

Leadership and Political Violence in Edify Yakusak's *after they Left***Idris Muhammad Ladan PhD**

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Abstract

Every society is guided by a leader or leaders using the guiding principles and tenets of leadership. This leadership principle is to provide conducive and enabling environment for maximum productivity and survival if it is handled properly. Any society that is lacking in all-encompassing leadership is prone to one problem to another which may lead to crisis and violence. Violence is an ugly situation that results to destruction of property and loss of lives. This research essentially deals with the examination of Yakusak's *After They Left* with a view to bringing out the leadership crisis in Nigeria and the psychological effects the violence victims experienced after the crisis. It is very pertinent, considering the way and manner Yakusak presents the emotional and touching experiences of the Jos crisis with the use of psycho-analysis as the theoretical framework. The research takes into writer's state of the mind read through the horrific scenes of the crisis creatively captured in the novel. However, the researcher puts forward danger the people are exposed to during violence and the state of the mind of the people before, during and after every crisis or violence of whatever nature. The story chronicles the structure of families and parents who want to live vicariously for them out of selfishness but also believing they know what is best for their children at all times. Another issue raised by Yakusak is the life in Displaced Persons Camps during and after crisis. He cautioned for redress against all odds.

I. Introduction

The concept of leadership is a complex and dynamic process that has been defined in many ways. Many definitions have been offered. In all the diverse perspectives on leadership, the underlying meaning is the condition of presiding over affairs of a group, institution, state or organization. It is also seen as the process of social influence in which

one person can enlist the hand and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. According to Alan Keith, “Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen (124). Ann Mane E Mcswain maintains that “Leadership is about capacity, the capacity of leaders to listen and observe, to use their expertise as a starting point to encourage dialogue at all levels of decision making to establish processes and transparency in decision making, to articulate their own values and visions clearly but not impose them” (330). It can be seen that leadership is about setting and not just reacting to agendas, but also identifying problems and initiating change that makes for substantial improvement rather than managing change.

In the case of Nigeria, leadership has constituted a huge problem. The dearth of positive change or effective leadership in many African countries appears native to Nigeria. Chinua Achebe, in the opening lines of his small critical book, *The Trouble with Nigeria* stated unequivocally that:

The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the water, land, or climate or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise up to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which is the hallmark of true leadership.

While it is accepted as that this problem of leadership is not peculiar to Nigeria, it is an undeniable fact that good leadership has been in short supply in Nigeria since independence to date. Achebe further intimated that a good leader must be patriotic, giving his best in the service of his people and demanding the best conduct and support from his people. He insists that leadership is the sacred trust like the priesthood in civilized, humane religions of the world which no one gets into without proper advice and consultations and also with total commitment. When the process is not in consonance with the expectations of the people, it brings about agitations which leads to political violence.

According to Paul Hollander, “political violence is violence which is perpetrated by people or government in order to achieve political goals,” This can include violence which is used by state against other states” (144). Also, it is seen by some political scientist as part of “contentious politics” or collective political struggle which includes such things as revolutions, civil war, riots and strikes. Political violence can often include attacks on civilian or non-combatant target that are perceived as proxies for the opposing faction. Many groups and individuals believe that their political system will never respond to their demand and thus believe that violence is not only justified but also necessary in order to achieve their political objectives.

After They Left is the heart rendering story of how somewhat dysfunctional family pulls through an inter-ethnic/religious crisis. In this intriguing tale, the author weaves in all the sides to crisis and survival in Northern Nigeria. The story takes a reader on a journey through massacre, an internally displaced camp as well as a mega kidnapping, human trafficking, syndication and other related issues. The story which sets in Northern Nigeria in the city of Jos is an aftermath of bad leadership system in the country, Nigeria and Africa at large.

This x-rays issues relating to leadership in Nigeria since independence to date. Bad leadership is often accompanied by agitations sometimes results in violence in form of religious, ethnic or political. The main focus in this work is political violence as treated by Edify Yakusak in his work, *After They Left*. Here we shall also look at the evil effects of leadership that emanates as a result of bad leadership, which include human massacre by fellow men, destruction of properties, family disintegration, anguish, sorrow, pain, rape, trafficking in persons and other inherent dangers.

