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Epistemic Politics and Pluriversality in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* and Emeka Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures*

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Abstract

Culture is formed by knowledge, so that, the episteme defines ontology. The universality of modernity defines the existence of the colonized with promises of development and salvation. This is with an imperial undertone to foster the cultural violence of coloniality in the postcolonies. This paper is an evaluation of epistemic politics and the emergence of the pluriverse in Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* and Emeka Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures*. These plays from our review of related literature are dominated by studies on satire, gender relations, and political imaging of present-day Nigeria. From a decolonial perspective, our study engages modernity as an agent of coloniality in these selected plays. The paper argues that coloniality employs the rhetoric of modernity in transforming knowledge, power, and being as its strategy of encroachment. Therefore, delinking knowledge, power, and being are examined as decolonial motifs for a pluriversal ontology. Pluriversality however, emerges in place of universality as an ontological order marked with alternatives to modernity.

Keywords: Coloniality, decoloniality, modernity, universality, pluriversality

Introduction

Epistemic politics is the friction between Eurocentric and non-Eurocentric views of being in the world. It implicates the global contest of superiority between the notion of "universality" and "pluriversality". In *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*, Walter D. Mignolo maintains that "pluriversality is the name and the horizon of all decolonial trajectories today, on the planet, arising from the awareness of repressive forces of coloniality" (91). The need to overcome repression of subjectivities gives pluriversality a political undertone. In agreement with Mignolo, Ulrich Oslender concludes that pluriversality "is born out of a decolonial desire to break those bonds of dominance and a call for a coexistence of many worlds as an acknowledgment of the entanglement of diverse cosmologies, of which Western universalism is but one" (138). Thus, "intellectual and cultural bush clearing" (Chinweizu et al, 304), underline the decolonial project of pluriversality. Franz Hinkelammert conceptualized pluriversality, its usage first began with the Mexican Zapatista revolution in 1994. Enrique Dussel's philosophy of liberation paved the way for its application in literary criticism. Without contention, it appears that pluriversality is a decolonial project of liberating those at the existential margins through transforming epistemology to redefine ontology.

Modernity/coloniality are decolonial concepts that complement each other in the sense that modernity hides the logic of coloniality. As such, Mignolo agrees that "there is no modernity without coloniality" (232). Modernity refers to the narratives of development promoted by the Western ideology that advances the project of coloniality, that is – violence, expropriation, extermination, and all sorts of chaos in the former colonies. Responding to this, decoloniality, as a critique of



modernity, initiates the politics of knowing and being in the world, that pursues epistemic freedom for a pluriversal world where options to the “universal” rhetoric of modernity exist. Hence, it seeks to undo the myth of modernity as a strategy for creating the pluriverse. Crashing the myth of modernity implies unveiling the darker side of Western modernity – “Coloniality”. It is Annibal Quijano, that pioneered scholarship on coloniality. Assuredly, “it names the underlying logic of the foundation and unfolding of Western civilization from the Renaissance to date of which historical colonialisms have been a constitutive, although downplayed, dimension” (*Darker Side of Western Modernity*, 2). For Mignolo coloniality “is the darker and hidden side of modernity. It is called the destitute and the logic and processes of destitution” (140). The rhetoric of modernity shields this darker side of Westernization. Mignolo buttresses this fact, conceiving the rhetoric of modernity as “the promises of salvation by conversion, progress, civilization, development, defeating terrorism, or ending the drug economy in order to finally live in a developed and happy world” (100).

Nevertheless, it is quintessential to note that coloniality according to Maldonado-Torres differs from colonialism and vice versa. Colonialism “refers to specific empirical episodes of socio-historical and geopolitical conditions” while coloniality refers to a logic, metaphysics, ontology, and a matrix of power that can continue existing after formal independence and desegregation. On the other hand, decolonization refers to the formal liberation of the state from foreign rule. However, its incapacity in wholly liberating former colonies persists as Western systems of thought dominate the third world today (“Outline of Ten Theses”, 10). It is necessary to establish the relevance and critical import of Chinweizu’s decolonial project in relation to the innovative ideas of Latin American critics of decoloniality. Chinweizu et al’s angle of decolonization is a summon to critics and writers of African literature to decolonize their mode of writing as a means of bringing African cultural values and ethos to a global appreciation. Chinweizu et al take the path tasked with ensuring that “Africa’s literary culture becomes decolonized and liberated” (1).

