

# ASEMKA

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OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS  
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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Department of French  
Faculty of Arts  
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## **ASEMKA: EDITORIAL**

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The Number 11(1) June 2021 Edition of *ASEMKA, The Bilingual Literary Journal of the University of Cape Coast* contains seven (7) papers centred on diverse areas of teaching and research in the Humanities, spanning between themes in Literature and Religion. This Edition contains only one (1) manuscript in French. The remaining six (6) are in English. The papers span between thematic areas in Literature and Religious Studies. The contributors are from Ghana and Nigeria. These papers were taken through rigorous blind peer-review processes and painstaking editorial work.

### **First Section**

*Britnum, A. G.'s paper titled, "Mariama Bâ/Ramatoulaye en un combat douteux dans Une si longue lettre », ....*

### **Second Section**

*Nyatname, P. N.'s paper titled "An ecocritical reading of Victor Yankah's The Pretty Trees of Gakwana and Sikaman"* examines two plays of Victor Yankah concepts within analytical framework of ecocriticism. It is a critical assessment of Yankah's ecodrama in the light of ecocriticism, a field of literary theory and criticism. It draws on the broader concepts and discourses of ecocriticism and demonstrates how the playwright shares a symbiotic relationship which has become a significant feature of the selected plays. This is to emphasise Yankah's view and preoccupations about the mutual relationship between the human other and nature - the natural world of environment with the view to prove the playwright's concern about the interference of human beings into the world of nature. A situation which adversely results in the disruption of the symbiotic (human-nature) relationship. The significance of the paper lends credence to ways in which Yankah provokes environmental debate and a rethinking in African playwrights concerning environmental issues to raise awareness and inspire environmental consciousness and ecological sustainability among people in Africa, Ghana in particular. The findings reveal both the epistemic and retributive forces of nature as well as raising concerns about the environment, ecological consciousness in advocating for ecological sustainability in modern African theatre and dramatic literature scholarship. The paper offers insight into and expand the frontiers of the discourse of ecocriticism in the global south and adds to the relatively new and developing interest in environmental discourses on the African continent and what they reveal about African environmental consciousness and ecological dimensions.

*Amissab-Arthur, H. W.*'s paper, "**Examining mothering: Race and abjection in Wilson's *Our Nig* and Walker's *The Color Purple***" analyses the concept race and abjection in African-American women's writings. It specifically emphasizes the idea of mothering during the freedom epoch of the African Americans after slavery. The focus is on mother characters in the novels of Wilson and Walker. The paper borders on some thematic components which come together in unravelling the identities of both the mother characters and their children when faced with issues of race and abjection.

*Awojobi, P. O.*'s paper, "**The Ministry of Moses Orimolade and the prophetic tradition of Israel: An ecclesio-historical study**", examines the ministry of Moses Orimolade and the prophetic tradition of Israel from an ecclesio-historical perspective. The thrust of his paper is to investigate the origin, and the place of ecstatic prophecy in ancient Israel and its reflections in Moses Orimolade's prophetic ministry in Nigeria. Historical method was used for the research. It uses historicity and ecclesiology as conceptual framework to contend that Israel's prophetic tradition started before Israel settled in Canaan where she interacted with other nations. While it cannot be disputed that Israel must have been influenced by the culture of its neighbours, there were some elements in the religion that were peculiar to Israel. The study concludes that Israelite prophetic heritage cannot be compared with the divination in ancient Near East. There exist a parallel between ecstatic prophetic ministry in ancient Israel and Moses Orimolade prophetic ministry in Nigeria. The paper recommends that contemporary Prophets in Nigeria and beyond must strive to fulfil divine mandate received by them at all cost.

