Ku Nseke and Ku Mpèmba: The Dikènga Theory as Evinced Through Content and Function of Akan Ananse Stories and Yorùbá Ìjàpá Tales

Obádélé Kambon

Senior Research Fellow, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana
Author email: obkambon@staff.ug.edu.gh

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to highlight parallels between Akan Ananse stories and Yorùbá Ìjàpá tales. In this article, connections are made with regard to function and content of Akan and Yorùbá stories using Dikenga, the cosmogram of the Bakôngo, as a tool for oral literary analysis revealing intertextual parallels (O_ Kambon, 2017). We highlight six (6) sets of stories common to both Akan and Yorùbá people differentiated primarily by the main character being the spider or the tortoise. Further, we show how the stages of transformation of any story can be gainfully analysed using the proposed Dikenga theory of literary analysis.

Keywords: Ananse, Ìjàpá, Dikènga, content, function

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Résumé

Le but de cet article est de mettre en évidence les parallèles entre Akan Ananse Stories et Yorùbá Ìjàpá tales. Dans cet article, des liens sont établis en ce qui concerne la fonction et le contenu des récits Akan et Yorùbá en utilisant Dikenga, le cosmogramme du Bakôngo, comme outil d'analyse littéraire orale révélant des parallèles intertextuels (O Kambon, 2017). Nous mettons en évidence six (6) séries d'histoires communes aux peuples Akan et Yorùbá différenciées principalement par le personnage principal étant l'araignée ou la tortue. En outre, nous montrons comment les étapes de la transformation de n'importe quelle histoire peuvent être analysées avec profit en utilisant la théorie proposée de Dikenga de l'analyse littéraire.

Mots-clés: Ananse, Ìjàpá, Dikènga, contenu, function

"Okunini" Oòbaìdeìleì Bakari Kambon (okambon@ug.edu.gh) is the founder of Abibitumi.com. He completed his PhD in Linguistics at the University of Ghana in 2012, winning the prestigious Vice-Chancellor's award for the Best PhD Thesis in the Humanities. He also won the 2016 Provost's Publications Award for best article in the College of Humanities. In 2019 he was the recipient of the [Nana] Marcus Mosiah Garvey Foundation award for excellence in Afrikan Studies and Education. He is a Senior Research Fellow and Head of the Language, Literature and Drama Section of the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana. Okunini Kambon is currently Editor-in-Chief of the Ghana Journal of Linguistics as well as Secretary of the African Studies Association of Africa. He played an instrumental role in 34 Afrikans of the Diaspora receiving Ghanaian citizenship in 2016 and 126 receiving citizenship in 2019. He now assists others interested in repatriation via RepatriateToGhana.com. Dr. Kambon is also Special Advisor to UNESCO (ICM). His research interests include Serial Verb Construction Nominalization, Historical Linguistics, Kemetology, & Afrikan=Black Liberation.

Introduction

pḥrt pw ꜥnḫ 'Life is a cycle' (Faulkner, 1956, p. 22)

In this study, I will build upon the Dikènga framework introduced by Kambon (2017), focusing on the upper and lower halves of the Dikènga cosmogram of the Bakôngo people: ku nseke and ku mpèmba as shown in Figure 1. Ku nseke is envisaged as the upper world manifestation of the story from the opening sequence to the closing formula. Ku mpèmba is conceptualized as the lower portion of the Dikènga cosmogram in that it represents that which is more intangible; i.e., the functions and objectives of the story as well as its effects on the Afrikan person and in society. The utilization of this framework will enable us to extend the layered analogy in which the story, the human being and n'tangu 'the sun' are seen as being different manifestations of fundamentally the same thing as exemplified below in Table 1.
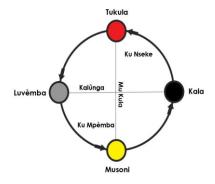
Figure 1: Dikènga Cosmogram (Kambon 2017)

Further, Kambon (2017) argues that Afrikan Studies should be conceived of as extending beyond Ghana Studies or West Afrikan Studies and that Ghana can only be understood in the total Afrikan context in the wider (Nkrumah, 1963). As such, I will once again apply the Dikenga framework from Kôngo to Akan Ananse stories of Ghana and Yorùbá Ìjàpá tales of Nigeria. In doing so, I hope to diverge from the tendency to solely look "forward" to Eurasia/America for theoretical models and "back" to the Afrikan village for ethnographical/anthropological raw materials; a situation I refer to as "galamsey research" or the "backward/forward" paradigm. Further, in doing so, I will challenge Freytag's misappropriation of the Afrikan pyramid by providing an alternative structure: the cyclical Dikènga model (Freytag, 1863).