The bulk of literature on Ola Rotimi’s *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* and Emeka Nwabueze’s *A Parliament of Vultures*, echo an overwhelming concern with a wide range of present-day global tensions. From the Marxist, satirical, postcolonial realist perspectives. Emeka Nwabueze’s *A Parliament of Vultures* has been engaged with an unusual bent for the subject of politics and leadership anomaly in Nigeria, a postcolonial entity stunted by the ills of colonial contact. Lamenting the dearth of decorum in Nigeria’s political sector, Emeka Aniago employs the concept of “gutter politics” as a metaphor to understand *A Parliament of Vultures* as a tool for conscientizing society about the state of its political destiny. “Gutter politics”, for Aniago, represents a kind of politics that portrays “disgust, unpleasant, dirty as well as mucky” (72). The Parliamentarians are the major force of this political misconduct following Aniago’s social constructivism. He concludes that the political system in Nigeria is already structured to produce and maintain leaders who are Vultures metaphorically.

From a satirical perspective, Uwem Affiah believes the text calls attention to an existential paradox, where the legislative arm of government whose duty is to

protect does the opposite. Drawing from the title of the play, Affiah paints the ravenous legislature in the image of Vultures whose sole aim is to scavenge on the remains of their subjects. Thus, he maintains they are irresponsible parliamentarians in the visage of a vulture is justifiable. It is the exact metaphor to communicate the ridiculous nature of politicians in the text. In a further identification, Ezeugo Enunyeluchukwu believes these politicians are vultures, metaphorized and depicted in the moral capacity of literature to provide a remedy for irresponsible leadership. Enunyeluchukwu succinctly affirms that Nwabueze's creative oeuvre is informed by the contemporary socio-political ill plaguing Nigeria. For her, the text's sole mission is to uphold the moral standards of good leadership in Nigeria.

Cumulatively, the topical issues that are specific to all the readings of *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* fall under satiric deconstruction and socio-cultural conflicts such as gender struggle. These are validated in reference to the following works (Diseph, 2015; Obuh; Jegede, 2015). These critical outputs attest to the work's literariness and at the same time affirm its utilitarian potential. Nevertheless, the subject of power relations seems to have dominated literature regarding the work. Dwelling on the social significance of *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*, socio-cultural satire appears to be the most prominent in critical discourse among critics. A view from the satirical lens tries to regard the work as a tool to correct and effect order in society, thus echoing Heidegger's idea of equipment. This is aptly demonstrated in Florence Diseph's reading of the text which enunciates the text as a tool for social critique, a microcosm of Nigerian social and political realities. Diseph believes that Ola Rotimi personifies the character of corrupt African leaders who see politics as an opportunity to eat the national cake (2). In this case, she regards Lejoka Browns as the focal point of discourse whenever the satirical dimension of the work is illuminated. Nostalgically, Diseph calls to consciousness the defects of colonialism which has a rub-off on the leaders of third world nations. These leaders are not different from the colonial masters in attitude.

Stanley Obuh comes to agree with her view of the text as a satirical object. Hence, the scriptural maxim that it takes two or three witnesses to establish a truth holds sway. Both scholars are of the opinion that the writer's social activism is manifest in his ability to combat social vices using his art. Indifferently, Obuh attempts to balance Diseph's lopsided critique as she only focuses on the play's humanistic spirit. Obuh's strategy for balance identifies and establishes the work's literary merit before going further to account for its social significance. For him, the work belongs to the Horacian literary tradition, and of course a problem play, because of the exploration of social vices that burden the nation. Going further to explore corruption implicated in tyrannical leadership, Emmanuel Jegede agrees with Diseph and Obuh on the satirical outlook of the play. He sees the work as "saliently speaking on how colonial administrations created black elite groups to succeed them and perpetuate their political and economic interests in post-independence Africa. Nevertheless, none of these studies on the two texts is focused on the aspect of decoloniality and epistemic politics of pluriversality that this paper engages.