*Ofei, D. & Oppong Adjei, D.*'s paper titled, "**Sexual Identities in Africa: A Queer Reading of Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees***" analyses queer sexual identities in Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*. It draws on the broader concept of queer analysis and demonstrates how *Under the Udala Trees* uses its narrative to conceive space and language whose midpoint encompasses literary innovations and the significance of some experiences of queer individuals within an African setting. Ultimately, instead of simply emphasizing these sexualities as alternative solutions in adverse conditions to some individuals who cannot help being the way they are, the paper unravels the literary merits such as shock, characterization and thematic values of queer sexualities in Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*.

*Sam, C. A. & Nkansah, S. K.*'s paper, "**Evidences of our Inhumanity: Representations of Evil and the Quest for Postcolonial Healing in Tadjoo's *The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda***",

explores the literary representations of evil in relation to the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda while simultaneously looking at therapeutic strategies in healing the wounds of the past as depicted in Veronique Tadjó's *The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the heart of Rwanda* using Kant's conceptions of evil and postcolonial literary theory. The results of the analysis is that hatred, otherness, genocide and remembrance constitute conversations for understanding travel writings and historical violence.

Inusah, A-R.'s paper, "**Lundaa as speech surrogate of Dagbamba**" examines surrogate language in Dagbani, a Mabia language spoken in the Northern Region of Ghana. The paper pays attention to its functions and its transformation from traditional to the contemporary sociocultural issues. Premised on participant-observation, the paper supports the multi-toned language represented on a pressure drum capable of many pitches. It attests that the *lundaa* 'pressure drum' is a speech surrogate used among Dagbani speakers. The *lundaa* has a wide distribution of functions but this paper is focused on the core functions of drum language that include *molo* 'announcement', *salima* 'Panegyric', *ginguani* 'invocation' and *naba* 'proverbs' as examples of drum literature and transformation. The paper suggests that the communication potential of the *lundaa* rhythms and its interpretation leads to an understanding of the sociocultural life of the people.



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# Evidences of our inhumanity: Representations of evil and the quest for postcolonial healing in Tadjó's *The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda*

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**Christabel Aba Sam**

University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.

[Christabel.sam@ucc.edu.gh](mailto:Christabel.sam@ucc.edu.gh)



**Samuel Kwesi Nkansah**

University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.

[snkansah@ucc.edu.gh](mailto:snkansah@ucc.edu.gh)

“We must acknowledge the existence of evil. We must exorcise it through justice, through an attempt at true justice”  
Veronique Tadjó (*The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda*).

## Abstract

In spite of Tadjó's evident references to the concept of evil and its ramifications in post-genocide Rwanda, it still remains peripheral in the literature. This gap distorts our understanding of traumatogenic experiences and the diagnostics that is required. Drawing on Immanuel Kant's conceptions of evil and postcolonial literary theory, this paper explores the literary representations of evil in relation to the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda while simultaneously looking at therapeutic strategies in healing the wounds of the past as depicted in Veronique Tadjó's *The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the heart of Rwanda*. Such a reading, as the paper argues, creates new conversations for understanding travel writings and historical violence.