The Jos crisis which the novel treats may have come and gone a long time but made fresh by the writer. The reason is not to celebrate horror or severe carnage that characterized the violence but to sound a warning to the upcoming generations that violence is not the last option. The work therefore chronicles the effects and destructive nature of political violence in Edify Yakusak's *After They Left*.

Literature as a concept tends to depict and expose not only the society but also the leaders for their diversion from reality to individualism, this act of diversion create one antecedent and another. Writers write to explore or depict the emerging event be it positive or negative happening in the society. It is a reality that writers could not escape the political and leadership crisis of their society. In doing so, politically committed African writers and Nigerian in particular, capture the leadership issues realities of abuse of power on the corrupt ruling class. This includes how power is acquired and utilized negatively and how such ugly acts affect the society.

Killam, G D in Idris Muhammad Ladan et al commenting on leadership, social ills, leadership failure political violence in our society, joined Achebe in saying that if one takes the example of Nigeria which is the place he knows best, things had got to such a point politically that there was no other answer no could you resolve this impasse politically (368). The Nigerian political apparatus has been so abused and distorted that result to bad leadership characterized by maladministration, insecurity, corruption, ethno-religious crisis and other related social vices in the society.

The leadership issue in Nigeria and Africa at large reached a peak such that both the leaders and led are crying of moral failure in the society. This is as a result of high level of misrule in governance by our leaders. The failure to provide an enabling environment and necessary covers to the citizens for better living condition leads to violence and other political danger. Effective leadership is essential for the survival and success of any society including the subjects or led. It is glaring that the leaders failed to change positively the place of the citizens even after successive governments come and go. The leaders turned to democrats with a high sense of greed, corruption, ethno-religious crisis and maladministration among others. These ugly tendencies further compounded the problem rather than ushering new better life to the citizens.

II. Theoretical Framework

Literary theory is the body of ideas and methods used in the practical reading of literature. By literary theory, we refer not to the meaning of work of literature but to the theories that reveal what literature can mean. This includes; Marxism, Feminism,

Psychoanalysis, Modernism, etc. This research explores psychoanalysis as the theoretical framework upon which the analysis of the novel based. Psychoanalysis is a psychological theory that was conceived as far back as the late 19th Century and early 20th Centuries by out rank neurologist, Sigmond Freud. It was later expanded, criticized and developed in different directions, mostly by some Freud's students as Alfred Alder and Car/ Gustax Dung. Psychoanalysis as a theoretical framework can be described as a group or body of ideas developed by Freud. Freud developed this body of ideas in an effective treatment for patients with neurotic or hysteric symptom through this medium. Freud was able to study the psychological functioning of human brain as demonstrated by their behaviours. It is a theory for treating mental disorders by investigating the interacting of conscious and unconscious elements in the patient's mind and bringing repressed fears and conflicts into the conscious mind using techniques such as dream interpretation and free association. This theory is governed by irrational forces and the unconscious, as well as instinctual and biological drives.

From the above, it can be observed that psychoanalysis is a theory that understands the interplay between the human mind and behavior displayed. This shows that it deals with the conscious, unconscious and subconscious state of the mind. It explains how our actions are controlled by a greater force, which is the unconscious. The mind is a complicated place that a lot of things take place, some we are aware while we are not. The conscious state of the mind is a state we are able to control. This is the state of thinking about certain things, brainstorming of ideas. The unconscious state of the mind is that which we cannot control. This is inevitable and just happens such that we can't control it when it is happening.

This theory is governed by some guiding principles; irrational drive determines largely human behavior, experience and cognition. These irrational drives of human are largely unconscious. An attempt to bring these drives into awareness meets psychological resistance in form of defense mechanism. Aside the inherited constitution of personality, one's development is determined by events in the early childhood. Conflicts between conscious of reality and unconscious (repressed) material can result in mental disturbance such as neurosis, neurotic traits, anxiety, depression, etc. The libration from the effect of the unconscious materials is achieved through bringing this material into the unconsciousness (through skilled guidance).

