

CONCEPTUALIZING DIFFERENT AUTEURSHIP PRACTICES IN NOLLYWOOD: TUNDE KELENI'S IDEOLOGICAL AUTHORSHIP IN FOCUS.

Charles Okwuowulu
Theatre Arts Department.
University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Abstract

Auteurial discourse has been unswerving in film studies all over the world. Attempts towards its contextualization in Nollywood have been made by scholars such as Chisimdi Ihentuge, Ovunda Ihuwo and Silvia Okwosa. The need to deepen research on this subject which arguably determines the heartbeat of every filmic culture propelled this research. This study critically examines three categories of auteurship such as dramatic, technical and ideological practices. It is observed that different auteurs have different levels of auteurial control in specific components of filmic mise-en-scene. Directors such as Teco Benson apply a verisimilitude technique to narrative and as such may be categorized as a dramatic auteur practitioner. Izu Ojukwu on the other hand defined by his auteurial control in visual language is categorized as technical auteur practitioner whereas Tunde Kelani whom this paper interrogates is driven by ideological motifs. This ranks him as ideological auteur practitioner. In conceptualizing these different categories of auteur practices, the paper foregrounds Kelani's ideological authorship as a paradigm for ideological auteur practitioners. These classifications are expected to chart a new course for auteur practice in film studies in the world and in Nollywood in particular.

Introduction

Auteur theory is geared towards establishing the authorship of a creative artifact. It originated in France in the 1950s. Critics debated who should be legally considered the true author of a collectively produced artwork. Particularly in cinema, the debate revolves hugely around the producer, director and scriptwriter. The critics of this theory question why a single individual should be accredited for a jointly produced work of art. In a film production, the services of the scriptwriter, sound engineer, editors, lighting and camera men to mention a few are required. Each of this technical crew has levels of creativity which collectively acclaims a work. How then can an individual claim to be the author of a work that is collectively done? This question propels the criticism which has remained consistent in film studies over the years. One of such strong criticism is Schreiber theory which advocates for the prominence of a scriptwriter instead of that of the director. However, most scholars believe that the director's eminence amongst many technical crews justifies auteurism. Auteur is the French word for author. Hence auteur and author mean the same thing and are used interchangeably in different contexts.

The theory has so far received adequate academic attention in different film cultures in the world. Its application to Nollywood is difficult due to the predominance of entrepreneurial production structure which endows total control of film's production units to the executive producers who are mostly business men. Nevertheless, few directors have broken this structural barrier and distinguished themselves as auteur directors. Thus a critical analysis of the recurring decimal in the works of selected director foregrounds auteur practice in Nollywood. As a theoretical research on auteur theory, this work interrogates its conceptualization and contextualization in Nollywood. To achieve this, it categorizes its practical *modules*

operandi into three and uses a particular director to establish the functionality of each category. Teco Benson, Izu Ojukwu and Tunde Kelani will be used as paradigms in each category. However, the paper concentrates on ideological authorship which Tunde Kelani represents.

Contextualizing Auteur Theory in Nollywood

The concept of auteur theory is defined by the famous article of Francois Truffaut titled, "A certain Tendency of French Cinema" published in *Cahier du Cinema* in 1954. Having reviewed and discovered similarities in the works of Bost and Aurenche which they co-directed and which were adapted from different scripts, Truffaut concludes that there were similarities in them. He discovers that some directors rewrite screenplays to suit their *mise-en-scene* ideology. These categories of directors, he asserts are like authors of a literary work. Andrew Sarris in an article titled: "Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962" was the first to employ the term 'auteur'. Sarris enumerated the premise of auteur theory in three concentric circles: the outer circle as technique; the middle circle as the personal style and the inner circle as the interior meaning. He expounded the first premise as technical competence of a director which is a criterion of value. The second premise, being the distinguishable personality of the director as a criterion of value entails the director's peculiar leitmotif, style and recurring characteristics which distinguishes him from other directors. The third premise is concerned with the interior meaning, the *mise-en-scene* which is the soul of production. This could be seen in the theme and *mise-en-scene* techniques. This interior meaning is what differentiates one director from the other (Okwuowulu, 2012, p. 216-220). An auteur director must exhibit these three qualities before being recognized as such. Furthermore, Wollen distinguishes two different techniques of auteur directors, those