**Keywords:** Evil; Healing; Kant; Rwanda; Tadjó; Trauma.

## Introduction

The story of black primitivity has usually been conceived from the angle of the colonial account – tabling the prevalent dangers in Africa; where the African continent had become an epitome of distressing realities. Tadjó's *The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda*, though not written to cast yet another destructive glance at Africa, promotes an appreciation of rethinking historical violence and the need for redemption. Her motivation, which was born out of the desire to exorcise Rwanda stimulates discussions about Rwanda's healing after the genocide and the liberation of Africa. Critical commentary on Tadjó's novel has focused on women's testimonial literature -how Rwandan women genocide survivors respond to and communicate such traumatic experiences and the necessity of developing alternative ways of dealing with the diversity of Rwandan women experiences (Gilbert, 2013; Magnarella, 2001). Others have also looked at contemporary representations of memories, collective memories, violence and genocide in transnational literatures (Nanar, 2018; Ayala, 2018; Karin, 2010), political crisis in Africa, war, homo religiousus and literary representations of trauma (Glover, 2011; Benon & Sewpaul, 2007; Traore & Segtub, 2016; Muvuti, 2018) and the relationship between genocide, biopolitics and futurity (West-Pavlov, 2014). While these readings are particularly useful in terms of the ways in which the 1994 genocide in Rwanda becomes cardinal in framing discourses on historical violence and its aftermath, these critical readings surprisingly ignore the centrality of evil as the locus for rethinking Rwanda. Such a reading is crucial as it provides an understanding of the place of evil in the Rwandan genocide and how a careful assessment of its operations provokes a sensitive desire for postcolonial healing. Thus, our purpose in this paper is to examine the literary representations of evil and the therapeutic strategies of healing the wounds of the past in Tadjó's novel. Tadjó's travelogue recreates the horrors of the massacre through her interaction with some of the survivors of this tragedy. The divide between the two main ethnic groups – the Hutus and the Tutsis – who co-existed peacefully before their colonial masters' mastermind the tension that led to the genocide. Her journalistic perspective signals the quest for ethnic cleansing and the desire for a new state of affairs.

The qualitative approach is adopted in this paper. This paper is literary and it involves a re-reading of Tadjó's travelogue with library search support. The analysis in this paper is informed by the postcolonial literary theories and Kant's conception of evil. The content of this paper is divided into five parts. We set the tone of our discussion by looking at the climate of political crisis in Africa and how the idea of Rwanda reiterates the hegemony of colonialism. The second part of this paper examines Immanuel Kant's

conceptualization of evil with the intention of understanding Tadjó's account of factors leading to the genocide. The third and fourth sections are dedicated to discussing the literary representations of evil in Tadjó's *The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda* and how these representations provide a therapy for the survivors of the genocide. Finally, the paper concludes with a brief summary of the main arguments of the paper.

## Political Crisis and the Idea of Rwanda

Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has become synonymous with political crisis. Part of this misfortune is as a result of the disillusionment that has come to characterize the foundations of independence and freedom. Africa's response to the inhumane colonial project has become a laughable enterprise since it has only degenerated into a second epoch of colonialism. The focus for the struggle for independence: to de-affirm the hegemonic connotations of governance; to empower marginalized groups and to emphasize and validate the unique cultural experiences of the Africa has suffered grave despair (Pham, 2006). Indeed, in the last two decades, the political terrain in Africa has been polarized with the enduring dialectics of political change-overs and the persistence to weaken the vestiges of colonialism. While there is hope in terms of reconstructing the Africa's political vision, Alemazung (2010) in *Post-Colonial Colonialism: An Analysis of International Factors and Actors Marring African Socio-Economic and Political Development*, argues that Africa's failure is greatly compounded by international factors – the indirect impacts the West has on the political, social, economic and cultural life of ex-colonial societies and the legacy of ethnic rivalry. According to Shillington (1989, p. 356) as cited in Alemazung (2010): “the colonial masters emphasized the distinctions between the different ethnic groups, thereby strengthening tribal differences and rivalries between these groups and preventing them from forming a united opposition against the colonizers.” (p. 65).

Although colonialism cannot be solely responsible for ethnic divisions, there is no doubt that ethnic division is an antecedent to countless politically unstable states – Ghana's Kokumbas and Nanumba strife in the 1990's and the conflict between the southern Igbo and the northern Hausa in the Biafra War cannot ignore our attention. One of the worst examples of colonial founded ethnic rivalry and consequential conflicts is the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda which was characterized by the real killing of the Tutsi and moderate Hutu races in the country. Alemazung observes that:

the Belgians created differences between Tutsis and Hutus which did not exist before their arrival. These differences went

as far as creating identity cards for Tutsi minorities illustrating their superiority over Hutus and giving them the leadership positions in the country. The result was hatred and the nurturing of feelings of revenge by the Hutu's, which ended in the 1994 genocide which saw the slaughtering of over 800,000 Rwandans within a period of four months. (p. 66)

