

NINE

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Suicide and altruism in Ola Rotimi's Kurunmi

Abstract

Man's existence is characterized by his experience and consciousness. At the center of his/her, consciousness is intentionality, which holds the freedom to choose. Hence, the source of every man's action and inaction is rooted in his -intentionality of consciousness. Ultimately, consciousness is not just consciousness without intentionality. The play, Kurunmi has often been seen as a tragedy and also a satire built around history with the poise of postcolonial ideology. Such general classifications have limited the analyses of the play to thematic thoughts such as cultural clash, postcolonial disillusionment, and its understanding as an emblem of the Greek dramatic tradition. However, this study is not concerned with what has done over time. Instead, through a textual analysis of the play, it focuses on Suicide and altruism of Kurunmi. Consequently, this paper will examine the character, Kurunmi at Sartre's classification of the human level of Kurunmi and what types of suicide are portrayed in the play by the playwright. This research has carried out a study on suicide through investigative analysis and anchored on the Freud concept of Death Drive in psychoanalysis. This chapter concludes that Kurunmi's character traits in relation to his level of existence have an effect on his choice to commit suicide.

Key words: Consciousness, death drive, altruism, suicide, level of existence

Suicide et altruisme dans Kurunmi d'Ola Rotimi

Résumé

L'existence de l'homme est caractérisée par son expérience et sa conscience. Au centre de son / elle, la conscience est l'intentionnalité, qui détient la liberté de

choisir. Par conséquent, la source de l'action et de l'inaction de chaque homme est enracinée dans son "intentionnalité de conscience". En fin de compte, la conscience n'est pas seulement une conscience sans intentionnalité. La pièce Kurunmi a souvent été considérée comme une tragédie et aussi comme une satire construite autour de l'histoire avec l'équilibre de l'idéologie postcoloniale. Ces classifications générales ont limité les analyses de la pièce à des réflexions thématiques telles que le choc culturel, la désillusion postcoloniale et sa compréhension en tant qu'emblème de la tradition dramatique grecque. Cependant, cette étude ne s'intéresse pas à ce qui s'est fait au fil du temps. Au lieu de cela, à travers une analyse textuelle de la pièce, il se concentre sur le suicide et l'altruisme de Kurunmi. Par conséquent, cet article examinera le personnage, Kurunmi à la classification de Sartre du niveau humain de Kurunmi et quels types de suicide sont dépeints dans la pièce par le dramaturge. Cette recherche a mené une étude sur le suicide par l'analyse investigatrice et ancrée sur le concept freudien de pulsion de mort en psychanalyse. Ce chapitre conclut que les traits de caractère de Kurunmi par rapport à son niveau d'existence ont un effet sur son choix de se suicider.

Mots-clés: Conscience, Pulsion de mort, Altruisme, Suicide, Niveau d'existence

Introduction

Kurunmi is a tragic and satirical play with postcolonial ideology's finesse that is based on history. The studies of the play have been constrained by such broad categorizations to theme considerations like cultural conflict, postcolonial disillusionment, and its interpretation as a symbol of the Greek dramatic heritage. In contrast, to Sunday's (2016) examination of the traditionalism of the play, whose study unpacks the character of Kurunmi as a

traditionalist and epic hero, and Ikoye's (2016) investigation of suicide and how it is represented in the fictional text of Ola Rotimi from a religious perspective. I attempt to understand the act of suicide and altruism displayed by the character Kurunmi to question and understand the motivations for suicide, I will analyze the character Kurunmi in this study by utilizing a synthesis of Kierkegaard's classification of the human plane of life and Emile Durkheim's varieties of suicide.

In this study, I firstly contend that the distinguishing feature of suicides is that the act is undertaken consciously rather than by accident. Second, the agent is aware that, whether death is their intended outcome, their actions will result in death. As a result, human decisions and behavior directly correlate with human character attributes and level of existence. While I could examine the behavior of the act of suicide on the environment and the place of culture in the act of suicide, I have focused instead on the inward consciousness, behavior, motivations, and psychological reasoning behind the suicidal actor's decision. I argue that the performance of Kurunmi's decision to commit suicide was influenced by his personality or character qualities during his stage of existence.