who insisted on revealing core meanings of thematic motifs, and those who stressed style in *mise-en-scene*. According to him, Director's auteur motifs are lopsided in favour of either thematic motifs or *mise-en-scene* in production (1979, p. 682). Following Wollen's category, this study categorizes Ojukwu as pro-technical *mise-en-scene* biased while Benson is pro-dramatic *mise-en-scene* biased. Kelani combine both in equal measures. However, all of them are technically competent. Benson's deductive shots sustain the emotional charges in his narratives. Ojukwu's narrative is mostly devoid of emotional charge but is highly sustained by his psychological shot techniques and colour grading which makes his pictures very definitive. Kelani's films though have slow exposition; its themes are replete with topical issues in the society. His shots are equally apt in revealing the core thematic motifs. Sarris's second premise of style is prominent in these directors in focus. Kelani's folklore narrative techniques, Benson's late narratives point of attack, Ojukwu's triangular love narratives lends credence to this assertion. The third premise which is like the soul of a director is equally found in these directors. In Kelani, the interlude montage in his films differentiates him from other directors. In Benson, the emotional charge, suspense and surprise which sustains his narratives distinguishes him from other directors. Ojukwu's triangular love theme enshrined in great stories equally distinguishes him from other directors.

Ideological Impact on Authorship

The concept of ideology according to Vandijk is proposed as "science of ideas" known as *ideologie*. Citing Detutt de Tracy, Vandijk submits that ideology is the study of how human beings think, speak and argue. He defines ideology as "A system of ideas especially with the social, political or religious ideas shared by a social group or movement" (1998, p. 6). Since its

theorization by a French philosopher Destutt de Tracy at the end of the 18th century, scholars have applied the concept of ideology to different disciplines. Prominent amongst disciplinary contextualization of ideology is the Marxian ideological concept which is very relevant in the political circle. However, this work examines the import of ideology in narrative and its influence on auteurial practices of Tunde Kelani.

Domesticating the concept of ideology to cinema has generated controversy in the academia consequent on the scientific nature of the evolution of the cinema. While some film scholars attributes film as a pure science others argue that film is pure arts. The scholars who attribute film as arts base their argument on the definition of Ideology as a set of ideas and beliefs that is shared by an individual, society, community, religion, family as well as ethnic and pressure groups. They suppose that since film is a product of culture, it is ideological and therefore a product of arts. According to this line of thought, to construct meaning, film employs scientific attributes in its recording apparatus but creates its contents through artistry which is mainly ideological. One of the chief proponents of the ideological attribute of film is Andre Bazin who asserts that cinema owes nothing to scientific spirit. According to him its begetters are no scientists, except for Marley, but it is significant that he was only interested in analyzing movement and not reconstructing it" (1967, p. 23). On another note, Georges Sadoul in explaining the relationship between the scientific, economic and technological relationship in the cinema asserts that cinema is a science. (Bazin, 1967, pp. 23-27). The implication of attributing cinema as a science means that it has no ideological attributes. Bazin in trying to assert the ideological nature of the cinema bases his argument on potoniee's view of the artistic nature of the cinema. Potoniee, a

film historian justifies his argument on the artistic nature of the cinema based on notion that the evolution of the cinema stems from a perfect reconstruction of illusion through sound and colour rather than in the discovery of photography (Bazin, 1967, pp. 23-27). Potonniee's argument disputes the earlier notion by some scholars that camera alone signifies the evolution of the cinema.

Jean-Louis Comolli's theoretical essay titled: "Technique and ideology: Camera perspective, depth of field" explains the complementary role of ideology and technical attributes of the cinema. He posits that the scientific inheritance of the cinema should not be preferred to its ideological nature. According to him:

A materialist theory of cinema must bring out the ideological "heritage" of the cinema and its scientific heritage, the two being not at all mutually exclusive as Label seems to think (Comolli, 1985, p. 47).

