further weakened the stakeholder interests of citizens in the state and, by extension, their social responsibility roles. This appears to explain the vulnerability of citizens to mobilization and recruitment for violence against the state and their reluctance to support the fight against terrorism as evidenced by the complaints of security forces that citizen cooperation in the fight against terrorism is low or poor. The willingness of Nigerians to conspire with non-Nigerians to engage in bomb attacks on the country, as alleged by security operatives, and the kidnapping of persons, including government functionaries, also vindicates this point. This paper is not claiming that the poverty justifies terrorism or that every poor person can engage in terrorism in Nigeria. The point is that the population living in poverty are
prone to terrorism, and the social status of persons who have been paraded as terrorist suspects by security services and operatives, vindicates this point. Poverty thus tends to promote the objectives of terrorism and raises policy implications. In this regard, it is critical for the Nigerian government to bring poverty reduction into its anti-terrorism engagement strategy. Budgetary reforms to ensure pro-poor budgeting and vigorous anti-corruption programmes will be crucial in achieving this, but the challenge might be the culture of impunity and politics which is characterised by the pursuance of private interests as against the public good.

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BOOK REVIEW: Sign and Taboo: Perspectives on the Poetic Fiction of Yvonne Vera

A TRIBUTE TO ZIMBABWE’S LATE FEMALE WEAVER OF WORDS

Vera has attracted much critical attention because of her consistent focus on women’s problems and her commitment to women’s struggles for freedom. In her fiction, Vera maintains a no-holds-barred confrontation with African men and the colonial system as she sees both of these as sources of women’s domination and oppression. The writer, therefore, belongs to the category of radical feminists in Zimbabwean literature. Another element that makes her works outstanding is her unique style, characterised by poetic prose and the blending of African orature with modern techniques.

*Sign and Taboo* deals with the above issues in Vera’s creative writing. For a reader of Vera’s fiction, the title is very appropriate. The ‘sign’ part of the title refers to Vera’s use of symbols and images to signify meaning and reality in her works. The ‘taboo’ part refers to such events as rape, incest, abortion, suicide, murder and women’s other expressions of freedom in the author’s works. Vera smashes “taboos” by her courageous interrogation and challenge of the colonial system in Rhodesia and of African patriarchy and by offering an alternative vision for the embattled colonial and post-colonial society in her works.

In part 1, Kizito Z. Muchemwa, in his essay “Language, voice and presence in *Under the Tongue,*” argues that Vera’s main concern in *Without a Name* and *Under the Tongue* is the recovery of the repressed discourse of women. Thus, in Muchemwa’s view, the two novels are “a strategy of re-inscription and recovery” (p. 9) of women’s identities and their ability to represent themselves. Like Muchemwa, Meg Samuelson, in “A River in Mouth: writing the voice in *Under the Tongue*” shows how sexual violence perpetrated on women by men in Vera’s novels traumatises women into silence. Samuelson argues that Vera sees the redemption of victimised women coming from other women, as is the case with Zhizha, who is helped to recover her voice by her mother, Runyararo, in *Under the Tongue* after being raped by
her father Muroyiwa. The critic sees the assistance given to Zhizha by her mother as an act of empowerment. She also observes that Runyararo’s artistry, mat-weaving, represents Vera’s search for “a specific post-colonial writing that will retain the features of pre-colonial morality, which the mats connote, while simultaneously managing to offer African women a moment of intervention.” (p.23) In the same section, Carolyn Martin Shaw, in “The habit of assigning meaning: signs of Yvonne Vera’s world,” points out that Vera vividly freighted her stories through an elaborate use of signs and images. Shaw explores the use of colours and images in Vera’s story “The Shoemaker” in Why Don’t you Carve Other Animals and in novels, such as Butterfly Burning, Without a Name and Under the Tongue, in a very informative and refreshing way.