Coloniality of Knowledge, Power and Being in Postcolonial Literature: Theory and Criticism

Coloniality of knowledge is a precursor to other dimensions of coloniality. Here, the universal fiction of the West is revealed as that which “the Colombian philosopher Santiago Castro-Gómez described as the hubris of the zero point” (79). Expressions such as “Global linear thinking”, “monorationality” and “monopolarity” convey thoughts about the Western world’s domination of knowledge creation. This idea of monopolizing knowledge is captured as Eurocentrism. This is aptly what Chinweizu et al decry in their *Towards the Decolonization of African Literature*. However, decoloniality goes in-depth and by introducing the discourse in his seminal paper, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America”, Aníbal Quijano appropriates “Eurocentrism as the name and perception of knowledge whose systematic formation began in Western Europe before the middle of the seventeenth century” (549). This perspective of knowledge is highly imperial. Commenting on the imperial nature of Eurocentric knowledge, Ndlovu Gatsheni concludes that “knowledge has been used to assist imperialism and colonialism and to inscribe Euro-American-centric epistemology that consistently appropriated what was considered progressive, and displacing what was considered repugnant aspects of endogenous and indigenous knowledge remains a fertile area of research” (5). The consequence of this is that the ‘locus of enunciation’ validates each writer’s opinion. When one speaks from a Western-oriented perspective, it is considered truth. When the reverse becomes the case, that knowledge is thrashed.

The ‘Locus of enunciation’ points to the geo- and body politics of knowledge. It is an assumption that people speak from the standpoints of class, gender, ethnicity, and race. Their belief in speaking from a position is that there can be no other. According to Mignolo “Locus of enunciation is the obvious silencing of aspects of endogenous and indigenous knowledge” (5). Despite this fact, the West denies taking sides by hiding under the idea of the universal. From all possible evidence, the geo and ego politics of knowledge define Western epistemology. Assenting to this, in *Constructing The Purviews*, Mignolo considers the “crashing of the fictions that maintained both monocentric world order and universalism to give rise to an innovative narrative emerging from awareness and the need to delink from monopolarity and Universalism as the route to a pluriversal world” (93).

However, the two major extremes in coloniality of power are the zone of being and the zone of nonbeing. The latter lives in a situation of endless war and the former is a privilege. As earlier stated, wars in the zones of nonbeing refer to Maldonado-Torres’s “metaphysical catastrophe”. As a result, this “metaphysical catastrophe is the creation of a profound scission in the concept of humanity, serving as the foundation for a system that will no longer be structured in terms of intra-human differences justified by tradition and religion only, but gradually also by scientific and secular accounts of differences between the human proper and the sub-human” (Outline of Ten Theses, 13). This explains the root cause of why perspectives from third-world nations are considered invalid. It must acknowledge the West’s first-world nation position of producing universal knowledge. Consequently, knowledge or perspectives from the third world are discarded. In *Conceptualizing*

the Coloniality of Power, Ndlovu-Gatsheni considers what he calls the “current ‘global political present’ as a racially hierarchized, Euro-American-centric, Christian-centric, patriarchal, sexist, capitalist, hetero-normative, hegemonic, and modern power structure that emerged in 1492” (5).

The division of humanity into units occasioned by unequal power generates the coloniality of being. It is built on the ideas of Franz Fanon who identifies the colonized subject as *Damne* and is “the wretched of the earth”. Maldonado-Torres concludes that “the *damne* is the subject that emerges in a world marked by the coloniality of being” (*On the Coloniality of Being*, 257). The *damne* lacks autonomy and is often located at the base of the ontological ladder. Ndlovu-Gatsheni also conceives coloniality of being as an “imperial and colonial articulation of African humanity” (*Perhaps Decoloniality is the Answer*, 6). The black subject is considered lesser human by the Western appropriation of the other.