While exploring the intersection of character, suicide, ego, and altruism, this study aims to engage psychoanalysis by uncovering the patterns of behavior that are suicidal and destructive, revealing the existence of human desire and how this desire is a gradual step toward death- a baby's first few steps in life is also his/her steps towards death. Part of my effort here restates that death drive exists in every being and every human action is birth out of internality, as no human action exists in a vacuum.

Psychoanalytic theory is referring to the theory of personality organization and the dynamic of personality development that guides psychoanalysis, a clinical method for treating psychopathology. My reading of psychoanalysis is grounded in

the idea of –The Death Drive. Freud’s theory submits that death is a biological drive which he called the death drive or –Thanatos, which suggests that humans have a death drive. Tyson (2006) opines that Freud attempted to account for the alarming degree of self-destructive behavior, he saw in individuals, who seemed bent on destroying themselves, psychologically.

Under the auspices of the qualitative research method. The primary data adopted in this study is Ola Rotimi’s *Kurunmi*. The secondary data adapted in this study include Wole Soyinka’s *Death and The king’s horsemen*. Other secondary data for this study include related literature on suicide, death, and psychoanalysis. This related literature informs the foundational knowledge and lay the premise for the discourse of this study. For a thorough analysis, this study is divided into three parts. The first part is an introduction, while the second part is on Suicide and Soren Kierkegaard. The third and last part is the analysis of the play with a focus on an in-depth study of Kurunmi titled Suicide and Altruism in *Kurunmi*.

Kurunmi's Suicide

Reading Edwin Robinson’s *Richard Cory*, thoughts and questions running - I was puzzled by the suicidal ending of Richard Cory, within a moment I had a reflective pause, aware of the sadness of the protagonist. I began to question the reasons and motivations for his action. Why a man like that could kill himself? - the so-called –envy of all. I could not place exactly from the poem what had ignited Cory’s suicide, I asked my students; why suicide. In submitting their various reasons certain facts were clear - that depression could result in suicide. Secondly, the internal psychological disorder can be traced to human behavioral patterns, behavioral there exists an imitative tendency toward suicide. I became apprehensive of suicidal tendency as a manifestation of humane behavior, hence my exploration of human freedom and consciousness. Ojoniyi (2) in his essay,

-Deconstructing the consciousness of suicide: confronting societal stereotypes and duplicities; believes that one of the dictums of the existential idea in response to the motivations for or the consciousness of suicide never uses their freedom to take away or terminate their freedom. However, this seems unrealistic when the rationality of choice is placed inversely with freedom and personality or human character. Ojoniyi (2) agrees that the consciousness and the reality of individuals' freedom as *'Being For-itself'* about *'Being for others'* are relative and fluid. This points out that freedom is unfortunately not absolute in a sense, that for as long as individuals cannot live in isolation from others, our freedom cannot be absolute.

Suicide is a term generally referred to as the intentional termination of one's own life. This has been an object of fundamental concern for people of all cultural backgrounds. The disposition of people to suicide itself, as well as the degree of concern surrounding it has varied greatly from one culture to another. Throughout history, suicide has evoked an astonishingly wide range of reactions such as bafflement, dismissal, heroic glorification, sympathy, anger, and moral or religious condemnation, but it is never uncontroversial. Suicide has, therefore, become an object of multidisciplinary scientific study, with sociology, anthropology, psychology, and psychiatry each providing insights into the phenomenon (Gvion and Apter 2012, Jamison 2011, Joiner 2010).

In this study, I take the term suicide more loosely as suicide does not only connote death but also a denial of one's freedom to choose. I focalize the idea of freedom in this section, as the link between character, suicide, ego, and altruism to establish the idea of choice. Freedom multiplies how suicidal behavior can be understood without leaving the choice of individuality.