Ananse stories come from Akan speaking areas (primarily located in modern-

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[1] Galamsey from the Hausa 'gather/collect sell,' which is the term commonly used in Ghana to refer to illegal small-scale mining. Essentially, this term draws an analogy between exporting raw unprocessed materials (usually mined using non-Afrikan machinery) and the gathering of raw intellectual materials (usually researched using non-Afrikan theoretical and conceptual frameworks) without adding value by using research to develop our own frameworks and to solve our own physical, mental, and spiritual problems as Afrikan=Black people.

day Ghana and La Côte D'Ivoire). Ìjàpá tales originate from the land of the Yorùbá (primarily located in modern–day Nigeria and Benin), and the aforementioned Dikenga theoretical framework comes from the Kongo kingdom (which straddles the countries of Congo–Brazzaville, the Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa), Gabon, and Angola). In this study, 65 written Ìjàpá tales and ninety 90 written Ananse stories were systematically analyzed (Babalola, 1972, 1979; Hutchison, 1994; Ọ Kambon, 2017; Rattray, 1930). Additionally, 23 oral Àlọ́ àpamọ̀ "riddle stories" and 4 oral Àlọ́ àpagbè "narrative stories", as well as 57 oral Ananse stories from personal recordings and other sources were consulted (Afolayan, 2013; Bolajiutube, 2012; Hassan, 2013; Masters, 2012; Trustees, 2009). As such, approximately 239 tales were consulted in total. As the upper portion (Ku nseke) of the Dikenga cosmogram is presented as the content of the story, this will be dealt with in the first section of this study. The lower section of the Dikenga cosmogram (Ku mpèmba) comprises that which is intangible and, as such, the overt and underlying functions of the stories under consideration will be addressed in the second half of the paper.

Content: Ku Nseke

Shared Motifs

As the analysis presented in this article rests upon the Dikenga cosmogram, it would be useful to delineate exactly what it is. According to N'lôngi Fu–Kiau, "nothing exists that does not follow the steps of the cyclical Kongo cosmogram" (Fu–Kiau, 1994: 26). Dikenga consists primarily of four major points connected by a circle with intersecting perpendicular lines. The points of the circle are referred to as (1/5) Luvèmba, (2) Musoni, (3) Kala, (4) Tukula and back to (1/5) Luvèmba to complete the cycle whereby the end is the beginning and the beginning is the end. As shown in Figure 1 above, the core idea of the Dikenga cosmogram is that energy (represented by R^c 'The Sun') is not created nor destroyed but is rather transformed by undergoing different stages of transformation. This pertains directly to what has come to be known as the law of conservation of energy/mass. These ideas of transformation, far from being recently discovered phenomena, date back thousands of years to ancient Kmt 'Kemet' and the concept of $ḫpr$ 'exist, be, come into being, become, change (into).' In the Afrikan context, which is simultaneously heliocentric and anthropocentric, the human being is seen as a ntângu a môyo 'a living sun', thus, when R^c 'The Sun' sets he does not stop existing. Analogously, in the case of a human being in the context of this worldview, it is also understood that when a person passes away, he/she does not stop existing but has rather simply transformed. In this paper, this phenomenon of 'death' as merely transformation is also seen to be the case for the end of the story. In other words, because dying is not the end neither is the closing formula of the story truly the end as it will have psychological, social and other effects, functions and impacts on the individual and the society in which he/she finds himself/herself.

Figure 2. Twt-ꜥ nḫ-imn 'Tutankh-amun's' Golden Relief with Tail-Swallowing Serpents encircling both head and feet (Photo Credit Kambon)
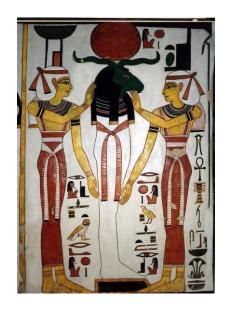

Figure 3: Fon conception of the Snake with its tail in its mouth

It follows logically, therefore, that whatever is claimed to be universal should also be true for subset of whole. As such, while we will focus on Akan Ananse stories and Yorùbá Ìjàpá tales, it is expected that the Dikenga framework could be extended to account for the structures of other Afrikan stories and beyond as might readily be applied by future researchers and scholars. This layered analogy is exemplified in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Analogous Structures: Sun-Human-Story (Kambon 2017)

	SOLAR POSITION (DIKÈNGA)	HUMAN LIFE	STORY STRUCTURE
I	MIDNIGHT	CONCEPTION	IDEA/CONCEPTION
1	TWILIGHT	PREGNANCY	FORMULATION (BASED ON EXISTING STRUCTURES)
	DAWN	BIRTH (NAMING CEREMONY)	OPENING FORMULA
	MORNING	YOUTH	EXPOSITION
			COMPLICATION
III	NOON	ADULTHOOD	CLIMAX
3	AFTERNOON	ELDERSHIP	DENOUEMENT
			RESOLUTION
IV	SUNSET	DEATH (FUNERAL)	CONCLUSION (CLOSING FORMULA)
4	EVENING/NIGHT	JUDGMENT/ ANCESTRAL REALM	REFLECTION/ INTERNALIZATION
I	MIDNIGHT	CONCEPTION	IDEA/CONCEPTION