So, Ndlovu (Gatsheni) agrees that “coloniality of being primarily refers to the normalization of the extraordinary events that take place in war” (255). These events are gendered, racialized, and socially stratified. Coloniality of being largely opens the hellish existence in the colonial world. This debased mode of existence is a consequence of the symbolic mutation of Rene Descartes’s “I think, therefore I am” into “I think (others do not think, or do not think properly), therefore I am (others are-not, lack being, should not exist or are dispensable)” (252). To this end, modernity/coloniality is a catastrophic transformation that foregrounds the above-mentioned levels of coloniality.

Coloniality and the Decolonized in *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* and *A Parliament of Vultures*

Having established the colonized in a continuous socio-cultural and political transformation, it is our concern here to evaluate the postcolonial society depicted in the two plays as a society in transit to its pluriversal destiny. The transition is from coloniality towards decoloniality for the pluriverse to emerge. Therefore, the focal point of analysis is twofold. First, a need to observe the various dimensions of coloniality and how they advance the reality of metaphysical catastrophe in the postcolonies within the texts. Establishing this as a problem, the second fulcrum of analysis is to reveal the decolonial forces that combat coloniality. Decoloniality’s strategy of combat is to crash the myth of modernity that is propelling coloniality. The processes are delinking, epistemic disobedience, and border thinking which are manifested by characters who rise from existing at the social margins to a place of social and political significance. The endpoint of all struggles in both plays is the realization of pluriversality. Subsequently, these issues are expounded in further sections of discourse. The structural unevenness in the first and second parts of the analysis is because unveiling the dynamics of coloniality tasks more than dismantling it. Once, this darker side of Western modernity is known, bringing it down becomes easier. This seems to be enough reason why every decolonial project must begin from the Epistemic point before permeating other dimensions.

The objective here is to critically engage the coloniality of knowledge, power, and being as dramatized in these two dramatic texts. What appears visible is that the decolonized is stuck in the strongholds of coloniality. Considering Rotimi’s *Our*

Husband Has Gone Mad Again, one is confronted with a character called Lajoka Brown who is formally freed from historical colonialism but is still operating within the confinement of the colonial matrix of power. He appears to be the flag bearer of the National Liberation Party. Their campaign chants happen to entertain and provoke the masses and they rejoice at the promises conveyed in these political chants. However, reality reveals these promises as deceptive, because the political flag bearer is out on a mission of exploitation, expropriation, and extermination to execute the colonial project of violence. Working closely with him is Gideon Abednego Okonkwo, his longtime friend from his military days. Lajoka-Brown's wives, Mama Rashida and Sikira are victims of his beguiling political strategy. Progressively, as events unfold, his other wife Elizabeth Tayana alternatively addressed as 'Liza' returns from America to join his household. Yet, it is unknown to her that Lajoka Brown is a polygamist. She marries him in Stanleyville, during his military assignment in Congo. Nevertheless, joining him in Nigeria is to consolidate the marriage. Her return is central to the play as it reawakens the old military self in Lajoka-Brown. This military self is an embodiment of coloniality. The monorational ideology of the Military in Lajoka-Brown brings his existence to the zone of being and his dehumanisation of other characters projects him as an agent of coloniality.

Meanwhile, this similar pattern is heavily present in Emeka Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures*, Madam Omeaku, is parallel to Major Lajoka Brown. Being parallels is founded on their inclination towards a particular habit of thought. This is a mind scheming the permanence of coloniality. The title of this play renders the Parliamentarians as 'Vultures' and this foregrounds their ravenous instinct which reveals the tendency of coloniality lurking within them. Madam Omeaku, Brown, Rev. Jossy, Chief of Protocol, and Habamero are working together to sustain the continuity of the darker side of Western modernity. The rhetoric of modernity comes to play an important role in continuing the colonial matrix of power. These characters disguise themselves as the decolonized, by their schemish utterances and actions that can easily sway gullible minds.