Patrick Label had earlier argued that cinema is a science since its basic equipment, camera is purely "founded in the real body of knowledge with the properties of matter which it activates" (Comolli, 1985, p. 42). Comolli advocates that the invisible aspects of the cinema which include lines, chemistry, fixing and developing, bath and laboratory, processing, negative, the cut and joins of montage technique, sound tracks as well as projector, should not be neglected over the visible aspects which include the camera, shooting area, lights, screen and so on (Comolli, 1985, p. 45)

In line with these arguments on the ideological nature of the cinema, this researcher observes that prior to the invention of the camera; dramatic performances existed in the theatres. The inception of film with the advent of the camera though foreshadows its technologically driven nature but does not take away the ideological nature of film. Both interplay for a good

narrative experience. In the evolutionary years of the cinema, technology served as a narrative medium to narrative ideology. Camera was used as a photographic machine to record dramatic arts which were deprived of the narrative language of the camera. However, with the technological development, filmmakers sought new ways of technical expression. This gave birth to the narrative voice of the camera through various styles such as angle, colour, composition and editing. In line with the above arguments, this paper therefore believes that film camera is scientific at the point of its manufacturing but its application towards achieving a narrative is purely ideological. This ideological application of film camera differs amongst directors because of their different diverse cultural and conventional biases. Every director is conditioned by the temerity of his culture and environment. While some directors are deeply influenced by their culture others are influenced by the prevailing conventions. The influence of culture and convention on directors will be examined on two randomly selected works of the Tunde Kelani. Every artiste is conditioned by the temerity of his culture and environment. This paper argues that auteur motifs of some Nollywood directors lie in their representation of certain cultural ideology: hence the concept of ideological autuership.

The Concept Yoruba Folk Cinema

To understand Kelani's works, the concept of the Yoruba folk cinema suffices. Shaka in explaining this concept asserts that its nomenclature denotes its thematic derivation. Folklore cinema thus inherits its narrative form from folk tradition, myth, legends, oral narratives of deified heroes, moral fables and traditional religious practices and rites (2004, pp.297-298). The folk cinema culture anchors its narrative on music; songs and dance which are used to established and reinforce moods in the

narrative. These arts which are rooted in the religious beliefs and practices ensure complexity in folk cinema narrative techniques. Shaka concurs to the complexity folk cinema and observed that oral narratives are full of parallel tales and digressions in the form of flashbacks, dreamstates, trances and possession, ghost and lots of photographically simulated manifestations of gods and other malevolent and benevolent spirits (2004, p. 298). The preponderance of this tradition in Kelani's works makes this paper to attribute him as ideological in his auteurship practice. This does not preclude that fact that he is technically as well as dramatically competent. His attribution as an ideological auteur stems from the fact that he privileges his thematic ideology more than technical and dramatic components in films. The table below titled: 'A Tabular Analysis of Kelani's *Mise en scene* in Selected Films justifies this claims. The literary analysis of the table suffices thereafter. This will be further be buttressed by pictorial analysis.

Conceptualizing Auteur Practices in Nigeria

It is discovered that Peter Wollen's delineation of two types of auteur critics with predisposition to stress areas is of utmost importance in comparative analysis of selected directors. He categorizes autuers according to presupposition in thematic motifs or style in *mise-en-scene* techniques. According to him, this plays key role in determining autuerial style. Synergizing Wollen and Sarris' theories, this paper develops a conceptualized framework of auteur practice applicable in Nollywood. This is based on subjective style of a given director which is influenced by the film's sponsorship method. Thus ideological, technical and dramatic *mise-en-scene* auteur practices are proposed by the as categories of autuerial practices prevalent in Nollywood. In technical auteurship

practice which Izu Ojukwu epitomizes, narrative emphasis is laid on the camera language. Here there is high sense of visual language which mostly forms the suspense techniques. Furthermore, the dramatic auteurship practice represented by Teco Benson, emphasizes on stunning story techniques. These story lines are often achieved with good visual techniques. Suspense techniques here are mostly realized through these storylines. In the ideological auteurship practice, the predominance of the director's motifs lies in propelling a particular ideology. Being pro biased in that particular ideology, the director sees dramatic and technical *mise-en-scene* techniques as vehicle toward realizing that particular ideology. Tunde Kelani's techniques represent this practice. Thus analyses of his techniques suffice.

