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Tradition and Modernity in Adebowale's *The Virgin and Out of His Mind*

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Abstract

Before the advent of the Europeans, African had a balanced society where every endeavour was guided by societal values and norms. This work negates the principle that city life is better than village life and also highlight on morality as opposing lyrics perceived in tradition and modernity. The adverse effects of European incursion into Africa had brought permissiveness into African society to an extent that things have fallen apart and the centre of our cherished values and norms can no longer hold. The conflict between tradition and modernity (conflicts with culture, attitudes, behaviour, values, tastes) displayed by the major characters from the canvas on which the author weaves his vision.

Introduction

The word 'tradition' comes from the Latin noun 'traditio', ("handing over") which derives from the verb tradere ("hand over, deliver"). Tradition corresponds closely to the Greek paradoses, which also comes from a verb (paradidomi) meaning "hand over". The concept of tradition thus applies to virtually all fields of culture, including sciences, arts and letter, education, law, politics and religion. (Eliade, 1987, p. 1). A belief or practice in any field of culture may be said to be a tradition to the extent that it is received from the hands, lips, or examples of others prior to the generation that now puts it to use and there is conscious intention of further transmission without substantial change. Hence, as a source of

knowledge, tradition purports and embodies a fixed truth from an authoritative source.

On the other hand, modernity is a correlative term, it implies what is new as opposed to what is ancient, what is an innovation as opposed to what is traditional or handed down. It also represents cultural and social attitudes or programs dedicated to supporting what is perceived as modern. It involves a commitment to support the tenets of the “new” in the face of critics, opponents and detractors. In this, it shows the commitment to modernization, political and economic aspects of society in support of the “new”.

To this point, modernity has brought so many changes to the old tenets of the African people especially in marriage and family life, which will be discussed below:

Marriage Institution in Africa

Marriage in Africa is a union between two people of the opposite sex, which is institutionalized by the payment of bride wealth or by religious or civil ceremonies. The parties are entitled to certain rights and have responsibilities to each other. Marriage, especially in Africa, is meant primarily for the procreation of children, though other marriage is meant to consolidate wealth, create security over property or provide companionship for the couple. In Africa, companionship has only recently become a major reason for marriage; especially in urban areas where partners often select their own spouse. Parents arranged most marriages, and even today most children seek permission before marriage to the person of their choice.

To buttress the point above, the African system of marriage allowed girls to be betrothed before their first menstruation. This was done through a verbal promise between parents. Until she menstruated, the girl continued to meet young people and to perform her daily tasks. In some African communities, at first menstruation, she was secluded and barred from all social interactions with males (Dupire, 1963, p. 4).

In some cultures, the girl was ‘captured’ by one of her groom’s brothers, and taken reluctantly as her family waged a mock struggle to keep her. When she arrived at her parents-in-law’s compound, she was given a mat to sleep on, until she gave birth. In the last stage of pregnancy, she returned home to her parents to give birth and remained until the child was about two years old. Then, when the husband sent for her, she returned to his village and was provided with a proper house and was for the first time treated as a woman and accepted as a true wife (Dupire, 1963, p. 6).

From the foregoing, one of the more misleading stereotypes in the African family is that one ceremony is not enough to celebrate an African marriage. There are many ceremonies that characterize the marriage process over time, in contrast with the western practice of having only one ceremony in a matter of an hour or less to formalize relationship between two individuals. Thus, in terms of traditional African marriage, the formalization of the marriage was based on a series of interrelated ceremonies. In Africa, a single ceremony has been adopted in the last fifty years, as more couples marry through church services or through a civil ceremony (Onyango, 1984, p. 14).

Family Management in Africa

Furthermore, the issue of African Family problems cannot be overemphasized. Every community has a way of handling problems that affect the family and that are likely to lead to its dissolution. Nonetheless, there were various techniques that are widely used in some parts of Africa to help solve some of the family problems. For example, avoidance or jokes were widely used in Africa mainly to prevent problems occurring among family members. In situations where girls and boys were mature enough to have babies, they were not allowed to be alone with opposite sex, even their parents. The rules were

even stricter once they get married.