In the Parliament, the introduction of Ogbunabani, an African deity, to replace the holy Bible as a totem for oath-taking reveals a dimension of coloniality at work. A casual reception of this proposal will commend it as a project of decolonization that is a radical movement against the Eurocentric sensibilities. If that should be the case, one needs to consider that Rev. Jossy, a missionary is there in the Parliament to consolidate the people's belief in the new government. Rejecting the holy Bible for oath-taking is commendable in the theory and praxis of decolonization, but it is not balanced in this case. Rev. Jossy should be rejected as well. Though, seeing his relevance in purporting the dark agenda of these Parliamentarians, makes him retainable for being an asset. Ogbunabani can come in because it is a way of scaring away possible opponents who will reveal the secrets of the Parliament, this secret is what Mignolo calls "the logic and process of destitution" (140). The process of destitution is to propound a narrative that will condition the people to think and act in a manner that is similar to the existential condition of the colonial era. An African deity that is to project the cultural values of Africans is now being used by minds that stepped into the shackles of coloniality to strengthen the existence of

metaphysical catastrophe in the post-colonies. What these Parliamentarians do is to sieve out systems of knowledge that suit their agenda and tailor it towards fulfilling their purpose. Therefore, their preference for Ogbunabani, tallies with Rev. Jossy's presence which is to shield the logic of coloniality practiced by the Parliamentarians. They act as decolonized people, but intrinsically, they pilot a system of thinking and being that is Western in nature.

For Major Lajoka-Brown, his Military background negatively influences him to attempt to replicate a military pattern of governance in his political affairs. This is his coloniality of knowledge, power, and being. It is a system of knowing and being in the world that views others and their perspectives as totally irrelevant, because of being 'civilians'. This system of knowing and being is fleshed out in violence and coercion which are the *modus operandi* of military personnel. This is against the grain of civil society to exhibit such an attitude in governance. Despite this, what appears risible is that Lajoka-Brown still clings to these erratic conducts associated with the military even as an aspiring civilian leader. The attendant consequence leads him to manifest the core attributes of coloniality which are exploitation, violence, and domination. He manifests different shades of coloniality which cumulatively amount to the deplorable situation in Nigeria. Quite conscious of his misconduct, he adopts subtlety, that is the rhetoric of modernity, as a measure of campaigning. It is a coloniality of knowledge that allows him to superimpose his ideas on his party. The campaign chants are manifestations of the rhetoric of modernity that shields the reality of the darker side of Western modernity. Ironically, the political party's name "Nigerian National Liberation Party" contradicts their flag bearer's hidden agenda, thus, reiterating the beguiling nature of Western modernity and project of coloniality. In this case, Lajoka-Brown's hidden agenda is to plunder the people he is proposing to lead. The party's name is a machination to foster deception and shield away any suspecting eyes just like the Parliamentarians in itself uses Ogbunabani in the play.

Madam Omeaku toes the path of violence, and political maneuvering as a way of catapulting her political interest. Her system of perpetuating violence comes in the form of character assassination. That is the coloniality of being. She usurps the people's power of choice in voting for Barrister Umeh, her opponent, by feeding them with Asili's version of the rhetoric of modernity. Barrister Umeh's reputation is stained by her political tactics as she conditions the people to think and act in her favour. She oversteps the bounds of her husband's authority in the affairs concerning their children. Violating her daughter Nkechi's innocence by using her as a bait for political machination, even at her husband's disapproval reeks a high degree of coloniality of power and being. And having succeeded in getting her household to think and act the way she wants is evidence of the coloniality of knowledge. Her actions of verbal assault on Barrister Umeh and sexual objectification of Nkechi are pointers to the degradation of being to the zone of nonbeing. In Frantz Fanon's words, Madam Omeaku brings Nkechi and Barrister Umeh to the fate of the *Damne*, that is "the wretched of the earth". As a bar owner, who is unqualified to work in the Parliament, owing to her mannerlessness and gross misconduct, her possible means of ascendance is to constantly replicate the evils of misanthropic skepticism that defines coloniality.