While the studies on suicide offer the possibility that the act can be an expression of performative imitation. However, regardless

of the imitative nature, it is not outside the deliberate choice of the actor to re-enact the suicidal script. Robert (4) argues that Durkheim's argument, can hardly be called 'imitation', for it involves no act of genuine reproduction whatsoever; the second, the notes involves an act of reproduction, but one inspired both by the specific nature of the manners, customs, and practices in question and by the specific feelings of respect or sympathy they inspire, and thus one ill-described by the term 'imitation' but only in the third case where the act is a mere echo of the original, and subject to no cause outside of itself, is the term warranted. This does not seem to account for the consciousness of the human mind involved in the process of imitation, which this study aims at investigating, as the behavioral trait that informs the act of suicide. We are aware that all conscious acts are intentional and as individuals do not act or respond to events in a *tabula rasa*, there must be a drive (death drive). There are two fundamentally different modes of self-consciousness or self-awareness. The first is thinking or being conscious of an event in time and the second is being conscious that one is conscious or thinking about that event at any given time.

The sociological theory of Emile Durkheim identifies three types of suicide, namely, the egoistic, altruistic, and the anomic through which he tries to show that the incidence of suicide depends on the degree to which a person feels connected to, or integrated within society. Suicide was, therefore, more likely when an individual lacked close relationships or social bonds (Durkheim, 2013).

***Kurunmi* and Kierkegaard.**

Rotimi effectively explores history in *Kurunmi* to deconstruct existing colonial accounts of the war as well as foreground the fact that the 19th-century wars with their intrigues and consequent resolutions have a place in contemporary dialogue toward the achievement and understanding of the postcolonial discourse on war and peace generally in Africa and particularly in Nigeria.

Rotimi shares strong similarities with Kierkegaard as both explore the dynamics and the multiplicity of human character. Rotimi, through his theatrical reaction, creates characters that speak or address the everyday human existence and essence while Kierkegaard's existential interpretation of human behavior and actions offers insight into how they interact and manage their individual experiences.

Søren Aabye Kierkegaard was primarily a philosopher, who asked searching questions as to how best that precious and rare thing, a Human life, ought to be lived. He used the terms existential and existentialism in his philosophizing. His heartfelt view was that life, existence, in all its aspects was subjective and ambiguous. Philosophy was seen as an expression of an intensely and courageously examined individual existence - an expression that was, hopefully, free from illusion. In his view individuals must be prepared to defy the accepted practices of society, if this was necessary to their leading (what seemed to that person) a personally valid and meaningful life.

Kierkegaard proposed that the individual passed through three stages on the way to becoming a true self: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious. Each of these –stages on life's way or –level of existence represents competing views on life and as such potentially conflicts with one another. Kierkegaard takes the unusual step of having each stage of life described and represented by a different pseudonymous character.

The aesthetic is the world of pleasures and sensory experiences. Joy is what constitute the aesthetic life, and in order to fully experience the aesthetic life, one must strive to enhance those pleasures. One strategy to fight boredom is to increase one's aesthetic pleasures, and Kierkegaard suggested various ways to do this. Although the importance of aesthetics is acknowledged, it is also shown to be in its infancy. Aesthetes are primarily interested in their own happiness, and since aesthetic pleasure is so

transient, they lack a reliable foundation upon which to base their decisions. The aesthetic joys eventually run out, and one must start looking for ethical pleasures in their place. In fact, the ethical life provides some joys that the aesthetic life is unable to. We all know that doing things for others without personal reasons may actually be very gratifying, even though an aesthete can never behave simply in their best interest.