Tunde Kelani's Auteur Techniques

Tunde Kelani is one filmmaker that is not easily understood by an average Nigerian film lover. This is because his critics tend to put him in a box in order to define him. In an interview with him, he is of the opinion that those who do not understand his films are blind to his styles and cultural background. Pinpointing the influence of his background on his films is exactly what this paper is set out to do. Tunde Kelani was born on 26th February 1948. Kelani is the CEO of Mainframe Production Nigeria, a company whose major philosophy is to promote African culture through audio visual means. He was educated at Oke-Ona Primary school in Ikija, Abeokuta and Abeokuta grammar school for his secondary education. His father took him to Abeokuta from Lagos at the age of five to live with his grandfather who is a chief (The Balogun of Ijaiye) in the community. His growth as well as education in Abeokuta community afforded Kelani the opportunity of identify with the core values and philosophies of the Yoruba's: a motif which

reoccurs in his films. In an interview with him, he noted that living with his grandfather equally gave him the opportunity of identifying with Yoruba culture. This according to him is because he is always around the corner when disputes are settled in his grandfather's kingdom (Appendix 3). During his secondary school days, he was exposed to some theatrical traditions of the Yorubas. He recalled that he watched *PalmwineDrinkard*, *ObaKoso*, *Kurunmi* and theatrical works of Ogunde. During these years, he had developed interest in photography. After his secondary school he work with Western Nigeria Television (WNTV), thereafter he later proceeded to London International Film School where he got a diploma in cinematography. When he returned to Nigeria after his studies, he worked severally as a cinematographer before he went into production and directing. During his year in active cinematography, he used camera effectively to compliment narrative. Nevertheless, as a director, Kelani's films replicate the same ideological value of the decolonization of African culture: a motif which he imbibed from his childhood experience.

Figure 1.1: Filmography of Tunde Kelani as a Director

| S/N | Title of Production | Format | Year | Language | Role |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------------|------|----------|----------|
| 1 | <i>Dazzling Mirage</i> | Video | 2013 | English | Director |
| 2 | <i>Maami</i> | Video | 2011 | English | Director |
| 3 | <i>Arugba</i> | Video | 2010 | Yoruba | Director |
| 4 | <i>Life in Slow Motion</i> | Video, Short | 2008 | English | Director |
| 5 | <i>The Narrow Path</i> | Video | 2006 | English | Director |
| 6 | <i>Abeni 1 and 2</i> | Video | 2006 | Yoruba | Director |
| 7 | <i>EfunsetanAniwura</i> | Video | 2005 | Yoruba | Director |
| 8 | <i>The Campus Queen</i> | Video | 2004 | English | Director |

| | | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|--------------|------|---------|--------------------------|
| 9 | <i>AgogoEewo</i> | Video | 2002 | Yoruba | Director |
| 10 | <i>ThunderBolt: Magun</i> | Video | 2001 | English | Director |
| 11 | <i>WhiteHandkerchief</i> | Video, Short | 2000 | English | Director |
| 12 | <i>Saworoide</i> | video | 1999 | Yoruba | Director |
| 13 | <i>Ko Seegbe</i> | video | 1995 | Yoruba | Director |
| 14 | <i>Ayo Ni Mu Fe</i> | video | 1994 | Yoruba | Director |
| 15 | <i>Mister Johnson</i> | Film | 1990 | English | Third assistant director |

As earlier noted, Kelani's films represents the same ideological value; Yoruba culture. However the repeated presentation of these Yoruba cultural motifs is not enough to adjudge him as an auteur director given Sarris' theoretical framework earlier explicated in this paper. Though this paper had earlier positioned him as an auteur, it queries if Yoruba cultural norms are the only motifs replete in Kelani films. If the answer is yes, then Kelani failed as an auteur director. Does it mean therefore that Kunle Afolayan and other Yoruba directors eschew Yoruba cultures in their films? Virtually, every Yoruba director replicates Yoruba cultures in his films. For Kelani to be acknowledged as an auteur, Sarris' second and third auteur premise must be evident in his works. This is what this paper sets out to achieve. Beyond the general knowledge of Yoruba cultural motifs in Kelani's films, what are other evidences of technical competency and personal style which Sarris proposed as proviso for an auteur director? Though the question of Kelani's technical competence seldom forms academic discourse. No doubt, being one of the foremost trained camera

men in Nigeria, one expects technical competence in his films. However, analysis of his *mise-en-scene* techniques will either justify or debunk Kelani's technical competence and well as having a distinguishable style.