This is the basis Sigmund Freud and his followers used for their theory. Therefore, psychoanalysis is a system of psychological theory and therapy aimed at investigating the interaction of the conscious elements in human mind and bringing out the repressed, fear, and conflicts elements into the unconscious mind as the reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges and memories that are always conflicting with the conscious mind, whereas the conscious mind is said to include every mental process that can be thought of and demonstrated in rational way.

Leadership and Political Violence in Nigeria

The novel x-rays the unfolding happening in Nigeria as a result bad leadership or failure in Nigerian leaders and leadership. Yakusak takes us through the dark and horrific

situation or period of violence vide political, ethno-religious, communal, and other related violence that almost consumed the whole nation. As it is with any violent related literature, cases of human massacre, material destructions are common in the novel. It all started when Samuel, a police corporal came back from duty in the evening and was eating the food served to him by his wife, Mafeng. He suspected a strange noise in a distance and reacted with “Sssssshhhh” he said, laying his finger across his lips (14). A question on her face, Mafeng looked at him. That was the beginning of the worst, as the suspecting sound got clearer. That sound was the sound that haunted the dream of many in Jos, a sound that no one prayed to ever hear. Samuel stood up to instinctively verify what was at stake. Some people that felt aggrieved as a result of one leadership failure or the other, were expressing their so called grievances. In many instances, those types of things happen in Nigeria, people that felt cheated sometimes, take the laws into their hands, thereby destroying lives and properties of innocent people.

We see in the novel where people without any provocation, just invaded their neighbour’s house as it is with Nigerians, from independence to date in one crisis or the other. It may be leadership problem, political, ethno-religious, communal and other related crisis with the attendant psychological trauma on the lives of the ordinary citizens. This situation can best be described as living by the foot of volcano that could blow up at any minute. That is the situation with the family of Mr and Mrs Samuel where we are exposed to how he hustled the two children to the kitchen, his eyes darting wildly as he looked round for where to hide them. The water drum was the only hope. He grabbed Kim’s shoulders and told her “No matter what you hear, unless you see me or your mother does not come out, okay” (15). The attackers usually go house to house killing people, where you hear all forms of screams and the scared screams. Sometimes one cannot decide what is more frightening between defending the screams of people being lynched, and the chants of the harbingers of death. On arrival at Samuel’s house, the attackers were made to know, fired two gun shots which wrecked the lock or both the front and the back door of the house that earlier locked. They shouted; “come out or we go burn una to death inside here” (16).

In situation of violence, man as the head of the family, always look for one form of defense or the other. This sometimes the head loses his life in making sure the family is not being cleansed up entirely. Samuel, upon all the plea from his wife not to face the attackers still went ahead to face them. He thought if remains in the hiding with his family the attackers would at the end find them and kill them all. As such, he prefers giving his life to save his family. “I have to go. Don’t worry my love. We will escape this one. God Will keeps us.” (16)

He has what he thought was right. He came to the parlour and the attackers met him as they gained entrance into the house. As a man, Samuel’s heart was pounding but his face betrayed nothing considering the number of attackers and their dangerous weapons. The primitive inclination to defend the herd that was in every male animal threatened to light a spark of rage in Samuel’s heart. His eyes narrowed, his fists clenched and his leg muscles tensed to leap, but his dominant logical brain won control. He took in a glance. As earlier

described, these types of violence are mostly perpetrated by people close to you whom you have been living together for a long time. Samuel recognized the leader of the thugs and even knew him to be a man called Askari who sells suya down the street near ANIEKE Central Market. Having recognized Askari, Samuel made efforts to persuade him by saying “My friend, you no know me again?” (18). with the entire plea, Askari who is determined to destroy by all means, turns his deaf ears.