Neither of the married spouses was allowed to interact with their parents-in-law. In some cultures, they were not allowed even to shake hands. For example, in some cultures, it was taboo for a daughter-in-law to open the door to her parents-in-law only on special occasions. If the parents wished to talk to one of the couples, messages might be sent through the daughter or the son. Such arrangements helped to reduce the conflict that would have arisen had the parties been allowed to interact freely. However, with colonization, western techniques of handling family problems have intruded into Africa, especially among couples living in the urban areas. The first western method to be introduced was counselling. Individuals with family problems head for counselling centres for help. Counselling is mostly done by priest and missionaries trained in marriage counselling and guidance in the West.

More so, moderate display of affection is one of the features of African family life. Whether in front of friends, relatives, or children, husband and wife are not supposed to express their affection for each other. In a way, affection is expressed through respect and caring for each other's needs in subtle ways. Contrarily, holding hands or kissing, brought by modernity is highly frowned at.

In addition, another feature of the African family is the importance of children. Children were so important that husbands were allowed to marry a number of wives to guard against being childless. Even today a childless marriage is thought of as a troublesome one since marriage seems meaningless without children. The artificial means of family planning have rubbished long period of abstinence from sexual relationships to ensure proper breast-feeding and the health of children. Among the East African ethnic groups, it was believed that sexual intercourse spoiled the milk and hence harmed the child (Kabwegyere, 1977, p. 206).

In Yoruba society, the duration of post-partum sexual abstinence was normally three years. It was common for the wife to return to her family of origin during this period (Orubuloye, 1981a, p. 57). Thus, children were spaced through such practices as abstinence and physical separation of husband and wife. It was shown in Yogo recently that sixty-six percent of the women interviewed were still willing to observe a 1 to 3-year period of abstinence (Kumekpor, 1970, p. 15). Most women do not use any artificial means to limit the number of children. In Ibadan, for example, only seven per cent of the married women had intentionally and successfully restricted fertility to six births or less (Caldwell, 1977, p. 95).

Large numbers of children are highly valued, and family planning is antithetical to the common notion that children are a gift from God. Traditional abstinence was intended to ensure the health of children but not to reduce the number of children. Even the urban elite in place like Ife, Oyo and Lagos has a family size of between 4 and 6 children. Furthermore, "Olusanya has indicated that fertility increase" with urban residence and with education among the Yoruba (Adepoju, 1988, pp. 137-38).

In the light of the above, we can see that before the advent of western civilization, Africa had a cohesive society where every endeavour was guided by societal values and norms. The advent of foreign value during the 19th century was a catalyst that served as the beginning of the demise of the cohesive values that were inherent in the society. The adverse effect of western incursion into Africa has brought confusion into African society to an extent that things have fallen apart and the centre of our cherished values and norms can no longer hold as Achebe would describe it.

In conclusion, the new system is always commonly adopted in such a way that the African undertakings are either condemned or relegated to the background or even destroyed. The elite class feels ashamed of it. African culture and easily accept what the white man has brought in replacement. This attitude arose the attention of many scholars to write copiously on the issue of tradition and modernity on

African Literature. Tradition and modernity have two different perspectives and writers like Wole Soyinka, Gabriel Okpara, Ngugi Wa Thiongo, Chinua Achebe, Mariama Ba, Zulu Sofola, Cyprian Ekwensi, Camara Laye, Okot p'Bitek, Olu Obafemi and host of others like Bayo Adebowale lament. The breakdown of communal spirit in African life and vulnerability of African culture. It is this loss of communal values that motivates some modern African novelists to write on African values. That is done purposely to convey to their readers the problems caused by the advent of the Europeans.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine tradition and modernity in Bayo Adebowale's *The Virgin and Out of His mind*. It will also negate the principle that city life is better than village life. It will afford its readers to know the stand of Adebowale on tradition and modernity. This work will highlight on morality as oppositely perceived in tradition and modernity.