The societal norms that determine how a person should behave are known as ethics. Although ethics and aesthetics are not always at odds, when they are, ethics must win. The ethical life must come before the aesthetic life because it is founded on a set of clear-cut guidelines established for the common good. Even when leading a moral life, one can still enjoy life. Living an ethical life encourages people to act in ways that are beneficial to society and promote the peaceful coexistence of varied groups. A person can still experience pleasure while living an ethical life. An ethical life serves the purpose of allowing diverse people to coexist in harmony and causes individuals to act for the good of society. The ethical person considers the effect his or her actions will have on others and gives more weight to promoting social welfare than to achieving a personal gain. The ethical life also affords pleasures that the aesthetic does not. Aesthetics steers one away from consistency since repetition can lead to boredom. An ethical person doesn't simply enjoy things because they're novel but makes ethical choices because those choices evoke a higher set of principles. Kierkegaard uses marriage as an example of an ethical life choice. In marriage, the excitement of passion can quickly fade, leading to boredom and a diminishing of aesthetic pleasure. However, by consistently acting for the good of one's spouse, one learns that there are enjoyments beyond excitement.

In Aesthetic life, one is ruled by passion. In Ethical life, one is ruled by societal regulations. In Religious life, one is ruled by total faith in God. One can never be truly free, and this causes boredom, anxiety, and despair. True faith doesn't lead to freedom,

but it relieves the psychological effects of human existence. Kierkegaard claims that the only way to make life worthwhile is to embrace faith in God and that faith necessarily involves embracing the absurd. One has *faith* in God, but one cannot *believe* in God. We believe in things that we can prove, but we can only have faith in things that are beyond our understanding. For example, we believe in gravity: we feel its effects constantly, which we recognize as proof of gravity's existence. It makes no sense, though, to say we have *faith* in gravity since that would require the possibility that, someday, gravity would fail to materialize. Faith requires uncertainty, and thus we can have faith in God because God is beyond logic, beyond proof, and beyond reason. There's no rational evidence for God, but this is exactly what allows people to have faith in him.

Suicide and altruism

The play begins with the playwright presenting a traditional society that is close to a modernized or advanced industrial society in which a significant portion, or perhaps only the dominant elites, have already experienced, or see themselves as having experienced, a decisive rupture with the past and thus perceive themselves as no longer being traditional. Older customs are therefore mistakenly thought to be extinct, in decline, and irrelevant. The door to Kurunmi's Agbo'le, or compound, is opened. So, to speak, we see classic family home. Additionally, it shows that the family respects and firmly believes in its traditions and culture.

Character and suicidal behaviour

Kurunmi's quest to save a dying tradition is the dominant theme that brings about the conflict in the play. Kurunmi, from the exposition to the resolution of the play, shows defiance and obstinacy in his struggle to avoid tampering with his African (Yoruba) traditional beliefs.

In the first scene of the play, we see the prayer made against the enemies of Kurunmi, simultaneously, to those against tradition. We get to know that Kurunmi believes strongly in Yoruba tradition. We hear the prayers through the mouth of Abogunrin, this also shows the love and respect his people have for Kurunmi; Pg.11. Indirectly, we are also open to the love Kurunmi has for the traditional belief system of the Yoruba people Pg. 15-16. It is clear from the discussion how much Kurunmi values and cherishes tradition. Kurunmi is also seen as the Yoruba race's protector of culture and tradition. This play blatantly expresses religious strife. In a scenic description, Rotimi describes the conflict between the Christian religion and the Ijaiye's Egungun festival; however, the focus of this chapter is not on the playwright's adherence to historical sources or accounts, but rather on the playwright's portrayal of Kurunmi's personality traits and the play's level of existence and suicide types.

As a result, Kurunmi can be characterized as a conservative who opposes any break with tradition. He did not concur with the King's death request that Adelu is crowned king after his passing rather than the expected suicide that was required by tradition. The tradition of the Oyo town that after the king's death, his first son should execute a rite of passage to accompany the king to the world of the dead, along with several other things, is negated by the king's wish or, more accurately, order. Kurunmi passionately supports and promotes this practice. As he recounts his experience to his people at the meeting with the other party, it is possible to understand his adamant stance in Pg.16-17.