Following Kambon (2017), I argue that the solar/human analogy can be useful for understanding the worldview, structure, content and function of stories in the Afrikan context. Just as in the case of Dikenga, in ancient 𓊖 Kmt, the Papyrus of Ani states, "I am Khepera in the morning, Ra at noon, and Temu [Atum] at evening"(Budge, 2013: 76). In this configuration, 𓆣 *ḥpri* 'Khepera' represents sunrise, 𓇳 *Rꜥ* 'Ra' represents noon and 𓏏𓐝 *itm (w)* 'Atum' represents sunset. 𓊨𓁹 *Isir* 'Asir' represents 𓇳 *Rꜥ* 'The Sun' at night in the understanding that 𓇳 *Rꜥ* 'Ra' unites with *Isir* 'Asir' at night to receive the power to come to life again at dawn as a manifestation of the principle of regeneration. We see this in Figure 4 which states *Isir ḥtp m Rꜥ; Rꜥ pw ḥtp m'Isir* 'Asir rests as Ra; it is Ra who rests as Asir' demonstrating the principle of complementary inversion. This is related to the idea that time is a cyclical thing. In this view, the human being and the story undergo similar stages that can be understood in the contexts of rites of passage.
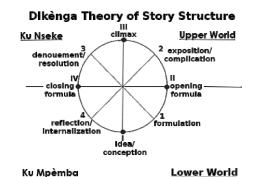
[2]The 1/5 delineation represents the idea that the first stage (1) is the same as the final stage (5).

Figure 4: Wall painting from the Tomb of imAxwt Nefertari

Figure 5: Ancient Afrikan Cosmological Structure
(Kambon 2017 adapted from Moore 2011)

With specific regard to stories, these stages of development also serve to organize the story in the understanding of as above, so below. Several figures introduced in Kambon (2017) are useful for understanding the analogous and cyclical nature of time and story structure as shown below in Figure 6 and Figure 7.

This color-coded structure based on Dikènga can also be represented in tabular format as shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Analogous Stages of Time

Stages	Akan	Yorùbá	Kikôngo
Luvèmba	Owia at ɔeɛ 'sunset'	Ìwọ̀ oòrùn 'sunset'	Ndimina 'sunset'
Musoni	Ɔdasuom 'midnight'	Ọ̀ganjọ́ òru 'midnight'	N'dingu –a–nsi 'midnight'
Kala	Owia apuee ɛ 'sunrise'	Ìlà oòrùn 'sunrise'	Nseluka 'sunrise'
Tukula	Owigyinae ɛ 'noon'	Ọ̀sán gangan 'noon'	Mbata 'noon'
Luvèmba	Owia at ɔeɛ 'sunset'	Ìwọ̀ oòrùn 'sunset'	Ndimina 'sunset'

Now that I have delineated the conceptual framework upon which this paper is based, I will now present several instances in which the exact same story can be found in the Akan and Yorùbá storytelling traditions. In these parallel stories, often the only difference between stories in each tradition is that one features a spider, while the other features a tortoise. In other cases, other aspects of the story are more culturally specific to the Akan or Yorùbá cultural context. In this section, such inter-textual parallels will be documented in the form of six sets of stories. Using the Dikènga framework, each of these stories will be presented with regard to which aspects of the story correlate with specific stages of the Dikènga model, focusing on Ku Nseke.[3]

First, in "How It Came About That Children Were (First) Whipped" (Akan) and "Ìjàpá and the Unripe Palm-Fruits" (Yorùbá) the motifs present in each of the tales are presented side-by-side in tabular form to show parallels and divergences:

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[3]The full stories can be viewed in the appendix here:
https://drive.google.com/open?id=17zmvy28vrNc3V2pTN_BkAsZn78HGnTrr

Table 3: Food and Whipping

"How It Came About That Children Were (First) Whipped" (Akan)	"Ìjàpá and the Unripe Palm –Fruits" (Yorùbá)
Conceptualization of Story	Conceptualization of Story
Opening Formula Famine	Opening Formula Famine caused by drought
Ananse goes to the bush	Ìjàpá goes to the ocean & follows a cluster of unripe palm fruits into the ocean
Finds a magic pan	Is given a scoop by Olókun (òrìṣà of the ocean)
Says magic words and food is produced	Says magic words and food is produced
Everyone partakes	Everyone partakes
Ananse's son Ntikuma intentionally transgresses the pan's taboo	The scoop is accidentally broken at a feast
Ananse goes back to the bush and finds a whip	Ìjàpá goes back to the ocean and is given a whip
Ananse says magic words and is whipped	Ìjàpá says magic words and is whipped
Tricks family who partook of the food into saying the magic words and being whipped	Says magic words for people of the town to be whipped
Closing Formula	Closing Formula
Impact/Function of Story (Rattray, 1930, p. 62)	Impact/Function of Story (Babalola, 1972, p. 29)

In both the Akan and Yorùbá stories, the magical objects are symbolic of life (provision of food) and death (whipping). In Akan, there is a proverb which states that:

1. abɔdeɛ ne abrabɔ mu ntaa
creation CONJ life Inside twins
'creation and life are twins'

This symbology of the magical items encapsulates the idea that all things exist in complementary pairs which is central to the worldview of many Afrikan people that Wiase wotra no baanu baanu 'People live in the world in pairs' (a proverb that expresses a universal truth about human beings – that every man or woman needs a partner)(Opoku, 1997, p. 25). Similarly, at the end of the Ìjàpá tale in Table 3 there is a proverb that says:

1.