Imagine a situation like this the person you communicate, exchange greetings and even transact business sometimes is the person taking arms against you without any reason and all the plea fall on deaf ears. Askari and his gang already prepared to destroy anything on his way, whether living or property. The attackers had with them guns, machetes, logs of wood, pipes, knives, stuck in their ragged tattered clothes. “Askari warned finally: wey the rest? I don dey hear movement since when we dey inside” (18). Samuel answered, “Ni kadai ne. I’m the only one.” As it is with the game of chance, the lie earned Samuel a great blow on the shoulder with sharp edge of the machete. That was the blow that the life out of Samuel. That is the peak of evil of man to his fellow man. This ugly thing happened while Mafeng, his wife is hiding under the bed. The sacred scream from the attackers, the scream from her husband, the sounds of gun shots and other weapons all to her ears. This horrific experience sometimes affects people psychologically through their life time. For instance, Mafeng could not bear the agony her beloved husband was going through and finally came out from hiding.” No”, she whispered. No GOD, No! (18). A strange fire flickered in the eye of Askari when e saw her breasts as they swung, bare less under a sweater. A man that truly loved his wife, the dying Samuel, managed to beg the attackers faintly to free his wife. “Please, I beg you with God; leave her please! (18). Samuel plea was like holding a red cloth to bull. He was hit with an iron pipe on his forehead and finally collapsed. One of the devilish acts perpetrated by terrorists is the violation of women’s right. The attackers having killed Samuel went ahead and raped his wife. We read from the novel how Askari tore Mafeng’s pant beside her dead husband. This painful scene is that of agony, hopelessness and helplessness in the hands of the people that supposed to provide help in time of need, the people you with for a long time and sometimes intermarry.

The writer captures high level of anguish, indignation, and sorrow among other calamitous situation. Typically, evidence are abounds to show that anguish, and sorrow pervaded the novel. Despite the traumatic experience in crisis situation, the surviving casualties are left to pull through by healing the physical and psychological wounds inflicted on them in addition to

Typically, evidence abounds to show that anguish, indignation, sorrow and other related calamitous situations pervaded the novel. Despite the traumatic experience, in crisis situation, the surviving casualties are left to pull through by healing the physical and psychological wounds inflicted on the in addition to reconstruction of damage infrastructures. For we see Samuel’s family members put efforts to bring themselves back to life from their shock after the violence, thus:

Mafeng, despite the pain and sorrow, manage to sit up using the last strength in her and that was when she gets to remember what really happens to her, as it is with

anybody regaining his memory from comma. The evacuation of the dead bodies especially that of her beloved husband is left to her. The wound as a result of the injuries sustained in the violence is another problem to deal with before the delayed arrival of the emergency aids. We are being exposed to how the corpse of Samuel was left for days decomposing after some days of the crisis. (62)

The disintegration of the family as a result of the violence where Kim and Jugu were separated from their mother, their only surviving hope for a very long time is another issue of concern in the violence. In addition, Mafeng, putting her pains behind her, runs up and down looking for her children. The children left their hiding place out of confusion. Mafeng's mind switched to her children, she screamed out widely " Kim/Jugu, they can't be dead ! (64). This time, she is limping, dragging her foot behind her. As the cold breeze hit her and made its way through her body, she felt weaker, sweat and blood dripped as she walked uncertain of a particular destination. This type carnage is done within a short time. Not only that, it is done in a place without any form of confrontation by the security formation leaving the victims at the mercy of God. We see hoe corpses were all over the place. Some of the corpses were seen along the street, others in their houses decomposing all over places. For instance, horrific situation is being described thus:

When Mafeng was running helter-skelter, looking for her children in the neighbourhood, she saw Mama Nankwat's corpse on the floor in her (Mama Nankwat's) kitchen. Her head had been bashed and her left hand removed. Her body mangled out of shape. Mafeng fixated on her skull, noticing how the right side of her face had almost flat, a black deflated ball with red strip, like giant had stepped on her. Mafeng felt the pain all over again, this time, in heart. (65)

The late arrival of the emergency staff like Red Crescent Society who came to render help and support to the survivors and the subsequent evacuation of the dead ones for mass burial is the only place government shows concern. It was during this process that Mafeng was discovered by the emergency staff and carried a long side other survivors to the hospital for treatment. We notice in the novel how her eyes flit open. She knew she was not dreaming, but she was not awake. She was stucked between worlds, in a state of unconscious realization and forced awareness. Ordinarily, she was supposed to feel intense pain, considering her injuries, but that was overshadowed by the abundant grief she was agonized with. In total confusion, she felt like the room and the world was beginning to cave on her. She muttered, "As thought of her children crossed mind" (91).