Limitation of the Study

This work will be limited to the conflict between tradition and modernity in Bayo Adebowale's *The Virgin and Out of His Mind*.

This research is a socio-culturally based, and I will use *The Virgin and Out of His Mind* by Bayo Adebowale. Thus, the researcher will rely basically on a thorough reading of the texts; the study will entail textual analysis through adequate consultation of relevant books, journals, and magazines. Thus, the use of library becomes a matter of necessity. The work will be divided into four chapters. Chapter one will be a general introduction to the study, purpose of the study, limitation of the study, chapter two will be literature review, chapter three will focus on tradition and modernity in the two novels while chapter four will be for the conclusion and bibliography.

Review of Related Literature

The clash between tradition and modernity has aroused the consciousness of some African writers. Tradition and modernity have different perspectives and this has made some writers to focus on the negative effect of the colonial rule such as the breakdown of communal Africa life and the vulnerability of African culture. It is this loss of communal values that motivate some modern African novelists to write. This is done purposely to convey to their readers, the problems caused by the advent of the Europeans. The two books I am using in this essay have been reviewed by some scholars (*The Virgin and Out of His Mind*).

Sam Adesua (1985) holds tenaciously to the African way of life. According to him before the advent of the Europeans, our forefathers used to have a set of rules which served as a means of governing their society. He explains the African legal system as such that is anybody is found guilty of any offence; such an offender will not go scot-free but rather be punished under the law. If that is not done, the tendency is for the gods to be offended. He also lays emphasis on the city life and rural life. He debunks the notion of city life by looking at the evils inherent therein. His opposition goes to Dauda who represents city life in the novel. He accuses him of polluting the life of a rural girl who does not know anything. Dauda brings his "Saturday Night Power", to deceive Labake thereby making her lose her virtue. To Sam Adesua, the Whitman is the devil who visits a village where peace and harmony is reigning only to disrupt the peaceful co-existence. He exemplified by the power, which is used luring Awero? In addition, Andrew Ehinwenwa does not condemn modernism per se but he tries as much as possible to call the attention of some conscious African people to awake from their slumber by not being carried away with the advent of modernization.

To him, modernity is significant and if we say we have not achieved so many things from modernity,

then we are deceiving ourselves. In short, it is because of modernity that people could walk or travel to a long distance by boarding vehicles, aircraft and what have you. In spite of all these, we should not say we are living in a better environment thereby throwing our long-cherished tradition over-board. He is of the opinion that we should try as much as possible to blend the two. i.e. a little tradition and a bit modernity. He appears to be a preacher of the two theories who does not see anything wrong in modernization and at the same time tradition itself.

Joseph Damilola (1987, p. 2) asserted in his review of *Out of His Mind* that: “This is a piece of fiction that draws one to varying states- sympathy, expectation, anxiety, sadness and happiness as the author creates characters who are realistic and weaves circumstances around them that one emphasized with one.” He further opined that the novel relates to contemporary Nigeria and her immediate environment. He states that the picture of current times is painted lucidly, hard as they are. He also said that the novel: “Signal his arrival as a writer to watch out for. He Knows the way of his people.” He concluded that the book itself is a work of fiction and the contemporary nature of this piece is not mistakable to the extent that readers themselves see both Nigeria and Nigerians caught in a time of hardship, the tendency is for the weak ones to crumble under the weight of any form of hardship as Alamu does in the novel.

In short, Alamu is almost mad. But then, his problems seem quite common these days when every other person loses a job by the minute. Thus: “The author has overplayed Alamu’s problems by making it look larger than life. Why not, for instance, try his hands on some other ventures while pursuing his court case.”

Ehinwenwa went further, in his review, to assert that Bayo Adebawale, however, makes up for Alamu’s weak characterization by building a stronger one in Labake, his wife. To him, Labake is more emotionally stable though her matrimonial problems are enough to destabilize her.