Ẹni	tí	ó	jẹ	dídùn	yẹ
someone	REL	3SG	eat	sweetness	fit

k'ó	jẹ	kíkan	o
should'3SG	eat	sourness	EMPH

"A person who tastes sweetness should also taste sourness." (Babalola, 1972 35)

Figure 8: Rendering of Proverb in Example (1) in Brass

Figure 9: Akan Goldweight reflecting Owia apueeɛ ne atɔeɛ 'The Sun's rising and setting'

Again, that which is sweet and that which is sour are seen as complementary opposites represented symbolically by means of the central objects of the story.

We find other intertextual parallels between the Akan Ananse stories and Yorùbá Ìjàpá tales in both "How it Happened that Wisdom Came into the Land" (Akan) and "Ìjàpá Gathers all the Wisdom of the World into a Gourd" (Yorùbá), the key stages of which are represented below in Table 4.

Table 4: Wisdom pots and gourd

"How it Happened that Wisdom Came into the Land" (Akan)	"Ìjàpá Gathers all the Wisdom of the World into a Gourd" (Yorùbá)
Conceptualization of Story	Conceptualization of Story
Opening Formula Ananse attempts to avariciously gather all of the wisdom of the world into a pot	Opening Formula Ìjàpá attempts to avariciously gather all of the wisdom of the world into a gourd
Ananse decides to hide pot up in a tree	Ìjàpá decides to hide gourd up in a tree
Attempts to climb the tree with the pot in front unsuccessfully	Attempts to climb the tree with the gourd in front unsuccessfully
Ananse's son Ntikuma advises him to put the pot on his back	Yorùbá hunter passing by advises him to put the gourd on his back
Upon trying this advice, he climbs the tree successfully	Upon trying this advice, he climbs the tree successfully
Realizes that he did not actually gather all of the world's wisdom	Realizes that he did not actually gather all of the world's wisdom
In anger Ananse throws down the wisdom pot and causes wisdom to spread throughout the world.	In anger Ìjàpá throws down the wisdom pot and causes wisdom to spread throughout the world.
Closing Formula	Closing Formula
Impact/Function of Story (Rattray, 1930, p. 4)	Impact/Function of Story (Babalola, 1972, p. 16)

In another set "How Ananse Got a Bald Head" (Akan) and "The Reason Why Ìjàpá's Head is Bald" (Yorùbá) we see similar parallels that can be understood in terms of the Dikenga framework.

Table 5: Bald heads

"How Ananse Got a Bald Head" (Akan)	"The Reason Why Ìjàpá's Head is Bald" (Yorùbá)
Conceptualization of Story	Conceptualization of Story
Opening Formula Ananse at his in-law's funeral says he won't eat	Opening Formula Ìjàpá at the marriage of his wife's younger sibling
Ananse gets very hungry so he decides to sneak some beans	Ìjàpá smells bean porridge, but they give him greens to eat instead
Dumps the beans into his hat to avoid getting caught	Too ashamed to ask for bean porridge and steals the bean porridge when no one is looking
Puts on his hat to hide his theft but can't get away from others around	Puts on his hat to hide his theft but can't get away from his wife's mother who insists on accompanying him part of the way
The beans end up burning the hair off of his head	The beans end up burning the hair off of his head
Ends up with nothing but shame and baldness.	Ends up with nothing but shame and baldness.
Closing Formula	Closing Formula
Impact/Function of Story (Rattray, 1930, p. 118)	Impact/Function of Story (Babalola, 1972, p. 76)

In "How the Desert Came into the World" in Akan or Ìjàpá "The snail and Ọsìn's Hunchback" as it is titled in the parallel Yorùbá version, both Ananse and Ìjàpá exhibit similar behaviors and get similar results as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Make it Rain

"How the Desert Came into the World" (Akan)	"Ìjàpá, The Snail, and Ọsìn's Hunchback" (Yorùbá)
Conceptualization of Story	Conceptualization of Story
Opening Formula Drought causes Ananse's friend, Akwasi, to go to Onyankopon (The Creator) to get rain to fall on his farm	Opening Formula Ìjàpá's is jealous of his in–law, Ìgbín the snail who is a hard–working farmer while he is lazy
Ananse's friend is informed that rain has been delegated to the hunchback	Ìjàpá's tries to get Ìgbín in trouble by killing the king's favorite servant, the hunchback
Hunchback tells the friend to just tap lightly on his back	Frames Ìgbín by dragging the body onto Ìgbín's farm
Friend taps lightly on hunchback's back and it rains copiously on his farm	Tells on Ìgbín to the king to get reward
Ananse finds out and wants even more rain so he takes a big club and beats this hunchback to death	Ìgbín comes up with idea that he should be carried around on a horse in celebration
Ananse hides body in a tree and gets friend to shake the tree causing the body to fall	Ìjàpá comes to claim the reward holding the bloody club that he used to kill the hunchback
Frames friend	King ties him up and orders his execution
Friend asks to be carried around in glory	Ìgbín comes back to see that his in–law is the one who has framed him
Out of jealousy, Ananse confesses to the killing and is punished with no rain falling on his farm again causing the desert	Ìjàpá is executed
Closing Formula	Closing Formula
Impact/Function of Story (Hutchison, 1994, p. 15)	Impact/Function of Story (Babalola, 1972, p. 103)