We then learn that the dramatist exploits his traditional beliefs as a representation of the Yoruba people. He thinks that hostile neo-colonial forces similar in greed and selfishness to both Alaafin Atiba's invasion and the chiefs have arrogated and damaged the traditional beliefs. Kurunmi, who has a duty as the military chief, understands the necessity to uphold the traditional values and culture of the populace, and he will not settle for anything less.

We see how committed Kurunmi is to upholding tradition in a dialogue between him and other chiefs. His people have this similar consciousness ingrained in them;

OLUYOLE: [hotly] We have come to warn you that as Are Ona Kankanfo, chief warrior of our Kingdom, you must do nothing rash against the kingdom. Yours is the sacred duty to protect and fight for our people, not to confound and rip them apart.

KURUNMI: Rip the kingdom apart? Tell that to yourself. Go tell OniIfe. And then go plead withAlaafin Atiba.

TIMI: You are the only important chief in the kingdom who opposes the Alaafin's wish.

KURUNMI: We have tradition. Whenever an Alaafin dies, his first son, that Alaafin's son, must also die with him. Is that not part of our tradition, or am I sick in the head?

OLUYOLE: It is so but—

KURUNMI: There has been no exception to the rule, and wealthy Atiba can't now corrupt us to grant him a special favor. Atiba dies, Adelu—WO!

TIMI: You forget that time passes and the ways of men must change with time.

KURUMI: We have a tradition, and tradition,
and tradition is tradition. Time
may pass but the laws of our
fathers, tested and hallowed by
the ways of men, live on. That is
the tradition. (Pg. 19-20)

From the foregoing, Kurunmi adheres to several traditional ideas and can be referred to as a fanatic. Fanaticism can therefore have its roots in the religious plane of life, which is fundamentally distinct from the ethical and is the greatest plane of existence one can reach by taking a leap of faith. Thus, Ojoniyi (7) asserts that "man must establish his integrity and morals" and that "this leap of faith is solidly anchored in metaphorical reality."

Kurunmi attempts to accomplish this by zealously upholding his traditional beliefs. A life of sacrifice is implied by this degree of character. It stems from the idea that when a circumstance happens, the ethical existence is no longer applicable, and a higher norm must be created. Significantly, Kurunmi changed character attributes from one level to another, moving from the ethical to the religious and then back to the aesthetical level. It follows that a person or character can switch or oscillate between the levels.

Consciousness and suicidal plan

Fundamentally, it can be said, from a critical point that, the reason for Kurunmi's strong stand for the WO! The WO is a cultural rite of passage practised by the old Oyo people, in the play The tradition to continue is because he has a dream and desire to sit on the throne of the Oyo kingdom and the only thing that stands against it is Adelu, who was expected according to tradition to perform the rite of passage WO! but is going to be crowned King. His act of rebellion also supports this, as we see in his dramatic dialogue;

OLUYOLE: Tradition must change
with man

KURUNMI: Go give your robes to your
slaves.

TIMI: why?

OLUYOLE: Very well then. We have
sworn to make Adelu king, and
king he must be.

KURUNMI: not over my people.

OLUYOLE: Ijaiye is part of Atiba's
kingdom. You are chief of Ijaiye
today because Alaafin Atiba, the
Supreme Head of the kingdom,
made you so.

TIMI: Adelu is his son, and once Adelu
is king he will be your king.

KURUNMI: Over my dead body.