Also, Damilola (1987) was sceptical about modernity simply because of how things are going on in the society. The economic, political, social, religious, educational systems of the country are not stable at all. If not for ethnic chauvinism and nepotism, how can someone be fired for no just cause. To him, this was not so before the advent of the Europeans; the environment and the community were peaceful.

He further asserted that in the olden days, the issue of egotism was not known then. Everybody tried as much as possible to be his/her brother’s keeper; love then was supreme. Nobody was envious of their neighbours.

Furthermore, Odunlade reviewed the madness of Alamu as the consequences of individualistic was of life. If he were to reveal what really happened to him to his family or at least to his neighbours, things would not have reached a critical stage, he observed he does not in any way support the idea of the European was of individualism.

He further pointed out that things would have been better in Alamu’s family had it mean he does not distance himself from the family. To him, the role family members play in one’s life goes a long way. He frowns at a life of my family and I alone. He believes that since Alamu and Labake’s marriage is not conducted in their own hand so as to be blessed by their parents that is why they encounter series of problems in the family.

He tried as much as possible to debunk the notion of individualism, concept of western education and marriage in a foreign land. His idea goes to show that there is no greener pasture anywhere but rather in one’s own soil. He commends Bayo Adebawale as follows:

Without mincing words, Adebawale, the author of *Out of His Mind*, has presented in his short but action-packed novel, the universe of a man who is haunted by a self-

imposed solitude and an unjust, rotten and inconsiderable social system and a turbulent family report.

He concluded by rebuking those who travel abroad to watch out for the temptation of giving too much attention to ephemeral things.

Besides, Ogunsiji (1990) also reviewed the book by looking at the gripping ordeals of a family, which is nearly broken, but for the help of a lawyer, family-friend, Adio. He saw this as a taboo to the African way of life. Instead of settling the conflict between the two couples in the community, they use a lawyer who does not know anything. By so doing, they neglect the tradition. He further asserted that the modern world itself does not recognize dedication, dignity and hardworking. He compares Alamu's victory in the novel to the victory of every diligent worker who is today being exploited and oppressed. He concluded:

The success of Bayo Adebowale in this novel does not end with the relevance of the story to the contemporary Nigeria situation. Like his first novel. *The Virgin, Out of His Mind* shows Bayo Adebowale as a conscious artist who stylistically weaves the fabrics of his stories into psycho-socio-philosophical profundities?

Moreso, Abana George (1987) also described the novel thus: "Undoubtedly, this is a timely novel and so relevant to the prevailing socio-economic situation not only here in Nigeria but in all other parts of Africa and the entire world." He opined that the book is very interesting, entertaining and well written. The author has fully established himself as a committed writer to reckon with, one with plenty of grace and style. He, recommends the novel to the Nigerian working class group as well as the general reading public.

Biography of the Author

Bayo Adebowale is a Nigerian from Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State. He was born on 6th June 1944. He attended St. Andrews Primary School, Kuti and St. Andrews School Bamigbola (Ibadan district for his primary school education between 1950 and 1955. He went to City Council Modern School, Aperin for his Modern School Education from 1956 to 1958.

He later enrolled at St. Peter's College Ilesa for his Grade III Teacher' certificate in 1960/1961. Thereafter, he began a teaching career. After teaching for six years, he went back to Baptist College, Ede, between 1976 and 1978 for his Grade II Teachers' certificate. He also attended the University of Ibadan to study English between 1971 and 1975. He was a tutor at Augustine's College Lafia; he also served as an education officer at Government Technical College, Oyo. He went for a Diploma in Applied Linguistics (1976) and a Master's Degree in English at the University of Ibadan in (1978). In 1997, the University of Ilorin awarded him a Doctorate Degree. He has written two novels- *The Virgin* and *Out of His Mind*. Besides, he has written volumes of short stories and won awards for them. His first novel, *The Virgin* was published in 1985. In it, he shows his interest in traditional culture. His second novel, *Out of His Mind* was published in 1987. He established the first rural-community based African Heritage Research Library in Ila-Orangun which was later transferred to Adeyipo village, in Ibadan district.