Introducing a system of operation called, the “surprise and attack” strategy, which is a military mode of operation, Lajoka-Brown unveils his locus of enunciation to be rooted in the military. In supporting his characteristics, he insists his party members must endorse and practice it as a campaign pattern. What informs his locus of enunciation is his affinity with the military and it characterizes his style of administration. He ensures that there is no other political orientation that sustains the ability to challenge his “surprise and attack” mode of operation. Explicitly, this is to sustain his imperialist intention of leadership, hence, “surprise and attack” is deceptive and imperialist in nature. This idea forms the baseline of his coloniality of being. As he insinuates,

Lajoka Brown: Ladies and Gentlemen, our election campaign plans must follow a pattern of military strategy known as surprise and attack. Now, what is surprise and attack? Surprise and attack, Gentlemen, is “to catch the enemy off-guard, and wipe out his power before he can mobilize enough forces to launch a counter-attack”. Are you there...(50).

“Surprise” is a pseudonym for “modernity” while “attack” is for “coloniality” - the darker side. “Surprise and attack” being a system of operation that unconsciously disarms the enemy before he reacts connotes that Lajoka-Brown surprises the people by brainwashing them with a false promise of progress, development, and national renaissance. This is seen in the campaign songs where he proposes salvation to the masses through the promises of freedom, security, education, and economic welfare. In the actual sense, these are merely empty promises intended to grossly deceive and lure those who imbibe such information and believe them. The song urges the masses to vote for Lajoka-Brown, who will usher them into their El Dorado. Hence, this rhetoric is meant to connect with the masses emotionally, dampening their sense of logic and reason, and swinging them to act ignorantly. With this pattern, Lajoka-Brown hides the darker side of his political ambition from the people. All they can see is the promise of a saviour who will liberate them from “their hellish existence”. As he tells Sikira: “Nevertheless, it is my duty to lead you back to the path of righteousness”! (58).

Lajoka-Brown’s egg treatment on Liza, his other wife, is a strategy of surprise that will shield his agenda of attack. The surprise phase of his relationship with Liza precedes the attack phase where he will unveil reality to her. This system of operation spreads across his relationship with other characters. He dehumanizes the media personalities with this pattern of being. Pointing an assault rifle at these journalists while they are prostrating on the floor is an attitude that brings to bear the reality of the naturalization of war in these zones of nonbeing. Lajoka-Brown, by displaying such a negative attitude, automatically communicates his existence in the zone of being, while the journalists are subhuman in this sense. Gullibly assimilating his campaign rhetoric, these journalists and the masses are conditioned to think within the confines of a perspective that Lajoka-Brown imposes on them. His dominion over these characters anchors on the power of Eurocentric knowledge that promotes a narrative of progress whilst hiding a dark agenda. This explains why he goes red with Mallam Gaskiya and Osagie who question the validity of such campaign promises. He begins to see them as potential threats who can let loose the skeleton in his cupboard.

In *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*, Sikira, the members of the National Liberation Party, and the pressmen are all-inclusive in the class of characters who are damned. The exploitation of Sikira for political reasons projects her as a conquered entity. She thinks Lajoka-Brown is faithfully married to her, but that is not the case with him. Their union is marked by humiliation and disdain, on the part of Liza. Lajoka-Brown does not take her to be human. Communicating this hellish existence in Lajoka-Brown's house, the description of Lajoka-Brown's house is thus rendered, "all told, a curiously uncensored picture of well-meaning chaos" (20). This chaotic appearance of his home is a semantic undertone that shows the coloniality of being. Degrading of humanity is also the case between Lajoka-Brown and National Liberation Party members. Going on to enact "Surprise and attack" as a campaign strategy without the consent of the party communicates little or no regard for their opinion. He takes them for non-cognitive subjects.

Mr. Otobo, Dr. Parkers, Omeaku, Nkechi, and the Students are characters who dwell in the zones of nonbeing in Nwabueze's *A Parliament of Vultures*. Their power of choice has been stripped off by the ravenous attitude of the Parliamentarians, especially Madam Omeaku. These characters have lost the power of choice and the consequence becomes to exist as the wretched of the earth. The two ultimate contractions contending for supremacy are the forces of coloniality and the forces of decoloniality in the play. The Parliamentarians reveal the presence of coloniality in the decolonized.