KURUNMI: GO! Tell the world:
Kurunmi will never prostrate
himself to shoot a deer with a
father one morning, and the squat
with the son in the evening to shoot
a goose! Never ...never, I say n-e-
v-e-r! (Pg.20-21)

According to Jean Satires (6), "awareness is characterized by and is the source of nothingness." He uses the term "nothingness" to refer to non-being, which is the same as unactualized or unfulfilled intentionality. Furthermore, he argues that nothingness can exist intentionally as well as experientially. Both are unfulfilled aspirations and hopes. The tiny difference between the two is that although purposeful life consists of both realizable and unrealisable dreams that are not realized, experienced realities are

achievable possibilities but not actualized. In the end, possibilities and dreams are what haunt us and give our lives significance as beings in the world. Perhaps nothingness itself gives meaning to our lives. This explains why Kurunmi supports traditional ideas while pursuing his own aspirations and wishes. Kurunmi's conversation with Rev. Mann can be understood in this context as he subtly reveals his optimism toward the impending battle with the Oyo empire. Rev. Mann, who regrets the gospel's failure in Ijaiye as opposed to Ibadan, Oyo, and Abeokuta, views the arrival of the white man as the cause of the yearning for change in the traditional beliefs of the people (Pg. 35).

Existence and suicide

As can be seen from the foregoing, Kurunmi's optimism reveals his decision to enter the war and his level of religious existence. As a result, he must win the war at all costs because failure to do so would mean the end of his traditional beliefs because the conflict was primarily an ideological one. According to Sartre, The Being For- Itself has unrestricted freedom to evaluate and reinvent itself in its capacity as a conscious agent. He has a choice in its worth.

KURUNMI: I lead wrongly?

AMODU: You have become too powerful my lord.

FANYAKA: you lord it over everybody, over everything.

EPO: you are even a chief priest to all the gods; look at them, Sango, Ogun, Oya, Orunmila. All of them, the gods of our fathers are now your personal property.

AKIOLA: *****you pass it to your brother Popoola, who now owns the Egungun cult.

AMODU: You have grown too powerful,
my lord.
FANYAKA: Landed property,
Kurunmi
The farms,
Kurunmi.
The air we breathe,
Kurunmi.
The gods of our fathers,
Kurunmi (Pg.39)

According to historical precedents, the Alaafin continued to administer the Empire, but for defence, he relied on two important Yoruba towns: Ibadan and Ijaiye. From the foregoing, we may determine the level of authority and influence Kurunmi holds in the Oyo kingdom. The ruler of Ibadan was given the title of Bashorun, or Prime Minister of Oyo, while the ruler of Ijaiye, Kurunmi, was given the title of Are-Ona- Kankanfo, or Generalissimo, in acknowledgement of their prominence. As evidence of Kurunmi's monopoly on the situation and the wealth of Ijaiye, they had tremendous power at their disposal to rule their subjects and territory as they saw fit.

Additionally, given the foregoing dramatic discourse, it is clear why Kurunmi would go to war with Alaafin, Adelu gave their respective position of ultimate political and military authority [power corrupts utterly] as well as material wealth and social influence. He wouldn't want to submit to a young king by bowing. I submit with absolute certainty that Kurunmi is an egoistic character, i.e., he belongs to aesthetic existence, as we see the desire to amass more power, wealth, and influence for himself. As a result, the desire to go to war and prefer the suicidal act was simply an issue of Ego; because each character sees death as a remote possibility that is manifested in every individual, death drives instinct in every single one of them.

This can be further clarified by referring to the Yoruba traditional belief on death, which holds that passing into the afterlife—or the world of the dead—does not mark the end of a person's existence. Noteworthy of this is Rev Mann as he notes;

REV MANN: in the interest of peace, your greatness. If the purpose is in the interest of lasting peace, I think cutting my whole body up to achieve that peace is not too great a sacrifice to bear, your greatness.

This indicates a few things. First, suicidal ideation—which is defined as thoughts or actions intended to terminate one's life—is not a stereotype; rather, it is a product of basic human impulses that might be referred to as "death drive instincts." This also reveals Rev. Mann's personality attributes or level of existence; like Olunde in *Death and the King's Man*, he belongs to the religious existence, which directs towards a life of sacrifice.