Background to the Two Works

The Virgin

The story is about a young seemingly, innocent naïve girl of the village- Awero – who shamed her parents – she betrayed their trust, as she prepared for her wedding. The culture of her society demanded

that she arrived in her husband's house on the wedding day pure and chaste. Dauda, a city guy came from town into the village to defile Awero, robbing her of innocence and chastity, dishonours and shame await her on the wedding day. Awero's husband, Odejimi, discovered to his utter amazement that his wife has arrived in his house with 'broken pot' and this act was met with condemnation from Odejimi and his people. Consequently, Awero became a Daughter of Shame. And finally, an unheard type of was developed between Awero and Odejimi's people.

Out of His Mind

The novel portrays the struggle in the protagonist, Alamu, to make a good future which led him to leave the shores of his country for Britain and eventually returned as a 'Book-man' – a qualified Accountant and got a job as an Accountant at Banjoks Company. His life style with pseudo-aristocratic soon got crumbled as a result of drastic change in the socio-economic situation of the country resulting in the devaluation of the Nation's Currency. Hunger then became psychologically and physically dislodged. He is now a changed man-he turns to a chain-smoker, a drunkard and now lives a solitary and hallucinatory life. Because of his Spartan attitude to life, Alamu is able to come out of the mess.

Tradition and Modernity: Social Laws

The Virgin depicts a typical African way of giving birth and child nurturing between Awero and Odejimi. A woman in labour is not taken to any hospital before she can deliver her baby. She is rather being taken care of by the mother-in-law. Also, the way in which the mother will breast feed the baby will be natural, not the artificial means of breastfeeding. In *The Virgin*, for instance, Awero and Odejimi really portray the African way of childbirth and child development. Unlike Alamu and Labake in *Out of His Mind* the reverse is the case. Owing to their sophistication while abroad, they gave birth in the hospital where nurses attended to them. Everything they used appear to be modern. Also, how they breast-feed their child is highly artificial. They do not in any way give their child the natural milk that flows from the breast but rather the artificial canned or tinned milk. Thus:

This girl who looked so sophisticated and so sharp like the point of a needle; this girl whose lips never closed-a human talking; this girl who read so much and was consequently so swollen headed.... Alamu's people wanted for their son, a woman whose breasts the baby would be allowed to suck with relish and satisfaction, at all times; a woman whose back the baby would be allowed to mount and beat lovingly with its tiny fingers under the secure grip of the 'oja' and 'iro' a woman who herself would be able to sing the traditional lullaby in sonorous voice to send the baby to sound sleep... (Adebowale, 1987, p. 31)

From the above quotation, we can see tradition and modernity clashing or conflicting. Awero and Odejimi represent the set of couple who will breast-feed their baby with natural milk from the breast, carry their baby 'Oja' and 'Iro' sing lullaby in order to lull their baby to sleep. On the contrary, Labake and Alamu will rather give artificial milk to their baby; carry their baby on their hand and what have you

Furthermore, in the traditional society, courtship means so much to people in the sense that, there must be an intermediary who will play a prominent role in the relationship between a man and a woman since there is suppose not to be direct communication. The intermediary is all-seeking and all- knowing, on him depended the success of failure of the love affair.

Awero and Odejimi could be seen as a perfect example of African tradition. When they were to get married, Korede plays a crucial role; he was their intermediary. He was always reporting to Odejimi to

know what was at hand, for him to lose Awero, he has to be fast in his actions. He served as an informant especially to the man and he saw that everything went on well. This could be seen in Odejimi's action when he notices Lapade's reaction: "Lapade was always around in the evenings, and he's desperate, we have to watch out. Awero herself did not want to see me any longer, she was always sad each time it appeared" (Adebowale, 1985, p. 66).