Decoloniality, Pluriversal Thinking and Being in Both Plays

The homecoming of Liza, Lajoka-Brown's other wife, represents the crossing of a border. This border is not only spatial but epistemic as she begins to think about the existential realities in and beyond Lajoka-Brown's household. It is the power of border thinking that affords her the luxury of probing the unspoken desires of Lajoka-Brown. The failure of his egg treatment on her announces the disclosure of the darker side of Western modernity. Liza tears down every rhetorical device he employs to keep her oblivious to events on the other side of his political aspiration. Liza's capacity to think analytically gives her an edge to probe the dark confines of coloniality.

However, before Liza begins to think, Sikira already has some questions on her lips. As the confessions of Lajoka-Brown fail to coincide with his actions, Sikira's consciousness is awakened to uncharted realities. This burdens her to ask questions pertaining to the real motive of the power-hungry political aspirant. Her consciousness is aroused by the pain she suffers in the zone of nonbeing. This is because Lajoka-Brown promises salvation to all and sundry, and yet she remains a victim of his domestic violence. It leads her to suspect the possibility of a hidden agenda, thus:

Sikira: "In this house? Ha! A slave, that's what I am. Did he marry me because he loves me, or because of his crazy politics? What do I care whether he wins politics or not"? (15).

These questions are the path to existential freedom of the "damned". Sikira, by the instrumentality of her curiosity, invades this secret temple of Lajoka-Brown. The

answer to her questions arises when she discovers that Liza is a co-wife. She understands that Lajoka-Brown marries her to take advantage of her mother's position as the market women leader to attract votes for himself. By considering herself as a slave, she launches a radical quest for freedom. Out of grief motivated by emotional pain, she goes in search of personal freedom. She eventually, liaises with Liza, who lectures her on the basics of human freedom. Having discovered the stark reality, the duo attacks Lajoka-Brown and Sikira challenges his superiority saying: "Do as you say, do as you say! It is always do as you say. Always command, command, command! Why don't you show some respect and let me do as I want, just once"! (57).

This knowledge of the deceit of the rhetoric of modernity dares Sikira to an epistemic delinking from Lajoka-Brown's perspectives. She eventually, on the strength of this illumination, conquers the fear of her husband. Hence, she engages in border thinking that ushers her into self-autonomy. The new campaign song that Sikira composes is an instance of endogenous knowledge purposed to crash the fictions of modernity that Lajoka-Brown has created to enforce his selfish ambition. Malam Gaskiya, Osagie, and Madam Ajanaku, the president of the Market Women Association follow a similar trajectory with Sikira. Delinking from Lajoka-Brown's imperialist political ideology. They understand the hidden agenda of their party flag bearer. Madam Ajanaku points out that the flag bearer, Major Lajoka-Brown, has "one bad teeth' inside...(and the consequence of the brown teeth is that) una mouth' go get wahala teel-e-e-e una take that rotten teeth comot" (67). This rotten tooth metaphorically refers to the dark side of Lajoka-brown's leadership aspirations. "Rotten tooth" reveals the potency of coloniality that is hidden until power is transferred to Lajoka-Brown. On discovering this dark side, they cease to be deceived by the empty campaign promises. They stand to challenge his mono-rational ideas that do not accommodate other views. Here, these characters discard the Eurocentric ideologies of Lajoka-Brown. This phase of decoloniality deals with knowledge before it transcends power and being.

Removing Lajoka-Brown as the party flag bearer balances power to the end of social inequality. His forceful exit aborts the attempt to govern with a military power structure. This communicates the people's heightened consciousness of the evils of modernity as the basis for constituting metaphysical catastrophe. This change of mindset of the party members allows them to look beyond Lajoka-Brown, for an alternative. They discover their underprivileged status as nonbeing and the desire to rise above that limitation spurs them to remove Lajoka-Brown. Madam Ajanaku moves the motion to consider a female to be the new candidate for the party. Beyond gender discourse, the choice of a female flag bearer balances the unequal power relationship that exists in this space. When power is balanced, the reign of violence and torture comes to a stop.