Method of Film Analysis

Two films *Thunder Bolt* and *Mammi* are randomly selected from Kelani films. Analyses of films are based on ideological, dramatic and technical *mise-en-scene* techniques. Qualitative method of analysis is embarked on. The researcher's major preoccupation far from determining the narrative flaws of these films foregrounds the reoccurring *mise-en-scene* motifs in them. In the ideological *mise-en-scene* analysis, Kelani's frequent projection of a particular philosophy, idea, thought, notion, beliefs, value and concept is taken into consideration. Here the analysis of a particular ideology which reoccurs in his work and which normally preeminence in his auteurial style is explicated. In the dramatic *mise-en-scene* analysis, the researcher takes a holistic study of the recurring nature of peculiar themes in different works of Kelani. Emphasizes are drawn on peculiar plot structure. While analyzing these dramatic *mise-en-scene* techniques, similarities in characterizations in different works of Kelani are taken into special consideration. The narrative progression and suspense techniques are determined in examining the narrative element. In technical *mise-en-scene* analysis, the director's use of camera as the literary author uses a pen is determined. This includes colour grading methods and screen techniques. The use of camera as an adjunct story telling device which includes the connotative and symbolic effects of camera setup are taken into special consideration. These works are analyzed based on the concept of *mise-en-scene* which is a French theatrical work for placing on the stage. Thus Kelani's

ideological, technical as well as dramatic *mise-en-scene* constructions are examined.

Synopsis of *Thunder Bolt*

Ngozi an Igbo lady having being posted to a land for the National Youth Service Corps, meets Yinka in the camp and marries him. However, she takes-in within the service year and had her service year extended. After her child birth, she continues her service in Oleyo village which is far from her husband's home. Thus she goes to work on Monday and comes back on weekends. There at her work place, a medical doctor Dimeji, desirous of sexual affinity with her, disturbs her so much. Ngozi however turns him down bluntly. Nyinka Ngozi's husband, following his friends advice, accuses Ngozi of infidelity in her work place. This accusation which sets the dramatic pace further heightens upon Ngozi's grandmother willing some properties to her. To Nyinka, rich women control their husbands. Thus this makes him uncomfortable about this development.

On a fateful day, a ghost appears to Ngozi at the market place and warns her of her imminent death. Following this, Mama Tutu, Ngozi's landlady at her workplace, takes her to the herbalist for inquiry. The herbalist diagnoses Ngozi of *magun*. *Magun* being a traditional sickness infested on suspicious wife incidents death of any man who sleeps with the carrier. However, Ngozi must be cured of the sickness or she dies within nine weeks. Ngozi haven objected severally decides to receive treatment. The last stage of the treatment which involves sexual intercourse between Ngozi and any man within the purview of the herbalists becomes very problematic. Ngozi who refuses to bring in any other man insistently brings in her husband for the act. Her husband however refuses to make love to her, a proof

that he infested his wife with the *magun*. He however fends being deceived by his friends.

Ngozi is then left with the option of providing a man that will sleep with her or face instant death in two days. The available option becomes Dimeji the medical doctor who has been sexually harassing her. Dimeji having known Ngozi's reason for wanting the sexual intercourse gives conditions; the act must be done in his hospital in the presence of three of his doctor friends. These crops of Medical doctors do not believe in the efficiency of traditional ailment and wants to use a practical experience of Dimeji to refute the theory of medical synergy of western and traditional medication which is being proposed by another medical doctor. Left with no option, Ngozi accepts being used for the experiment.