Further inter–textual parallels are found in the following set:

Table 7: Sticky situations

"Kwaku Ananse the Trickster" (Akan)	"How Iʒaʔpaʔ Stole the Water of the Animals" (Yorùbá?)
Conceptualization of Story	Conceptualization of Story
Opening Formula Ananse fakes death to get out of farm work	Opening Formula Iʒaʔpaʔ refuses to dig a well during the drought
Ananse steals food at night	Iʒaʔpaʔ uses scare tactics to steal water during drought
Gum baby used to catch thief	Sticky carving used to catch thief
Ananse gets stuck from beating it and caught	Iʒaʔpaʔ gets stuck from beating it and caught
Closing Formula	Closing Formula
Impact/Function of Story (Hutchison, 1994, p. 10; Indiana.edu, 2014)	Impact/Function of Story (Babalola, 1972, p. 144)

Finally, inter–textual parallels between the motifs of Ananseseɛm and Àlọ́ Ìjàpá are readily apparent in the following set:

Table 8: Snapping and Trapping

"Ananse and the Hare" (Akan)	"Ìjàpá and Ìgbín Set a Trap" (Yorùbá)
Conceptualization of Story	Conceptualization of Story
Opening Formula Ananse and Hare set a trap	Opening Formula Ìjàpá and Ìgbín, the snail, set a trap
Every day greed causes Ananse to give up today's catch for tomorrow's bigger promised catch	Every day greed causes Ìjàpá to give up today's catch for tomorrow's bigger promised catch
Finally, its catches an elephant but Hare says tomorrow the trap will catch "ahum ne aham ne ahahan hunu"	Ìjàpá is told he will get ọ̀ràn "serious problem" but he does not know what ọ̀ràn is.
A major storm (ahum) hits the forest (aham) leaving empty leaves (ahahan hunu)	King's daughter is killed in the trap that Ìgbín has moved onto the path.
Ananse comes and realizes that he has been tricked by the Hare due to his greed	Ìjàpá gets his ọ̀ràn "serious problem" and is executed
Closing Formula	Closing Formula
Impact/Function of Story (Hutchison, 1994, p. 41)	Impact/Function of Story (Babalola, 1972, p. 108)

There are several interesting issues that come up in these parallel stories found among the Akan and Yorùbá. The first question may be, who "borrowed" the stories from the other? If any of these were borrowed, indeed, at this point the stories have been indigenized in their respective cultural milieu beyond recognition. For example, in "Ìjàpá and the Unripe Palm-Fruits," we find Ìjàpá going to see Olókun, the mystical owner of the ocean who grants him the magic scoop which produces food. This element is wholly missing from the Akan version which has the same "food-producing utensil" motif as there is less prominence attached to the Akan correlate called Ɛpo Abenaa or Bosompo/Bosonopo. The Akan version, however features an ayowa, which is a prominent cultural artifact among the Akan. It also features taboo-transgression, which is a particularly prominent feature of Akan spirituality. Thus, if the motif or the story originated with the Yorùbá, this would mean that the Òrìṣà aspect was taken out for the purposes of the Akan version. If the motif or the story began with the Akan, it would mean that the taboo aspect was taken out and the Òrìṣà element was inserted to "Yorùbánize" the tale. In either case, what is clear is that in each parallel story with a shared motif, the form in which the tale exists now is very much indigenized if not indigenous for one or the other (or either). Another possibility which may be considered is both "borrowing" the motif from a common ancestor language/culture group from which both are descended. According to current prominent theories of linguistic categorization, both Akan and Yorùbá belong to what is commonly referred to as Niger Congo Group A. Given the significant time and spatial depth that would be entailed by such a proposal, one may hesitate to follow this line of reasoning given that the simpler proposal would entail one getting the motif from the other given the fluid nature in which stories may be shared in situations of cross-cultural contact. In yet another scenario, both groups may have borrowed the motif from a related or non-related contemporary language. At this point, the answer to any such questions of origins would require further research and are beyond the scope of this paper. For the purposes of this paper, the main point to be understood is that these motifs are shared and this sharing is as a result of a common worldview. Any adapting that may have occurred was done with ease due to common perspectives on storytelling content, function, worldview and structure. This is why we can find the same tale time and again between these two culture groups whereas, in neither case do we find an indigenized Akan or Yorùbá version of say, "Snow white and the Seven Dwarfs" or "Hansel and Gretel." This is because despite significant cross-cultural contact, the worldview divide may prove too great to facilitate the incorporation of such tales into the collective cultural corpus of storytelling for either group. A final potential source of finding the same story among the Akan and Yorùbá is the possibility of independent creation despite the observed parallels. However, logically, I consider it implausible that so many of virtually the exact same stories just happen to exist in the Akan and Yorùbá traditions that this possibility is too remote to warrant much attention.