People in traumatic agony like the one Mafeng faces, need care and counseling. For instance, when she was shouting, a nurse approached her. "Calm down. Please calm down" (91). In the nicest way possible, the nurse asked, "What is your name?" The nurse again said. "You suffered from multiple injuries and internal bleeding" (92). Mafeng was silent, but her face said all she wanted to say and displayed the emotion she was feeling, befuddled, sad, furious, dark, rancorous, somnolent- in no exact order. From whatever point of view, the situation at hand is the one of sorrow, the agony of a lonely victim of violence. The writer takes us through this situation, thus: "Mafeng looked at herself and realized that her sweater and wrapper had been replaced by a long grey gown and cardigan. She screamed

again. The kind nurse did what she had to do by giving a dose of diazepam and Mafeng become calm when it entered her veins” (83).

Mostly, the psychological effect on the victims, if care is not taken is a life time one. Mafeng’s husband was brutally murdered before her own eyes, right beside her husband’s corpse she was violated sexually by the person she could consider as a family friend. Her children are displaced to God- knows where. For instance, we read thus:

She woke up after sometimes, this time in tears. She neither screamed nor shouted. Tears only rolled down her cheeks unremittingly. She made an effort to take in her surroundings, but her thought intruded and distorted her gaze. She began to deteriorate into an advanced stage of self-pity and the dam of tears burst loose again. All she wanted to do was cry. (88)

It is glaring that one of the evils of violence clashes is that which has to do with the displacement of family members and the inherent inhuman situation suffered by the victims of crisis in refugee camps. The displaced children of Mafeng, Kim and Jugu found themselves in a situation of helplessness when running towards their grandmother’s house. The horrid stench of blood, rot, death, fear, anger, and sadness filled the atmosphere (65). For instance, the description of the helpless situation of Kim and Jugu is made known to us, thus:

Pain, agony, and helplessness hit Kim like Tsunami. She did all she could do to curtail the wave of emotions cascading through her fragile hearth, “my chest! It is paining me”. The earth had soaked up blood of what was left, but that did not bother her as much as the wailing cries of the living over their dead loved ones created a cacophony of wailing sirens. She looked away and did not stop walking, but clench Jugu’s hand tightly. A distance of 40 minutes looked shorter, today Kim walked as fast as she could without straining Jugu’s chest, avoiding bodies and bodily parts that littered the ground. (67)

Looking at the situation described above, one can imagine the agony of the survivors of violence. These survivors in trying to reach a safer ground encountered one threat or the other on their way. We see how sounds of gunshots were still being heard when they were passing to their grandparent’s home. The sounds of gunshots made Kim to grab her brother’s hand threw him across her back. He held tight and enveloped her stomach with his feet. They ran for over thirty minutes. She held her brother tight on her back as she ran and did not look back or stop (70). The age of these children is a great thing for concern. Encountering this pandemonium at the age of less than 15, if care is not taken, could lead to psychological disarray. A dreaded situation that is described in one of the passages by the writer as “experienced that no one would pray to ever witness again” (20”. The journey to a safer ground took the children three days. In this journey, for instance, they have encountered many difficulties like sleeping in open places in the wild forest, coming across life threatening wild animals, harsh weather and so many dangers. This is clear as:

The path looked worn, like a track that was often used. This boosted Kim’s confidence, giving her assurance she need to move forward. They started the journey until the night falls. The night was completely silent. Kim could neither see nor make out

anything. This was the second night they had slept outside and she had slept sitting. Finally, the Merciful God brought them “help”. (102)

As it is with life, anything that has beginning must surely have an end. After three days of tumultuous experience from loneliness, sorrow, fear and pain, they have for the first time come to an IDP Camp where they feel safe, socialize and find food to eat and other social bearings. A beggar does not have a choice whatsoever, victims of violence under whatever come their way: material wise, food wise, health wise and whatever help humanitarian. For instance, Kim did not pause to think about how the people in the camp may respond to their presence. She was just happy to see human beings after three days in the bush. It is stated, thus:

People in the camp came closer to them and other forms of questioning. “Where did you come from?” Someone from behind asked Kim in Hausa “from there”. She pointed in the direction of the hill. Series of questions were asked by the people in the camp. At last, the camp leader ordered somebody to offer them something to drink. “Danjuma, they are children, at least offer them something to drink”. The camp leader (Madam Mati) said to the man who had been interrogating them. (104)

They were received and offered accommodation as the camp leader took them to one of the tents. She told them one experience or the other about the camp as expressed, thus:

“So you lost family ko?” The woman started. “Don’t worry, you are safe now. Everyone here has been through what are going through. You will be fine. I m sure you would be comfortable staying here for now. “What is your name?” “Kim” She answered. The woman furthered; “Do you have any relative?” Kim shook her head sadly. “Even outside Jos you have none?” Do you have her phone number or address?” “Nomi, don’t, Kim answered. (107-108)

The novel also takes us through a life in IDP Camps in times of crisis like this, where all sorts of inhuman activities take place. Diversion of relieve materials by the camp leaders, human trafficking and other forms of ill treatment meted out on human by fellow human beings. For instance, we see the case the situation as:

Kim woke up in the middle of the night to ease herself near Madam Mati’s tent, she heard a man say from the tent: Everything has been put in place. This new arrangement is going to slow us down”. It sounded much like Danjuma’s voice. Madam Mati’s voice sounded after; “slow us down with just two days”. This is my business, I brought you into it so will play by my rules.” Madam Mati sounded threatening. “I have contacted them. They need a little time to create space for the extra girl. Hr voice became calmer now. (109)

From the foregoing, we are made to understand that those that take care of people in refugee camps during crisis divert the items meant for the refugees, selling them or giving them out in exchange for money. The buyers use them for slavery, sex rituals, and hard labour in Nigeria and sometimes beyond the shores abroad. A heart tracking situation was when Kim who was promised save found herself, thus:

The following morning, a van was brought to the camp. The white van stood in the middle of the valley, covered in dust and fog. One of the gunmen that escorted the van

opened the door of the van and Danjuma threw Kim into the truck. “ If I hear one sound, even pim, I will cut your neck”. He climbed into the back of the van, and other two men closed the door. The van started moving, he added, “Look at me. Look at me very well, I m not joking with any of you. (198)

The perpetrators of these heinous crimes have numerous method of carrying their acts. Sometimes they beat the security intelligence and go undetected. As exposed in the novel, God’s intervention made it impossible for the human traffickers to go free. For instance, we seen how the soldiers intercepted them at check point on their way to Damaturu “wetin you carry?”. Asked, the soldiers. “Na yams! We dey carry am go Damaturu”. Danjuma replied. We have sigh of relief as the story takes us to how they were arrested. The arrest and the prosecution of these evil doers will solve the problem of human trafficking in our country if it continues like that, if not all, at least a part.

True Love

The situation of true love, natural love between partners is well treated by the author, Edify Yakusak in *After They Left*. We are being taken to the scene where against all odds, pain, despair, sorrow, danger and hazard, Mafeng thought it that she must give respect to the love of her life. She thought that her husband’s body must not be allowed to be rotten and eaten by vultures outside. Her husband’s corpse is one of the many that are left scattered in all the nooks and crannies of the area unattended to, for the past three days. This time, the destruction has been done, properties, lives of people of her neighborhood especially those of her dearest husband, Samuel whom she showed must be given a decent burial that befits any human. A burial not carried out by men (male) as tradition demands. Men are all killed, consumed by the violence. She has to do it all alone. For instance, the passage bellow takes us to the scenes;

She picked up a shovel and headed towards the side of the house. She never buried a person and had no idea on how deep or wide to dig, but she had to dig. She dug so deep she could not see the ground above her. She used a white bed sheet and wrapped Samuel up not minding the stench of decomposing husband. Rolled him gradually to the hole and at last cover him up. Despite her resolve not to cry, tears flowed down freely as she covered Samuel up. (163)

The horror, anguish, pain and destruction of people are exposed to be stylistically treated by Yakusak as the reader is exposed to the psychological trauma undergone by the victims of political violence. Samuel was killed by Askari without any justification, Mafeng was sexually abused and the mass killings in the town, the plight of the refugees in the Internally Displaced Persons’ camp under the supervision of Madam Mati. These and more are well captured in the novel where we see how these are being perpetrated without any action from the part of the authority to prevent it and even to come to the aid of the victims after the killers left.