The eventful day, both of them make love and after which Dimeji falls down and vomits blood. The herbalists present in that vicinity restores Dimeji's life. With the *Magun* finally cured, Dr. Dimeji and Ngozi presumably marry.

Synopsis of *Maami*

Maami is a narrative film woven around the 2010 world cup tournament held in South Africa. Kashimawo (Wole Ojo) an international foot ball star who plays for Arsenal FC returns to Nigeria in preparation for the world cup tournament. Having returned home, he is still undecided about joining the team despite media hype and pressure from Nigeria football federation. His indecision is consequent upon his bizarre childhood experiences and development.

His ritualistic father had killed his brother for ritual money. Consequently, his mother Maami (Funke Akindele) ran away with him (Kashimawo). However, Maami found it difficult to fend for herself and Kashi. They barely had enough food to eat. On his birthday, Kashi demanded for a plate of food with

meat as a birthday present from his mother. There was meat starvation from his mother the penultimate day that he took first position in school. Maami, following Kasha's excellent results resolved to get the meat for him on his birthday at all cost. Their Journey towards getting the meat eventually landed them in Kashi's father's house. They sneaked into the house where Maami destroyed Kashi's father's effigy which is Kashi's brother who was used by his father for ritual money. Consequently kashi's father sent his guards in pursuance of them. Having outrun the guards, Maami and Kashi entered a bus en route for home. On their way going home, their bus ruan into a big truck and Maami died.

Kashi reminiscences this past as soon as he lands in Nigeria for the world cup tournament. This hunting past which makes him emotionally unstable to effectively carry out his duty to his father's land must be cleared before making a decision to join the team. Kashi finally takes back his pound of flesh from his wicked father.

The table below itemizes kelani's technical, dramatic and Ideological *mise -en-scene* techniques.

A Tabular Analysis of Kelani's *Mis- en-scene* Techniques

| | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| | Technical <i>scene</i> | <i>Mise-en-</i> | Dramatic <i>Mise -en- scene</i> | Ideological <i>Mise -en-scene</i> |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1 | Slow expository sequences | Topical issues as thematic preoccupations | The projection of Yoruba cultural values |
| 2 | Inductive camera setup which achieves aerial and non-jerky kinetic shots | The character concept of hero who suffers and later emerges victoriously is prominent in his films | Competitive nature of Africans |
| 3 | Interlude Montage sequences | The adaption of play texts into films | Preponderance of market scenes |
| 4 | Stagy actor placement on set/ camera setup | Time bound technique | The presence of a jester character in his films |
| 5 | Frequent application of flash back techniques | | The concept of the old educating the young |
| 6 | Prelude documentary in kelani's works | | Eating /cooking scene |
| 7 | Good picture and sound quality | | The use of Metaphysical characters such as ghosts |
| 8 | | | The introduction of dance and music which reinforces thematic preoccupations |
| 9 | | | Yoruba language |

| | | | |
|----|--|--|---|
| | | | inclusion in his films |
| 10 | | | Traditional religious practices |
| 11 | | | The inclusion of Crowd scenes which shows the communal nature of Yoruba culture |

From the table, one would observe that Kelani's ideological motifs are higher than technical as well as dramatic motifs. It is equally observed that his technical *mise-en-scene* components are formed by the stagy orientation. Nevertheless his stagy techniques do not disqualify him as an auteur director. Kelani's technical competence is not questionable. He ensures good picture and sound quality in his narrative. He utilizes various camera accessories such as crane machine to ensure none jerky kinetic shots. The interlude montage which is noticeable in his works serves as his signature in his narratives.