Minor disparities between sets of stories can be seen in Table 4 wherein, in the Akan case, it is Ananse's own son who gives him the advice while, for the Yorùbá, it is a passing hunter. Again, if the story originated with the Akan, it would mean that the Yorùbá intentionally changed the role of the character of the one who advises Ìjàpá perhaps due to a greater stigma associated with youth giving advice to elders present in Yorùbá culture. On the other hand, if the story originated with the Yorùbá, it would mean that Ntikuma, the usual foil of his father's machinations, was intentionally inserted to play this role that he typically plays in Ananse stories.

Stories exist among the Yorùbá, for example, as etiological tales to explain why the protagonist, Ìjàpá the tortoise, has a broken shell. Other stories exist to show why Kwaku Ananse weaves his web in corners (usually due to shame). What we find is oftentimes, the etiological explanatory coda may simply be tacked on to the end of a story which, in and of itself, along with its predominant motifs, be malleable enough to be retold in a different form without it.

Another difference is found in Table 5 where Ananse is at a funeral, which is much more ubiquitous in Akan culture, while Ìjàpá is at a wedding ceremony, which is more prominent among the Yorùbá. Again, while the differences are instructive in seeing the nuances of each culture, the similarities may show us something deeper with regard to the shared environment and worldview which allows stories to be seamlessly integrated and adapted in either instance.

Shared Aesthetics - Stylistics

Once one identifies the motifs within the story one has the skeleton or framework upon which the story can be woven and retold (Propp, 1968). However, what truly brings the story to life is the aesthetic content. In this section, such stylistic content as repetition (of episodes and formulas), syntactic parallelism, semantic parallelism, songs/chants, phonological effects, alliteration, tonal rhymes, word play, onomatopoeia, and ideophones. We will address examples of repetition, phonological parallelism, semantic parallelism, and syntactic parallelism below.

According to Baba Okpewho, "One of the most significant things to happen in oral narrative scholarship in the last century or so has been the recognition of the functional values of repeated structures or formulaic schemes in the construction of the tale" (Okpewho, 1983, p. 102).

Over the years there have been arguments between Functionalists (anthropologists) and Aestheticists (literary scholars) debating art for a social purpose versus art for art's sake. Dikenga is powerful in that it allows us to come to terms with both perspectives viewing Ku nseke and Ku mpèmba as necessary and complementary parts of the whole (Ọ Kambon, 2017). Using Dikenga, one can examine the same story and see functional values (presented herein in association with Ku mpèmba) and at the same time one can appreciate the aesthetic values (presented herein in association with Ku nseke). The aesthetics of the story may be understood in terms of what we may term functional structure or constituent structural functions. An example of the functional values of repeated structures may be seen in repetition of songs as exemplified in example (3).

1. N'kama mia ntangu: http://youtu.be/dg9aqoSCBwU (Obadele Kambon, 2014b)

One of the main functions of the multiple introductions of song throughout the story in the video above is that of entertainment value. However, repetition of the same song can also be integral to the story itself in terms of marking episodic repetition:

2. Repetition as Story Structure: http://youtu.be/Ij3n38LNMZE (Obadele Kambon, 2014d; Masters, 2012)

Phonological Parallelism

Phonological parallelism also occurs in Anansesɛm and Àlọ́ Ìjàpá in the forms of

alliteration, ideophones, and onomatopoeia. An example of phonological parallelism can be found in the following Ananse story:

3. Phonological parallelism http://youtu.be/vYc2KqsMAFQ (Obadele Kambon, 2014c; Masters, 2012)

Another aesthetic feature of these stories is semantic parallelism where virtually the same thing is said in various ways. For example, in the story "Ìjàpá Kó Gbogbo Ọgbọ́n Ayé Jọ" "Ìjàpá gathers the wisdom of the world into a gourd", various proverbs are employed using semantic parallelism:

4. a.   Àfi   wèrè   ènìyàn   l'ó   sọ   pé   ó   gbọ́n   tán
        l'áyé
        unless   mad   human   REL'3SG say   that   3SG   wise   finish
        in'world
        "Only an insane person says that he/she is finished learning wisdom in
        the world."

    b.   Ọgbọ́n   ọlọ́gbọ́n   ni   kìí   jẹ́   kí   a
        wisdom wisdom—owner   FOC   NEG   allow   should 1PL

        pe   àgbà   ní   wèrè
        call   elder   in   mad
        "The wisdom of another wise person is what does not allow an elder to
        be called insane."

    c.   Ẹnìkan   kìí   gbọ́n   tán   l'áyé
        someone   NEG   wise   finish   in'world
        "A person does not finish learning wisdom in the world."

    d.   Ẹni   t'ó   bèèrè   kìí   ṣìnà   o
        person REL'3SG ask   NEG   mistake—road   EMPH
        "Someone who asks does not lose the way."
        (Babalola, 1972, p. 16)

This is semantic parallelism expressing similar ideas in a variety of ways. Another stylistic feature of stories is syntactic parallelism as shown below in describing the effects of a famine:

5. a.   Ó   p'olómùú
        3SG   kill'clever
        "It killed the clever."

    b.   Ó   p'agbo   ẹranko
        3SG   kill'corral   animal
        "It killed a corral of animals."

    c.   Ó   p'ọ̀tọ̀tọ̀   ènìyàn   mẹ́fà
        3SG   kill'different   human   six

"It killed six different people."

    d.   Ó   p'ọlọ́jà   mẹ́rindínlógún.
        3SG   kill'market sellers   sixteen
        "It killed sixteen market—sellers."
        (Babalola, 1972, p. 29)

Within the Dikenga theory of oral literary analysis, each of these stylistic features can be understood as smaller cycles within the larger cycle or smaller patterns within the larger pattern. They are small repetitions which mirror each other and, at the same time, mirror the structure of the whole whether at the level of motifs (inter—textual parallelism), at the level of sound (phonological parallelism) at the level of phrases (syntactic parallelism) or at the level of meaning (semantic parallelism).

More significantly, with regard to content, the parallel stories are manifestations of a common shared Afrikan worldview. Using Dikenga, a human being's life and the story structure as Extended Analogy Layering (EAL), we are able to see how the three analogously relate, are relative and are relevant to each other. This is in the sense that even when the sun sets from the perspective of the observer, it is simply a perspective and is not tantamount to the sun no longer existing. By the same token, when a story ends, it is also only dead in the Afrikan=Black sense of transformation in that the sun reincarnates each morning. Thus, the story may be told again, just in a transformed state. Also, when the story is no longer in the ku nseke phase, it can be remembered – a transformed state that may not be readily observed but is still real and has an impact on reality nonetheless. As such, remembrance itself can serve as one of many functional objectives of storytelling. Via the instrument of remembrance, a person can transcend space, time, energy, and matter in that they can be remembered and live on through the words that they have shared. This may be one of an innumerable number of different lessons intended by the storyteller and received by the audience and vice—versa.

FUNCTION: KU MPÈMBA

In this section, I will address functions of Anansesɛm and Àlọ́ Ìjàpá in terms of overt and underlying functions using the Dikenga theory of oral literary analysis. As mentioned previously, Ku mpèmba is the lower world portion of the Dikenga. In the Ku mpèmba stage, function in the context of stories can be understood in terms of outcomes that are not readily perceptible after the story has been told. These outcomes may include remembrance, reflection, internalization, personalization and reformulation as the stages in the complementary inversion vis—à—vis ku nseke.

Although many of these underlying outcomes cannot necessarily be seen physically, they exist nonetheless.[4] As alluded to previously, there are many possible outcomes which may result from the telling of stories such as ideational outcomes, cultural outcomes, and character outcomes. Perhaps, upon hearing a story one may

[4]Thanks to Prof Daniel Avorgbedor for pointing out similarities between my discussion of overt and underlying functions and that of Robert K. Merton's latent and manifest functions in the context of sociological theory. (Merton 1968, Helm 1971).

be inspired to reflect upon one's character, for example. There are also structural outcomes in the sense that one who hears stories becomes enculturated enough to know how to formulate story structure. In this sense an underlying function of the stories is their own survival and self-perpetuation – almost in the manner in which a living organism strives to pass along its own genetics – so too does a story pass along an implicit understanding of its own structure and content. The hearer, then, becomes an incubator wherein the narrative structure undergoes a gestational period. The listener is consciously or subconsciously enculturated into narrative structure, aesthetics, function, and the worldview which underpins the entire edifice and is, thus, free to follow, alter or discard received structure prior to the story's retelling. Indeed, one can "signify on" received structures by means of one's own way of telling or reworking the story. If a story is told and the listener does not like how that person told it, one can tell the same story with the same motifs or salient points, but perhaps in an invigorated form with kinesthetic creativity, songs, clapping, and drumming. There are also social, behavioral, and material outcomes. With regard to material culture, for example, characters, themes, proverbs, and idioms found within stories may be recorded by artists through carving or brass casting; they could also be recorded with woven or stamped cloth that reflects elements of the story.

Overall, in terms of functions of the story, we can categorize them along the lines of underlying and overt outcomes as exemplified in the table below:

Table 9: Overt and Underlying Functions of Stories as Outcomes

Overt Functions as outcomes	Underlying Functions as outcomes
Behavioral outcomes	Remembrance
Character outcomes	Enculturation
Social outcomes	Cognitive development

With regard to overt outcomes, one could say that a tale may be given an Nkrabea "destiny" (Akan) by its creator. The teller may say overtly and directly something to the effect of "I am telling you the story for the sake of X moral." But then, there may be underlying functions such as enculturation or remembrance. There exists the following proverb in Akan which illustrates this point poignantly:

1. Onipa   wu   a,   ne   tɛkrɛma   m–porɔ
   human   die   then,   3SG.POSS   tongue   NEG–rot
   "When a person dies his/her tongue does not rot."