Jane Bryce, in her essay “Imaginary snapshots: cinematic techniques in the writing of Yvonne Vera” at the beginning of Part Two, argues that photographic and cinematic texts help Vera to capture ideas in a convincing and all-encompassing way. She says that even taboo subjects—incest in Under the Tongue, infanticide and rape in Without a Name, female resistance and heroism in Nehanda—“are brought under the lens into focus, where they can no longer be ignored.” (p.43) Jessica Hemming’s forte, in “The voice of cloth: interior dialogues and exterior skins,” is Vera’s use of cloth to convey meaning. She indicates that in Under the Tongue cloth refers to the fragile relationships between characters and the poverty that afflicts them as they use cloths to create physical boundaries between them in one room. The critic further points out that in Without a Name cloth is a metaphor for Mazvita’s alienation and suffering as Mazvita “sees herself as part of a torn social fabric encased in a body that is worn to the bone through years of unrelenting hostility”. (p.60) In the last essay in Part Two, Lizzy Attree’s “Language, kwela music and modernity in Butterfly Burning,” the view that in Butterfly Burning Vera fuses poetry with prose, poetry being the ‘private language of
beauty and emotion.’ (p.64) Attree says that these artistic forms are woven around the fabric of kwela music that ‘threads through the novel.’ (p.64) Attree indicates that kwela music and the poetic prose in the novel are suitable devices to express freedom, resistance and soothe characters in very difficult situations.

The first essay in Part Three by Shaw, “A woman speaks of rivers: generation and sexuality in Yvonne Vera’s novels,” reflects on the perennial the suffering of women. The critic observes that from Nehanda to Butterfly Burning Vera shows women suffering from generation to generation. Shaw thus points out that the archetypal symbol of water in Vera’s novels refers to women’s “tears” as well as to their healing and biological identity as child-bearers. In her discussion of rape and recovery in Without a Name and Under the Tongue, Samuelson, in “Remembering the body: rape and recovery in Without a Name,” shows rape as a form of oppression of women by men and also points out that women can only genuinely recover from rape through memory, confronting the incident and thus coming to terms with reality.

According to Samuelson, trying to repress the memory of rape leads to self-destructive tendencies, as shown by the case of Mazvita in Without a Name. Ranka Primorac, in “Iron butterflies: notes on Yvonne Vera’s Butterfly Burning,” views women in Butterfly Burning as ‘iron butterflies’ due to their resilience and vulnerability. These women are marginalised by both men and colonialism. The critic points out that the protagonist, Phephelaphi, makes a fruitless search for a space of her own and chooses death rather than stillness. Hence, in Primorac’s view, Vera’s novel reflects “a new perspective on what is meant to be a black woman in the country called Rhodesia.” (p.104) However, ten years before the publication of Butterfly Burning, Tsitsi Dangarembga, in Nervous Conditions (1988), had expressed concern about the double suffering of black women from patriarchy
and colonialism. In “Yvonne Vera’s Without a Name: reclaiming that which has been taken, “Ruth Lavelle is of the opinion that Vera’s depiction of Mazvita is meant to make the reader understand the character’s situation and even sympathise with her and also other women in similar circumstances. This ensues from the fact that Mazvita commits infanticide to salvage her freedom and heal “the wounds of the past”.