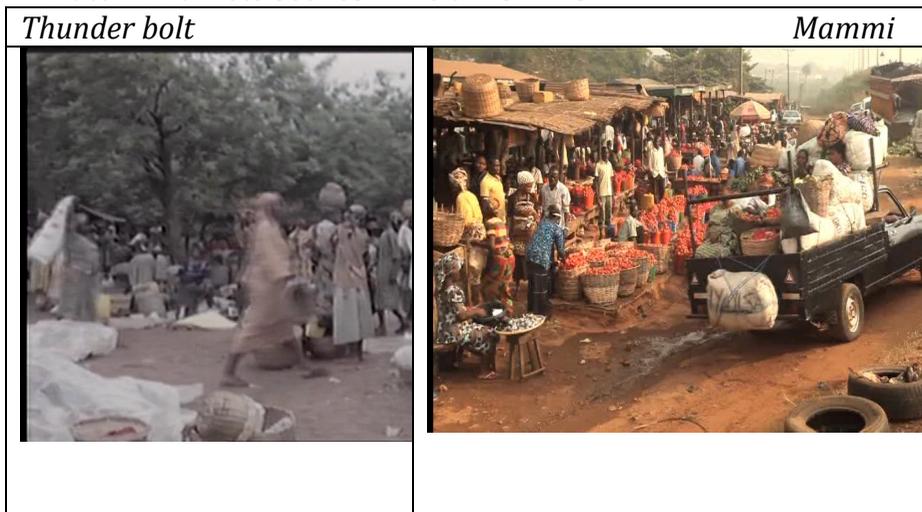
Analysis of Kelani's Ideological *Mise-en-scene* in Selected Films

Kelani started his directing Career with shooting Yoruba films in Yoruba language. The influence of this culture greatly affects Kelani's works. His obsession for the concept of *magun* in *Thunder Bolt* lends credence to this assertion. In analyzing his films, influences of this culture are so visible. This is seen in his inclusion of Yoruba language in his films. However, in quest to reach wider audience, he devises a method of intertwining Yoruba and English in these films. This he achieves by creating characters from the diverse geographical region in Nigeria. In *Maani*, Ngozi's character as an Igbo Lady created room for

English dialogue in every scene she appears. Being the major character, she virtually appeared in all the scenes. Of course, Yoruba remains the language of the film in scenes devoid of Ngozi's character. However the Yoruba language dialogue is mostly subtitled in English for the non Yoruba audience. In *Maami*, flashback scenes which reveal Kashi's battered childhood experiences are achieved in Yoruba language whereas present filmic situation is achieved in English language because of its urban setting and diverse cultural characters.

His films' construct, woven Yoruba locale is highlighted in his preponderance use of market scenes to depict the real Africa way of life. In *Maami*, Maami's table is destroyed in the market. Ngozi is visited by a ghost in the market in *Thunder Bolt*. Plate 1 represents these motifs:

Plate 1: Markets Scenes in Kelani's films



He brings the rich Yoruba cultural Milieu in focus in these films. In *Maami* which tells the story of the 2010 world cup, Kelani brings Yoruba tradition to the fore. This he realized by having

Kashi reminiscence his bizarre past through flashback. This flashback expounds Yoruba thought pattern and tradition. In *Thunder Bolt*, the concept of *magun*, a Yoruba traditional infection is well explicated. The film foregrounds the need for a synergy between traditional and modern medical practices. Yoruba traditions are further heightened by kelani through bringing animals in his films. The presence of these animals portrays the reality of African environment which Kelani seldom distorts. In *Maami*, cattle is purported to be killed in the market. The presence of dog in *Thunder Bolt* equally justifies this assertion.

However, the concept of a village jester is always employed by Kelani to create a convivial atmosphere in his films. This jester character stems its roots from Yoruba culture. The VP character in *Thunder Bolt*, *Mammi in Mammi* buttress this fact. Plate 2 explains this.

Plate 2: The presence of a Jester in Kelani's Films



Further more, the use of music; dance and songs are equally employed frequently in these films. These are mainly interwoven with montages to reinforce the mood of the narrative. In *Maami*, a musician sings in the eatery whereas in *Thunder Bolt* a musician sings in the camp. In addition, the use of metaphysical element in the form of ghost or DreamWorks is evident in his films. Kasha sees the ghost of his brother in his father's house and in *Thunder Bolt* a ghost forewarns Ngozi of her imminent death. Plate 3 justifies this claim.

Plate 3 metaphysical elements in Kelani's films.