A Critique of Edify Yakusak’s *after They Left*

After They Left elicited a visceral response in me; I read this book twice from the beginning to the end with my heart rate increasing at more than a few points. However,

Edify felt short of the mark several times in the book with her story telling. Referring to African traditional religions; they were described by one of the characters as mere idol worshipers with trees, animals, among others.” (28). She continued the concept of God that watched over them and protected them from evil. It’s claiming and interesting at the same time with the others alluding to the fact that this is why it was easy to switch to Christianity. Again, I found this not pleasing because the traditional religion had supreme beings that watched over the people and protected them from harm and danger. The people worshipped several deities and they kept them safe, so this narrative is not commendable.

Edify also demonstrated a penchant of springing things on the reader without any background, and not by way of a pleasant surprise but in a way that leaves you sort of confused and wondering where they came from. There was a hint at Bob’s abuse without any background or substance to it, it just came out of nowhere. Also, the mob action that opened the story should have lurked in the shadows for a bit before springing forth on the reader. It was a bit confusing. Again, the change in Mafeng waa fast, way too fast for a submissive wife who had accepted her fate in an unhappy marriage to a raging alcoholic. To me, she did not fit the profile then again despair and sadness can bring out the worst in us.

There were also several inconsistencies with the story; Bot apparently was a senator in his mid-30s but he had also been previously elected to the senate three times, so essentially, he was on his fourth term and still in his mid-30s (and the minimum age requirement for senate in Nigeria is 35 years). I get this is fiction and it is the writer’s prerogative to be imaginative but to me, characters should also be believable. There were other contradictions; on one hand, the birth of Mafeng’s daughter did not change the husband emotional attitude towards her and still down the page, the same husband became more affectionate after the birth which begs the question whether affection is not an expressed emotion?

Again, what are the odds that you as a family living in the city and hear wide spread of killings in the area and you never bothered to check on them? Even if had a fight with your sister? Essentially, Lydia didn’t care to check on her family until her sister called her? Nope, not buying it. Madam Mati fascinated me to no end; here was a woman who was profiting from the crises while pretending to do good work. On the other hand, she appeared to be providing a safe heaven for people who had flee there because of the crises and on another hand, she was selling off the young girls into sexual slavery as we see her keeping chunk of aid she received for herself. She reminds us of Joshua and his refugee centre in *Nairobi Heat* by Mukoma wa Ngugi and I cannot wrap my head around how people seek to profit from the misfortune of others, but there are so many things I don’t understand humans and their fate.

I wish Yakusak had provided a background to the crises that she about. I assume or get the idea that the novel wasn’t about the crises but more about the people it affected and how they deal with it. However, if someone who never lived in Nigeria or heard about Jos come to read this story will likely be confused.

III. Conclusion

The author makes sure the story is a well realized one, has employed a third person narrative technique as omniscient narrator by travelling through the character's mind to point a vivid picture of all events. The novel is being divided into ten chapters as the narrative structures. The language (diction) in after *They Left* is simple considering the sentences; where some instances of code-mixing are noticeable. For instance, the use expression, "come out or we go burn una to death inside here", "my friend, you no know me again?"(18). All are instances of pidgin, "ni kadai ne" (16), is an instance of the use Hausa Language. All these add colour to the story in no small measure. Another thing to put into consideration is the mood/tone which is that of sorrow with subdued emotion. It is evident that, it is a well realized story of violent situation. Hence, the research work concludes that violence of any kind is retrogressive bearing in mind the psychological effect. The novel is worth reading that reminds us of what is going on in our society or country and how we could all be easily consumed by our personal interest and that we are blind to the sufferings of others. She makes sure you see the horror and the devastation but most importantly she makes sure you see the people whose lives were changed forever.

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