This desire for balance in power dispensation instigates a protest headed by Sikira. The motive of the protest is to shatter the people's confidence in Lajoka-Brown, thus transposing it to Sikira who will reinstall love and understanding by probing practices that are catastrophic. Sikira's departure from Lajoka-Brown's household also marks the decentralization of power among his wives. Mama Rashida's choice to establish a poultry farm is evidence that is grounded in the instinct of delinking

and border thinking. This is an instance of balance in power relation, as it stirs up the transformation of the “damne”. Autonomy and humanity are restored at this juncture. For this reason, they transit from the zone of nonbeing to the zone of being. This is accurately captured in Sikira who rises from being a mere political object in the hands of a man to a party nominee. She validates her being by the ability to question, think, and react against the forces that repress love and understanding in the post-colonial world. This elevation, to a political party flag bearer is the peak of the transforming power of decoloniality in restoring and appreciating the humanity of suppressed subjectivities. This change in belief system and the attendant appreciation of human dignity enforces decoloniality into the scene. Here, Lajoka-Brown himself conforms to the peaceful ambiance created by the termination of coloniality. Hence, a pluriversal society is enacted as characters evolve from a state of nonbeing to a state of opportunities and choice. Their choices are no longer influenced by any external deceptive rhetoric. Sikira rises to be a prototype of repressed subjectivities whose resilient spirit defies the norm and creates an emerging global society that is built on the foundations of equity and the freedom of choice.

Considering *A Parliament of Vultures*, the movement of decolonial pluriversality is fully realized, almost in the same manner as *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*. The major precursor to decolonial liberation is epistemic disobedience motivated by suffering. This is the fate of Mr. Otobo and Dr. Parkers who are alienated from the thinking pattern of the Parliamentarians. The two obviously think outside the permissible ways of the scavenging Parliamentarians. Kicking against the irresponsible use of funds by the Parliament, Otobo and Parkers, become guilty of challenging an ontological setting. The unmannerly attitude of Madam Omeaku, like her tying an official document of the Parliament in her wrapper, gripping the shirt of Dr. Parkers, and assaulting him before the Parliament, are prevailing systems of thought and being in the world that Dr. Parkers must conform to. The ability to question these incessant acts positions him on a faceoff with the Parliamentarians. So, he initiates epistemic disobedience by acting outside popular assumptions, this attitude is a result of his border thinking.

The spirit of Major Lajoka-Brown of *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*, appears in Madam Omeaku. The two are the captains of coloniality. In *A Parliament of Vultures*, the manifest presence of coloniality is intense. Whereas it is not such with *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again*. The ravenous political ambitions of Lajoka-Brown are easily aborted before its climatic manifestation. But that of Madam Omeaku grows to show the manifestation of coloniality. She siphons the national treasury into building mansions within and outside the country. This life of luxury and affluence depicts the ideal desire of Lajoka-Brown, which unfortunately is terminated by the revolutionary force of decoloniality. Nonetheless, none of the projects can withstand the hammer and anvil of decolonial pluriversality.

The process of delinking from the colonial matrix of power in *A Parliament of Vultures* is marked when Mr. Otobo and Dr. Parkers are arrested by the machination of the Parliament. They are regarded as obtrusive because of the attitude of border thinking and epistemic disobedience. Their arrest is a physical manifestation of delinking from the system. Their exit from the Parliament prepares

them to fully relink with other systems of knowing that are not rooted in the exploitative nature of coloniality. The students' union involvement in the struggle for the emergence of a pluriversal society consolidates the efforts made by Otobo and Parkers.

Conclusion

In both plays, the Agricultural principles of seed planting and harvest are visible. The default setting of the colonized nations is coloniality, and it configures postcolonial subjects to exist in a state of metaphysical catastrophe. The route to ending coloniality is to liberate the colonized from this bondage through epistemic disobedience, border thinking, and delinking and relinking with the pluriverse. The trend of epistemic disobedience begins with a few characters, in both plays, causing them to delink from the colonial matrix of power. It eventually spreads to other characters at a time when the battle gets fierce. Liza, Sikira, Mr. Otobo, and Dr. Parkers, from both texts respectively, stir up the revolutionary spirit lying dormant in other characters such that they all turn into questioners, thinkers, actors, and agents of change in a perverse world rooted in the colonial matrix of power.

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