Ego and altruism

Kurunmi asks himself whether he is right or wrong about the conflict, Act 4, Scene 1 introduces us to him in two different states of self-consciousness or self-awareness. The two discuss how man has an existential consciousness. The first is thinking about or being aware of a specific moment in time, and the second is being aware that one is aware of or thinking about that specific moment in time.

KURUNMI: Am I in the wrong in this war? Am I....?

{Pauses reflectively. Then with sudden concern}

Obviously, Kurunmi is aware of the conflict, that he has lost it, and that he erred by starting a battle with the Alaafin. As a result, when there is nothing left for our efforts to grasp, we become lost in emptiness. The slightest source of discouragement in this morally bewildering situation might result in desperate self-destructive resolutions, and a suicidal tendency can develop. Excessive individualism is the condition in which a person starts to rely more on themselves and less on the social, political, and religious groups they are a part of. They also stop recognizing any moral standards other than those based on their interests, which leads to egoistic suicide. As seen;

KURUNMI: When a leader of men has led his people to disaster, and what remains of his present life is but a shadow of his proud past, then it is time to be a leader no more. [Drinks poison from calabash bowl.] My curse upon you both, if my body stays here for the vultures of Ibadan to peck at. My curse upon you and upon your seed forever, if my skull serves as a drinking cup for Adelu. In the River Ose, where my honor was buried, there will you also bury my body. You will dam the river, and deep in the sand of its bed, you will hide my body.

Robert A. Jones argues that was our desire for immortality so great, that nothing in this life could satisfy us; however, we do not take pleasure in our temporal lives, and the pleasure we take is not only physical and individual, but also moral and social, both in their origin and in their purpose. This goes against the traditional

view that man, psychologically, cannot live without some transcendent or eternal reason beyond this life. The only conclusion that can be drawn from this is that Kurunmi committed egoistic suicide and that, as was already mentioned, he was an aesthetical character on the plane of reality. Even though this might be the case, Kurunmi's suicide can also be an example of altruistic suicide.

Since altruistic suicide requires them to entirely disregard their own needs and aspirations in favour of the norms and objectives of their group. They commit suicide to further the interests of others. It is possible to say that Kurunmi's suicide occurred in accordance with the folklore surrounding death. Kurunmi can be viewed in a similar light as an ethical figure whose conduct is dictated by socially acceptable standards and regulations and serves the interests of society. Finally, he considers the nature of the conflict he started and realizes it goes beyond what he had originally imagined. This also shows that he recognizes he has lost the conflict.

KURUNMI: A Cow

A cow gave birth to a fire.

She wanted to lick it but it burned her.

She wanted to leave it.

But she could not because it was her own...
her own child, her own... child

Conclusion

Simply said, there are echoes of both native and foreign cultures throughout Rotimi's plays. His plays are primarily treated using knowledge of African rituals, festivals, and myth-based dramaturgy as well as the Greek dramatic tradition. His plays' emphasis on themes like heroism, the search for identity, ethnic variety, tribal conflict, predestination, socio-political corruption, exploitation, and insecurity provide evidence of this. In addition to the classical techniques, Rotimi also uses indigenous aesthetic

tools to augment indigenous thematic portraitures, such as proverbs, divination rituals, incantations, songs, and praise chants. The themes, subjects, styles, and techniques of Rotimi are thus influenced by a synthesis of indigenous and classical culture. Cultural diversity appears frequently in his works because of this clever fusion of two separate traditions.

The debate up to this point has been devoted to a character study of Kurunmi from Ola Rotimi's *Kurunmi*. Although the play is a real war drama, and the focus of this discussion has been on Kurunmi's portrayal of suicide and altruism. This article concludes that Kurunmi, who belongs to the ethical level of existence, sought the common good of the society by adhering to accepted social norms and regulations, regardless of his pleasure-seeking and immediate gratification of self or ego and the mindset of "it is his duty" was what informed his choice to commit suicide. This type of suicide, as portrayed in the play, is known as an Altruistic suicide.

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