Thus, the genocide occurred within the context of a plotted conflict with the deliberate intention of inflicting pain to a group of people - a crime that is aimed at causing serious physical and mental injury to members of this group. Tadjjo corroborates this assertion in her account when she records that: "But the massacres were without a shadow of doubt the result of the political maneuverings of the elite, who, in order to retain power, created a climate of hatred and division by urging the ethnic majority against the minority." (p. 33) Tadjjo adds that:

By mobilizing fear and hatred against the Tutsis, the organizers hoped to forge a kind of solidarity among the Hutus. But beyond that, they intended to build a collective responsibility for the genocide. People were encouraged to involve themselves in group killing, like soldiers in a firing squad who all receive the order to fire at the same instant, so that no individual can be held separately accountable or solely responsible for the execution. No person killed another person single-handed, declared one of those who participated. (p. 84)

The burden of the genocide becomes an organized crime. A crime that was pre-conceived in ways that makes both the colonized and the colonizer culpable despite the imbalance in teamwork. The comparison between the encouraged group killings and soldiers receiving orders to shoot in a firing squad strengthens the notion of collaboration as far as the genocide is concerned. Thus, the idea of Rwanda divulges issues of fear, hatred, transgression and the psychological burden of revenge – a place of radical harm. Tadjjo's account of the Rwandan experience – drawing attention to the intrinsic cruelties of the massacre and the devastating effects - is carefully represented through the complex paradigms of good and evil. Drawing on Mark's gospel chapter seven verses 21, she admits that:

For from within out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts.  
Evil has always existed at the heart's core. It is the fire of moral decay burning dully like eternally glowing embers. It is the



moral decay of a human being devouring his own kind,  
devouring his own flesh.  
But Good has not disappeared, has not been buried in the mass  
graves (pp. 115-116)

For Tadjó, the genocide is a signification of the moral decay that has engrossed Africa. That at the heart of evil, is man's inability to rescind any desire that has the potential of wrecking the bonds of community; the accumulation of violence, the inability to decline the obligation of instigating terror and the desire to ignore another's legitimacy of being. Although Tadjó does not appear to discount the possibility of goodness – the hope of restoration in Rwanda, she acknowledges the strategic nature of evil in maneuvering peace and stability. While she calls for caution in terms of arresting and dealing with the triggers of violence, she recognizes the enigma that defines its origins. Thus, the idea of Rwanda comes close to reinforcing the colonial image of Africa as a danger zone demonstrated through the massacre. This idea also brings back the thought of the kind of political culture that has resulted from colonialism and its successors: neo-colonialism and globalization.

### **Kant and the anatomy of evil**

The term evil is typically used as the basic opposite of good. Evil can also be thought of as the reverse of good or the absence of good. Thus, often than not, evil becomes the antithesis of good. Though these suppositions appear generalized, we can entertain the complexities of wrongdoings as primary to our understanding of the concept of evil. While the topic of evil in itself dissuades a sustained intellectual debate, some scholars have attempted an interpretation of what it is from psychotherapeutic perspectives to the religious domain.

In *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, Kant has a discussion of the radical evil in human nature. He claims that:

By propensity (*propensio*) I understand the subjective ground of the possibility of an inclination (*habitual desire, concupiscentia*), insofar as this possibility is contingent for humanity in general. It is distinguished from a predisposition in that a propensity can indeed be innate yet may be represented as not being as such: it can rather be thought of (if it is good) as acquired, or (if evil) as brought by the human being upon himself. – Here, however, we are only talking of a propensity to

genuine evil, i.e. moral evil, which, since it is only possible as the determination of a free power of choice ... must reside in the subjective ground of the possibility of the deviation of the maxims from the moral law... [T]he will's capacity or incapacity arising from this natural propensity to adopt or not adopt the moral law in its maxims can be called the good or evil heart. (Rel, 6: 29)