In Part 4, Robert Muponde, in “The sight of the dead body: dystopia as resistance in Vera’s Without a Name, “attacks Vera for her limited understanding of the machinations of colonialism and the nature and role of the liberation war in Zimbabwe as reflected in Without a Name. In this novel, Mazvita blames the land for her rape and abandons the national struggle for land in search of personal freedom in the city which is, ironically, the centre of colonial oppression. However, Muponde reads Mazvita’s victimisation as an “indictment of the predatory and exclusionary revolutionary theory of the nationalists”.(p.123) The critic further indicates that in Without a Name Vera shows that liberation of self is also possible in the context of liberation of the land and nation. In his essay, “Spirit possession and the paradox of post-colonial resistance in Yvonne Vera’s Nehanda,” Maurice Vambe is of the view that in Nehanda the positive contributions of women to society, especially by Nehanda, shatter the identity of black women as mere victims of patriarchy and colonialism. Nehanda was a national spirit medium (mhondoro) in Zimbabwe who played a very influential role in the 1896-97 Uprisings known as The First Chimurenga. The critic goes on to say that, in this respect, Vera challenges both the patriarchal and colonial ideologies and puts at the centre of the novel a woman-centred vision of society and meaning of independence. Vambe, however, observes that Vera’s vision is embattled with contradictions based on the politics of gender, ethnicity, class and Vera’s use of the coloniser’s language (English) in her novels.
Khombe Mangwanda’s essay in Part Five, “Re-mapping the colonial space: Yvonne Vera’s Nehanda,” sums up a novel such as Nehanda as “a tale of land re-appropriation that deconstructs the imperial narrative of appropriation.” (p.141) Like Vambe, Mangwanda notes that in Nehanda, Vera re-maps colonial Zimbabwe using Shona mythology and symbolism that excludes whites. In “History, gender and the problem of representation in the novels of Yvonne Vera,” Nana Wilson-Tagoe shows how Vera’s novels reconstruct history by recreating the images of women and also by creating space for women in a patriarchal and colonial society. She claims that the revolutionary story of Nehanda “unsets the collective ethic and its assumptions and paves way for a possible re-constitution of leadership, authority and the social order.” (p.163) Emmanuel Chiwome, in “A comparative analysis of Solomon Mutswairo’s and Yvonne Vera’s handling of the legend of Nehanda,” indicates that both Vera and Solomon Mutswairo depict Nehanda as a symbol of resistance and liberation and pay attention to cultural details in their novels about Nehanda to revitalise the legend vis-à-vis its distortion and suppression by the colonisers. Chiwome, however, notes that unlike Mutswairo, Vera’s depiction of Nehanda’s death is “from a supernatural rather than an organic point of view.” (p.189) The critic also attacks Vera for misrepresenting some of the African traditional norms and practices in Nehanda. He says that this act will unfortunately reinforce the outsider’s stereotypes about traditional African societies. Chiwome echoes Vambe when he reflects Vera’s dilemma of attempting to represent the African world in new ways using the English language.

In “Between the pause and the waiting: the struggle against time in Butterfly Burning,” Violet Bridget Lunga is of the view that space, time and memory shape identities and destinies in Butterfly Burning. She shows how women such as Phephelaphi, Deliwe, Getrude and others are affected by the colonial space and time as
black women. She reflects how colonial constraints and patriarchal restrictions in the form of Fumbatha stifle Phephelaphi’s ambitions, causing her to committing suicide. The well-known Zimbabwean historian, Terence Ranger, in “History has its ceiling: The pressures of the past in *The Stone Virgins,*” argues that although *The Stone Virgins* pursues the victimisation of women by men, the novel marks a change in Vera’s engagement with history as the book is not one ‘in which narratives are compressed into a private tragedy’ but is ‘about people caught up in and destroyed by a public disaster.’ (p.206) In other words, Ranger is saying that *The Stone Virgins* is not gender-biased but has a national perspective as its real focus. It is not Thenjiwe who is beheaded by government soldiers but the national tragedy in Matabeleland in the early 1980s during which several thousands of civilians were killed during the *Gukurahundi* campaign. *Gukurahundi* (a heavy storm) was the code name of the North Korean-trained Zimbabwe’s Fifth Brigade that was sent into Matabeleland and Midlands provinces to suppress “dissidents” soon after independence.

After going through *Sign and Taboo,* readers will realise that some critics of Vera’s work and the poetics of her novels and short stories tend to pay more attention on style while, on the other hand, other critics are more socio-historical in their approach as they highlight Vera’s perception of social reality as a woman. Nevertheless, I find the critical reader very suitable for teachers’ college and for university students and lecturers studying the late author’s works.
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