Analysis of Kelani's Technical *Mise en scene* in Selected Films

Kelani often starts his narrative with an extreme master shot of natural environments. He then gradually moves his crane to the narrative objects. He alternate deductive and inductive shots. Unlike Benson, his deductive shots start from the C.U of an object in vision. Kelani always include a low angle shot of a bridge in his films. Semiotically, this means heroism in character actions. The frequent use of high angle/aerial shots

which are juxtaposed with non jerky kinetic camera angles are used to establish his filmic locales. Kelani's application of inductive screen technique in matching his shots, gradually inducts the audience in a psychological process that promotes suspense in his films. One noticeable motif in Kelani is that there is so much influence of stagy tradition in placement of actors in Kelani's films. First he always takes cognizance of the theatrical fourth wall in his actor placement on set. This makes his actors seat in stage format. In shooting them, he seldom reverses his shots. He maintains 180⁰ angle. Thus he seldom makes use of O.S shots. Most times his camera angles do not revolve around the filmic 360⁰ angle. However, mini montage that normally appears at interludes of the film in form of summary of different events that have occurred in the film is perhaps Kelani's distinguishable style. In *Maami*, Kashi's remembrance of his childhood is often achieved in a montage where two unconnected events are juxtaposed in a picture. This montage in *Maami* reinforces Yoruba thought pattern and wisdom. Kelani uses it to promote Yoruba's rich heritage. Similarly, In *Thunder bolt*, this motif occurs frequently. It is prominent in the scene where Demeji and Ngozi make love. This is achieved through Ngozi's point of view as she remembers past activities. Most times these montages are achieved with a good background music which intensifies the filmic mood. Though his stories does not follow particular plot sequence like Ojukwu and Benson's, he employs flashback techniques frequently to induct the audience into the filmic past and then brings them back in the present filmic action. In achieving this, most times, he does not delineate the two filmic epochs with different colour grades.

Analysis of Tunde Kelani's Dramatic *Mise-en-scene* in Selected Films

His films are mostly adapted from play texts. This makes his stories dissimilar in structure. His quest for a perfect representation of African way of life is equally found in his costumes and portrayal of religion. The thematic preoccupation of all his films is hinged in topical issues. In *Maami* he tells the story of the 2010 world cup, a topical event. In *Thunder Bolt*, the concept of *magun*, which became topical in Lagos metropolis around the time of the film featured in the film.

In his character treatment, the concept of a hero who suffers deprivation but eventually emerges victorious is very prominent in his Films. Ngozi in love with Nyinke is infested with *magun*, suffers both the *magun* and deprivation of love but later regains her health and love in *Thunder Bolt*. Kashi in *Maami* suffers a bartered childhood experience with the disowning of his father and the death of his mother but however grows to become a world football star. However, it should be noted that these characters always conceal their traumatic conditions, a technique that endears audience' empathy. Kelani equally creates strong female characters that conquer environmental factors that inhibit their destiny. Furthermore, his protagonist characters though loved by the audience are given to human flaws. This character-flaw technique makes his protagonist characters face some challenges and through natural means, gives in to the opponent. This technique heightens tension in his films. In *Thunder Bolt*, Ngozi's frailty makes her to sleep out of her house the night that her husband visits her. That the husband did not see her in her house creates suspense in the narrative..

Additionally, time-bond technique is perhaps an unconscious technique which Kelani uses to heighten his narrative suspense. In *Maami*, Kashi in order to answer the call

of his father land, he must report to football camp immediately. However he has a personal business he had to finish for him to be psychologically disposed to serve his father land. Ngozi must cure her Magun infection within Nine weeks or die in *Thunder Bolt*. In the same narrative, as the time thickens, she must have sex with a man within five days or die. Kelani in heightening the suspense of his films allows this limited time to thicken before the character is finally saved. This perhaps is his best form of suspense technique.

Conclusion:

Auteur theory seems an alien concept in Nollywood. Many auteur directors in Nollywood are oblivious of their auteorial practices. This study has beyond contextualizing auteur practice in Nollywood established different categories of authorship practices therein. In addition, it situates Tunde Keleni's auteur practice as ideological. This stems from his constant replication of Yoruba traditional ideals which is more pronounced than dramatic as well as technical elements in his works. Kelani's ideological position in replication of this traditional ideal justifies his classification as ideological auteur practitioner.

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