For Kant, evil resides in a voluntary act of wrongdoings. It does not erupt out of external coercion and consequently, that it holds a revolutionary potential in negatively re-organizing spaces. Characteristically, Kant's conception of evil rests on three assumptions: that evil constitutes the underlying disposition of the human will; that evil is motivated by the preeminence of the principle of self-love; and finally, that all human beings are inclined to evil, even the best. What Kant tries to suggest is that, evil cannot thrive without endorsement and that it is nurtured as a matter of choice. This election by the individual to voluntarily behave in contravention to an established order is driven by a self-centered desire that refuses to recognize ethical restrictions. Thus, evil may be conceptualized within the context of egocentrism and the fallacy of reasoning. Singer (2004) however contends that Kant's conceptions of evil in human nature as the will or disposition or propensity to act on maxims contrary to the moral law is neither universal nor necessary. This is because according to Singer, not all maxims that are wrong—may be contrary to the moral law and therefore may not be evil, nor is the will to act on such a maxim necessarily an evil will. In his conceptions of evil, he postulates that:

And the concept, in my conception of it, applies primarily to persons and organizations, secondarily to conduct and practices. Evil deeds must flow from evil motives, the volition to do something evil, by which I mean something horrendously bad. (p. 190)

While the two appear to disagree on the basis of judgmental inferences, they both agree that evil will develop if exposed to the right triggers. Thus, evil takes up the nature of something beyond the ordinary bad. Stein (2005) also makes a distinction between self-deception and self-love as advocated by Kant and he argues that evil thrives as a result of the upsurge of violent impulse which is usually borne out of sadistic tendencies. Although Stein's work is not a direct criticism on Kant, they both draw attention to the role of the self in initiating evil. In *Can Kant's Theory of Radical Evil be Saved?* Goldberg (2017)

assesses three contemporary criticisms levelled at Kant's theory in order to make an argument in his favour. He identifies three schools of thought: the first school claim that Kant's theory cannot adequately account for morally worse acts since he simply conflates evil with mundane acts of wrongdoings. The second group are also of the view that Kant ignores the polymorphic quality of evil by emphasizing self-love over moral law as the cause of evil and finally, that Kant fails to pay attention to the conditions of the victims by simply defining evil only in terms of 'perpetrator's quality of will'. Arguing in favour of Kant, Goldberg contends that Kant's theory of evil has the conceptual tools that sufficiently accounts for these criticisms. Particularly, Goldberg argues that self-love is the root of all non-moral incentives and therefore has implications for the worse kind of moral acts. Drawing on Kant, despite the intellectual debate about his conceptions of radical evil and in unison with Goldberg, we operationalize the term evil to include acts or actions that are cruelly intended to cause terror and pain. By evil, we mean mundane acts and actions that lead to disorientation, disintegration and disorganization of whose aggregate is traumatic to the *other*.

## **Representations of evil in Tadjó's Travelogue** **Hatred is evil**

Reading Tadjó's novel, we find that evil has a polymorphic character and it is irreducible to a single form. Drawing on the Genesis account of the creation story, Tadjó draws attention to the age living existence of evil:

The concept of Evil existed even before the first sparks of sunlight, before the earth and the sky came together, and before the waters gave birth to the enormous womb of the oceans. 'Evil existed long before the breath of life, long before the presence of gods on earth (p. 116).

Tadjó calls attention to the fact that Rwanda was not without evil before the massacre. According to her travelogue, Rwanda was covered with darkness just like the earth was formless and empty with darkness covering its surface at the beginning of creation (Gen. 1:3). This darkness as she notes is embodied in the mechanisms of hatred, the deeds that put seal on treason (p. 118) and the ethnic rivalry that defined the relationship between the Hutus and Tutsis. In other words, for Tadjó, Rwanda was already living in a climate of danger on whose foundations Belgium took advantage. As she observes: "Hatred lies dormant in us all. What most torments us is that unpredictable feeling in our hearts which can awaken and tip us into a parallel universe." (p. 116)

The nature of hatred, as Tadjó describes it, is the motivation for violence. It is not of the intolerance and the indifference that had framed the ethnic rivalry in Rwanda. While she recognizes the chameleon quality of hatred, Tadjó contends that hatred produces a self-other binary similar to the divide and rule tactics of the colonial governments – something that leads to tribalism and racial discrimination.