Contrary to this, Labake and Alamu do not in any way have any intermediate before they get married. They do not even bother to find out anything about themselves. Their meeting was in London, where they fall in love and on their return to Nigeria, they get married.

Besides, marriage constitutes an important aspect of culture in Africa, every man or woman looks forward to this, only a few goes through life without marrying. Marriage in African culture is a sacred and log ceremonial institution where a girl will leave all her family members and live with her husband permanently. For a girl to agree is the beginning of the whole matter. After she has consented, the man now seeks approval of the girls' parents; then he can pay visits until a man has paid the bride price on a girl, she has no right to welcome any male visitor. In the relationship between Awero and Odejimi this tradition is respected. But the same cannot be said of Labake Alamu's marriage. In the case of Labake and Alamu, no parents are seen. They only meet each other in London and on getting to Nigeria, they get married. Another aspect that is foreign to Africa is the fact that the latter couple get wedded in the court.

In the traditional African setting, tradition and customs are to serious issues; this is why Awero's loss of virginity is seen as an offence that is beyond redemption because the value attached to virginity is cherished dearly. It is the basis for the sanctity of marriage as an institution.

That was the way of the innocent girl-virgin, all untouched, pure, chaste, modest and so bashful. The village lovers wouldn't speak looking at each other's eyes.... Holding hands was a taboo. They must not have intimate knowledge of each other at the initial stage.... (Adebowale, 1985. p. 9).

This is what is expected from every unmarried youth in the traditional society. Therefore, it is an abomination, or a taboo for any girl not to be a virgin. When Odejimi discovers that Awero has lost her virginity, he deems it fit to call the attention of the people outside waiting to see the soaked white handkerchief in blood. Contrary to this, Labake and Alamu do not even worry at all whether the former is a virgin or not. What they are concerned about is the love they have for each other.

In addition, there are dresses and make-up used traditionally which are naturally cherished by the people of the village, like the expensive 'Sanyan' cloth, the 'Iyun bead' 'Osun' to decorate the body and the fragrant 'laali' which all has a natural odour and with natural ingredient. All these are used for Awero on her wedding day.

.... Her friends assisted her in the selection of Sanyan clothes now, alaari dress next, then 'aran' dress and yet Onjawu materialAwero's neck was decorated with 'Iyun' Beads and lips also with 'Lagidigba' beads for her skin, the smooth 'Osun' and the dark 'Laali' for her beautiful legs.... (Adebowale, 1985, p. 89).

Unlike Labake and Alamu, modern dressed and make-up are used which are artificially cherished by the people of the town, like the expensive imported wedding gown, the necklace which are used as adornment for Labake on her wedding day. Here, we can see the clash of tradition and modernity, between the locally made wedding cloth and the imported wedding gown.

Tradition and Modernity: Social Interaction

First and foremost, the marriage between Awero and Odejimi extends beyond personal affairs; it is communal in nature. This is evident in how Odejimi wants to have the first carnal knowledge with Awero so as to know whether she is a virgin or not. When he discovers that Awero has lost her virginity, he does not hesitate to bring the news to the notice of the community, which makes him, vow to deal with Dauda who has brought shame to his wife. Alamu on the other hand is so secretive that he keeps the sad news of his sack away even from his wife. He has been so westernized that he greets his neighbours by just winking grinning, nodding- or just hissing at them) p. 6). Almu does this because he feels that he is superior to his neighbours who are illiterate and who know next to nothing. He is a 'book man' who had spent the better part of his life in the country of the Whiteman (p.5). It is possible that if Alamu has confided in his local people, he would have avoided the psychological plight arising from his sack, but due to his individualistic tendency, he faces the trauma of joblessness alone.

Furthermore, in the traditional African setting, the husband is considered to be the head of the family. He is seen as the commander and the breadwinner of that family. Awero and Odejimi project this element as shown below:

Her husband would issue out all these instructions and she had to obey. The husband used to be the lord and master of the matrimonial home, the absolute controller, the chief commander, the iron in the family who took major decisions imposing his will. He threw his weight- all knowing and all-seeking.... (Adebowale, 1985, p. 11).

From the above assertion, we see that a typical African woman like Awero, must accord respect to her husband irrespective of what the husband might have done consciously or unconsciously. Contrary to this, Alamu and Labake do not seem to follow this trend but rather deviate from the tradition. Instead of Labake to respect her husband as the head of the family, she did not. This was evident when Alamu kept away his financial plight from his wife. For the fact that Labake has been westernized and does not have a shock absorber, she deems it fit to say that her husband is mad. This eventually leads her matrimonial home in disarray. In the traditional way of life, this is a taboo but since the westernized couples do not embrace the traditional values, they don't see anything bad in it.

More so, the education of the young ones in a traditional setting is informal. Children are taught how to behave morally at home and within the society at large, female children are trained on how to cook, how to behave to their in-laws and how to take good care of their husbands. This could be seen vividly when Awero's wedding day was getting nearer, her mother advised her saying that:

You should learn to prepare even better dishes than that for Odejimi when you finally come together as husband and wife. A man needs good food, consideration and devotion. Handle him with extreme care and caution, pet him and play with him... (Adebowale 1985, p. 38)

The advice was not limited to the mother alone; her father also says:

Your husband's food must never be late; it should be neat inside a clean pot... you must be very careful not to nag or scold him steer clear of jealousy.... Men hate women with angry tongue and too jealous a heart... (Adebowale, 1985, p. 39).

In view of the above, the education of the young ones in a modern setting is formal. Children are not taught how to behave morally at home and within the society at large. Labake and Alamu are different in many ways. What she does is to get a housemaid that will be doing the cooking. At times, she does not respect her in-laws, mama as a case study. Consequently, when Awero is sent back from her husband's place, it is the elder who deliberate on the matter and gave their conclusion: "Later in the

evening, the elders met for a crucial talk under the Oden tree in the centre of the village... it was a deep and intimate discussion in a bold attempt to restore honour and respectability” (Adebowale, 1985, p. 116).

Going by this quotation, Awero and Odejimi resolve their matters in a communal way by consulting the elders. This really shows how the community plays a greater role on the lives of its people in such an interactive manner. Unlike Labake and Alamu, individualism is the order of the day. When Labake wants to divorce her husband, she takes it too personal by going to a lawyer, Adio:

... Labake, Mama is old, she belongs to a different generation- old fashioned, traditional and superstitious... what Mama did is exactly what my own old mother would have done too in a similar circumstance. You should know all these Labake. My friend couldn't have approved of Mama's stand... (Adebowale, 1987, p. 124)

Alamu and Labake are too individualistic by going to consult a lawyer who will solve their matrimonial or marital problem for them. This is not the case between Awero and Odejimi. A clash of culture is portrayed in these actions.

Tradition and Modernity: Social Security

In the case of Awero, when she flouts the long-cherished norms and values of their tradition by losing her virginity, she has to face the wrath of society or tradition for her misdemeanor. When Odejimi meets his wife with her 'purity' broken, it leads to personal agony for Awero, and distorts the peaceful relationship between the two villages of Orita and Agbede. In the case of Labake and Alamu, the government is less concerned with anything that happens to the citizenry. What the government is concerned about is that of the rule of law. If the rule of law is not violated, Alamu goes on to sell most of his belongings, he sells the fan, fridge and television set under the pretext that they are faulty and they have been taken for repairs.

In fact, to cap it all, Alamu disposes off the Peugeot car and comes home in a ramshackle Volkswagen Beetle car. Labake is shocked to see her husband in this type of car: “Whose car is this Alamu? She asked utterly perplexed. Our car, our new car Labake’ replied Alamu: I should have let you know earlier...” (Adebowale, 1987:39)

From the foregoing, in the traditional African setting, the loss of Awero’s virginity is seen as an offence that beyond pardon because the value of virginity is cherished dearly. As a result of this, when the two villages cannot reach a conclusion, it leads to disorder, confusion and anarchy. These result from the battle between Orita and Agbede villages. Unlike, Alamu when he sells his belongings, the government is not affected in anyway.