## **The Other /Othering as Evil**

The concept of the Other as put forward by postcolonial critics signifies that which is fundamentally different. The Other is usually treated as "mere object" and this objectification depicts the inability or refusal of the 'accepted/dominant' group to consider the other as a "subject" or as part of one's community. The other is considered passive and receptive and lacks agency (Fanon, 1961). These perceptions influence the dominant group to deny the other's actual existence. The Other is consequently treated in a way that is detached from the actual and the real and thus highlighting the distinction between the other and the dominant group. Othering is therefore a conscious process of discriminating and devaluing the worth of a minority group. In Tadjó's travelogue, there are two dimensions of othering - the first dimension involves power dynamics and the second looks at constructing the 'other' as 'pathological and morally inferior'. Tadjó's travelogue reveals the cracks brought about by the division and imbalance of power. The Hutu majority and Tutsi minority had lived in peaceful coexistence in precolonial Rwanda but this unity was disturbed when, after colonial rule, the colonial administration had failed to lay down succession plans. When the Hutu occupied the high positions in government, the Tutsis were relegated to the background and this power dynamics, according to Jensen, is the first dimension in the othering process. The ethnic other as a result is discarded as inferior and pathological. The Tutsis were slurred and the term 'cockroaches' became a discourse of abuse. In no time, what started as a feud between two ethnic groups escalated quickly into a genocide with lots of death and painful scars.

“Nyamata Church. Site of genocide. Plus, or minus 35,000 dead.

A woman bound hand and foot. Mukandori. Aged twenty five.

Exhumed in 1997. Home: the town of Nyamata. Married.

Any children?” (p.11).

The hatred and marginalization of the 'other' had grown so much that there were no hiding places for the ethnic other (Tutsis). As seen in the excerpt above, people were hunted and killed mercilessly. Those who were survivors were victims of rape (like Nelly). Sympathizers of the ethnic other also found themselves to be at risk of the persecution and killing; even churches became killing grounds. Tadjó appears to suggest that such deliberate marginalization constitute the precipitant for the ethnic tensions in Rwanda and consequently the genocide. She observes that:

I am afraid when, in my country, I hear people talk of who belongs there and who doesn't. creating division. Creating foreigners. Inventing the idea of rejection. How is ethnic identity learned? Where does this fear of the Other comes from, bringing violence in its wake? (p. 37)

The idea of the Other is thus inimical and an apparent potential of eroding the valued communal life of the African. It is also important to note that the Ten Commandments is a strong statement that entrenches the otherness of the Tutsis. Indeed, the differentiation between the Tutsis and Hutus is an open acknowledgement of the wrongs and hostilities that edged the genocide. The attempt by the Habyarimana regime to establish a Hutu-dominated front was simply a move to create a political climate that will be detrimental to the Tutsis and therefore heightening ethnic polarization. Othering becomes the genesis of and Rwanda's evil. Part of Tadjó's commitment in this travel narrative is to draw attention to the need for cultural integration, creating right relationships and rectifying the wrongs of Othering.

### **Genocide is evil**

Another important face of evil that Tadjó identifies is the evil of the Genocide.

Genocide is Evil incarnate. Its reality exceeds any fiction. (...) Emotions can help us to understand what the genocide actually was. Silence is the worst thing of all. We must destroy indifference. We must understand the real meaning of the genocide, the accumulation of violence over the years. (pp. 26-27)

By conferring a bodily form unto the genocide, Tadjó acknowledges the genocide as an obvious touchable crime and a personified chief villain. Calling attention to the accumulation of violence and the silences of the marginalized

as the pioneers of this evil, she draws attention to the dangers of othering; warning against a continued suppression of the freedom of minority groups and alerting us of the possible traumatic productions that may arise. Thus, Tadjó calls for an ethical responsibility to ensure the politics of recognition and upholding the realities of individual and collective experiences. In Singer's words: "It is evil to torture someone for pleasure"; "The Holocaust was evil"; "Genocide is evil"; "Slavery is evil"; "Racism is evil"; "Hitler was evil". These statements all make sense, and they are all true." (p. 190).