Besides, the peaceful and soothing night time at Orita Elerin district and Agbede community where Awero and Odejimi hail from is a time when children play about with their age mates, elders who retire from the day’s work rest their ribs on their mats or go to neighbours to check on their welfare. It is also a period when spirits move about the groves and birds of different kinds chirrup and chase about their preys. Thus: “The cool night breeze had a soothing effect on everything in the little village of Orita in Elerin district. For a brief period of time, there was quiet. There was tranquility...” (Adebowale, 1985, p. 11).

Night time in the village is always peaceful, full of peaceful activities especially moonlight plays by children and story-telling by adults to children either for amusement or for moral training. Unlike Labake and Alamu who hail from the city and city is known for its adulteration, chaos, havocs, thuggery and other vices, in short, Bayo Adebowale describes the city to a sprawling one:

The city sprawled out of miles around Alamu in a dusty mass of corrugated iron roofs- 'broken Chuna in the sum' – as the poet would say... The city-hall building stood in all its splendor on the peak of the high Mapo hill.... (Adebowale, 1987, p. 2).

In the light of the above, the security of Labake and Alamu's area is the sprawling one. Here, the community dictates the security of the formal while the government is the dictator of the latter. Whether there is peace and security of lives and property, government is less concerned but if there is no peace and security of lives and property in the community, the elders will find a better way of maintaining peaceful co-existence. Tradition is a belief, custom, principle of standard of conduct passed from generation to generation. It is tied up with situations which are subject to change. Civilization brought about modernization, this leads to advancement, and this has created effects on the life of individuals and the society in general. Modernity makes the people of the city to be cunning and deceptive; it makes them to be erratic.

Bayo Adebowale belongs to the modern African novelists whose major pre-occupation is to embrace African tradition and to expose the ills prevailing in our society today, which are due to the influence of western civilization. He is drawing our attention to the changing nature of life in the urban areas and its consequences on the African youths of today, who have been fascinated by the city life, the so-called civilization and forgetting the traditional customs and value in African societies. Traditionalism and modernism are two opposing philosophies with one trying to dominate the other and the struggle will persist as long as life is not static-we are living in a changing world; hence constant adjustment is desirable.

Conclusion

This essay has studied the conflict between tradition and modernity in Bayo Adebowale's *The Virgin and Out of His Mind*. There has been a careful and analytical survey of the issue. An attempt has also been made to examine some fundamental cultural values, before the advent of Western civilization and the various conflicts that sprang up as a result of the two cultures coming into contact. It has also given the general introduction to the work and has further attempted a detailed study of the tradition and modernization on the major characteristics in the novel. Also, Africans have been cautioned on how to embrace new ideas, because it might be accompanied by evil side effect, which may be detrimental to modesty and ethics. Affirming all that is good in Africa culture in order to teach morals that will help to regulate society more effectively can only solve these problems.

From our findings, we can see that virtually all the present matrimonial problems in homes can be traced to the fact that one's wife has lost her virginity before the wedding day. If one were a virgin, then there would be so much trust on the side of the husband in his wife. Awero loses her virginity before the wedding day; therefore, the trust Odejimi has in her was betrayed and will not trust her again; Odejimi concludes without bothering to know what led her into the act. Living by this assertion, we can see that modernization has really wiped out Africa's long cherished and value norms and traditions but the fact here is that we should not throw our tradition overboard but try to blend the two together i.e. a bit of tradition and a little of modernity. By so doing, our value custom will not be forgotten and the Europeans will not have the final say, over our lives. This work is concluded by presenting to us the degree of pollution of the African ways of life especially the marriage system that cannot be salvaged. We have to accept the fact that modernism has eroded the strength of 'I am my brother's keeper and, in its place, it has brought me and my wife and children'. And this we have to accept. If we fail, there would be confusion and chaos.

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