What is significant from Singer's observation is the parallel between the present and the past. He tries to suggest that genocide like slavery and racism is pervasive, that they are new forms of colonial warfare that continue to shape present day experiences. This tendency of violence-chain is what Tadjó cautions against - that new forms of inequalities potentially recovers the memory of the wounds of the past and re-create an enigma of otherness.

Akin to the role played by political and ethnic polarization as the defining factors leading to the genocide, Tadjó observes that the real meaning of the genocide is a burning willingness to vent at the slightest provocation – a desire that is borne out of a hurtful frustration of endemic discrimination, an expression of pain and an outpouring of resentments.

### **Remembrance triggers evil**

While Tadjó pays attention to the fracturing of self as a traumatic experience, she appears to conflate remembrance with evil:

He talks, knowing that our imagination will never be able to get anywhere close to the reality. Deep down, he does not understand why we are coming to stir up Evil {Emphasis is mine}. Perhaps in the end all this will turn against him as he guards the evidence of our inhumanity. He cannot understand what we have come here to seek, what is concealed in our hearts. What hidden motive drives us to gaze wide-eyed at death distorted by hatred? (p.15)

In *Remembering War: The Great War Between Historical Memory and History in the Twentieth Century*, Winter (2006) asserts that the act of 'remembrance is always defined by its specificity – who, why and where – a symbolic exchange between those who remain and those who suffered or died'. In other words, by remembrance there is a retrieval of past knowledge which succeeds in drawing a distinction between humanity and viciousness. The victim in the above interaction finds the process of recollection as reviving experiences of bereavement – an act that complicate the state of endangerment and

vulnerability of survivors. Thus, by his seeming hesitation, the victim refuses to trigger horrific memories and the frailties of humanity. The 100 days of torture, man's slaughter, mortal losses, particularly of children and infants, the silences and anguish of mothers and the invisible suffering of the raped can only be consciously buried in the archives with little success. The story of the Zairean woman who looked like a Tutsi – a woman who had to look on as her baby was slaughtered like a fowl and the woman who suffered not just the brutish scolding of the penis but was horrendously violated by a pickaxe cannot stand the recovery of such experiences from the genocide archives. This presumes that inherent in remembrance is witnessing to the failed humanitarian agency that is required in prefiguring the future terrain in Rwanda. Tadjó's attempt at fluxing remembrance to evil is justified since it leads to a disorientation of an already unstable groups. The aftermath of the genocide as Dupont & Scheibe (nd) captures as:

One of the worst in the history of humankind. Within a period of less than three months. at least 500,000 people were killed: thousands and thousands were maimed, raped and both physically and psychologically afflicted for life; two million fled to neighboring countries: and one million became internally displaced (p. 52).

The physical and psychological affliction of the genocide has left behind a perpetual climate of fear and terror that complicate the dialectics of remembrance. Despite the obvious complications she acknowledges, Tadjó also recognizes the therapeutic function of remembrance. She appears to suggest that although remembrance is a tribute to evil, it relieves the pain of memory by neutralizing the desire for revenge:

To disarm our urges for death, we must recognize within ourselves the fears that drive us. We must draw the sting from the wounds of the past, our own wounds and those that others have inflicted upon us, those we have inherited from our parents and those we might pass on to our children. The wounds buried deep in our hearts. (p. 116)

## **The Quest for Postcolonial Healing**

One of the key commitments of the postcolonial critic is not simply to comment on the effects of the imperial process of colonialism. Rather, the postcolonial critic is much interested in assessing the possibility of healing and

alternative ways of deconstructing oppressive paradigms. Tadjó's need to exorcise Rwanda is quite crucial in terms of the ways in which it intends to proffer options, probing into the necessity of healing and helping to reveal the deep-seated ethnic polarization between the Tutsis and the Hutus. She identifies the essence of recognizing the necessity of difference, strong institutions, justice and national reconciliation as key to the healing and recovery of Rwanda: "How can we ensure that this never happens again? What is needed are strong institutions, justice and national reconciliation (...). What we have to understand is the absolute necessity of difference. The necessity of difference (pp. 23 & 26)." The genesis of the genocide gives credence to the call for recognizing the necessity of difference. Tadjó appears to contend that the physical fear of the Other is contagious. It is an obvious bane to Africa's communal vision and that a careful assessment of the Rwandan crisis must lead to a conscious political re-awakening of colonial subjects to embrace cohesive structures that will hasten the journey into the future. Drawing attention to the cruelty in the persecution of the Tutsis, Tadjó appears to suggest that Africa may continue to be handicapped should there be an internal scramble for identity. She further stresses this need through a careful juxtaposition of the post-apartheid conditions in South Africa to the climate of betrayal in Rwanda in order to show the dangers of marginalization.

While she condemns the practice of discrimination as the birth of the hatred that led to the genocide, Tadjó seems to acknowledge the complicity of state institutions in the Rwandan crisis. One of the key institutions that cannot escape our interrogation is the role played by the media. The suspicion that characterized the reportage on the genocide clearly indicates the role of external influences in the massacre. Again, the church as the site of the genocide remains a historical proof of the ambivalences that shaped the colonial project and the dynamics of slavery. Muvuti (2018) affirms the fact that:

The advent of Christianity and Islam on the back of conquest and mission brought about more than a simple superimposition of the colonial religion over the African, it effectively led to the systematic scrambling, confusion and re-writing of homo religious in the African context. It destabilized the very foundations of the African interpretation and representation of meaning and existence (p. 36).

Indeed, the crux of Africa's crisis cannot be disconnected from the failures of religion which is why the possibility of forgiveness appears unlikely. What is yet to be resolved as Tadjó assesses is to pay attention to the



relationship between forgiveness and remembrance; how historical anger can be dealt with amidst the recurrence of injustices? In *No Future Without Forgiveness*, Tutu (1999) asserts that:

Now we don't have to be too smart to think what horrors would have befallen our land had Madiba advocated revenge instead of forgiveness, retribution instead of reconciliation, peace instead of continued hostility and the armed struggle—there would have been no future. Our land would have lain in dust and ashes.

Although Tutu's observation is premised on South Africa's circumstance, it affirms Tadjó's convictions of reclaiming Rwanda as a site of horror. The binary oppositions of revenge and forgiveness; of retribution and reconciliation; of peace and hostilities clearly show the implications of the choices available to Rwanda. Thus, Rwanda's redemption is carefully located within the utility of forgiveness. So that, Rwanda can be weaned from the pessimism of hope that has engulfed their men and women. The birth of a new future, as Tadjó envisions, is dependent on the attempts to guard against the desire for vengeance and the perpetual cycle of violence and reprisals (p. 47).

## Conclusion

The purpose of this paper has been to demonstrate that key to understanding Tadjó's commitment in her travelogue is a sustained engagement with her evident references to the concept of evil. We have shown that an understanding of what constitute evil is in itself a diagnostic to the traumatogenic experience in Rwanda. We have successfully outlined the representations of evil - paying attention to how Kant becomes a useful resource in understanding the symbolic constitution of evil - and how evil frames the failures of humanity. While at this, the content of this paper has also shown that Rwanda's recovery is dependent on letting go of any rights to retaliation, avoiding collateral acts of violence and utilizing forgiveness as an essential for a new beginning. Further studies may be required to pay attention to how other African writers re-conceptualize evil to reflect the unique experiences of postcolonial subjects.

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