In this sense, the teller becomes immortal by continuing to live on through his/her words. This concept of underlying functions may be seen in the following video in which storytellers are being interviewed:
2. Midnight http://youtu.be/QIiCZnaBCwI (Obadele Kambon, 2014a; Masters, 2012)

According to the first storyteller in the video, although his uncle died in the 1950s, his words still live on. This, then, is a manifestation of an underlying function which comes part and parcel of the story's overt moral or intended message as an actualized outcome that may not have necessarily been intended or anticipated by the storyteller.

There are also functions which are malleable and contextual and change as the context changes. The same performer who is telling a story when a rival or enemy is in the audience may use allusions to insult in ways that would be understood as biting remarks by that rival. However, if one is telling that same story to one's child, the desired outcome may be enculturation or character development. In other words, functions and outcomes could be different things for different persons or even different for the same person telling the same story in a different context.

Also worthy of note is the idea that different aspects of the same story may be salient or emphasized by the teller and different aspects may be salient or relevant to the listener. For any number of reasons, the goals of the orator may be highly influential – even on a subconscious level – with regard to what the listener gains from the story, but ultimately the listener gleans what is relevant to him or her from the story. In other words, objectives are malleable and subject to change for both the teller and the listener. One's reason for telling the story today may be different from the reasons tomorrow and the listener's understanding of the story may change or grow as his or her experience and wisdom grows. Thus, the goals and objectives of the orator – underlying and overt – may impact the outcomes of that orator. By the same token, the goals and objectives of the listener impact the outcomes with regard to what the listener gets from the story. This phenomenon which posits both the teller and the listener as scholars of oral literature, each with dynamic theoretical ideas about the nature of the story, could be seen as similar to the parable of the blind people feeling different parts of the elephant (Case, 1993). Depending on one's own knowledge, background and where one stands, any or all of these things may have an impact on what one gets out of the story. This is also similar to the story in which Èṣù wears a hat that is Black on one side and red on the other, which causes a quarrel between farmers who see things differently based on their particular perspectives (De La Torre & Hernández, 2011).

Thus, the oral literary artists themselves can be seen as philosophers, scholars or literary critics with their own views of what a story is and its role(s), purpose(s) and function(s). The person telling the story may see the story primarily as a means of entertainment while another may see it primarily as a method of moral instruction. Another storyteller may see the story primarily as a means of enculturation or a tool for cognitive development. Any and all of these are possibilities may also change over the course of time. As such, the multiplicity of the oral performance must be taken into account. The orator tells the same story many times. This is something that we do not necessarily see in the written tradition in that a person does not tend to write the exact same novel multiple times. Thus, Ku mpèmba gives us the underlying functions that precede the telling of the story in terms of goals, objectives, and also the desired outcomes that follow the telling of the story in terms of actual outcomes.

In terms of underlying functions as actual outcomes, indeed, research shows that stories help listeners in their cognitive development by assisting them to:

> Develop more sophisticated language structures, accumulate more background information, and have more interest in learning to read (Bower 1976; Chomsky 1972; Cohen 1968; Durkin 1966). In addition, active participation in literary experiences enhances the development of comprehension, oral language, and a sense of story structure (Blank & Sheldon 1971; Bower 1976)(Morrow, 1985, p. 646)

All of these may be grouped together as underlying functions of storytelling. As such, one may not overtly say "I am telling you a story so that you can have comprehension skills and cognitive skills" but these are the underlying functions that are part and parcel of the storytelling process. As the listener becomes a storyteller in his or her own right, further research shows that:

> Retelling stories is another active procedure that may aid comprehension, concept of story structure, and oral language. Storytelling of this kind enables children to play a large and active role in reconstructing stories. It also provides for interaction between the teller and the listener (Morrow, 1985, p. 646)

Function has been dealt with by Bascom as four basic functions as follows:
- amusement
- validation of culture – giving charter to custom
- education – through approbation or reprimand of behavior
- aetiology by answering questions about origins(Bascom, 1954)

Using the organizing principles and evaluative criteria advanced in this paper, we can see that any of those can readily be grouped into the categories of underlying functions or overt functions. It is also important to note that overt and underlying functions are not posited to be discrete categories with no degree of overlap. Amusement, for example, may be an overt goal of the teller, however, the concurrent release of pent–up tensions built up due to daily trials and tribulations may be an underlying function. Thus, while intentionality is a major aspect with regard to function, it is not seen as the "end–all and be–all" of storytelling.

In addition to these previously discussed functions, experience is another reason for the telling of a story so that not everyone has to go through what Ananse or Ìjàpá has gone through. There is a proverb in Akan that states that:

3. Nyansa   nyinaa   ne   osuahunu
    wisdom   all   be   experience
    "all wisdom comes from experience"

The Yorùbá also have a related proverb, which states:

4. Ẹni   t'ó   jìn   sí   kòtò   kọ́   ará   y ò ó k ù

l' ógbọ́n
person REL'3SG deep   into   hole   teach   folks   other   in'wisdom
"a person who falls into a pit teaches everyone else wisdom."

In other words, one should not have to fall into the pit oneself before one can learn a lesson. Thus, Anansesɛm and Àlọ́ Ìjàpá give the listener (or reader) plenty of opportunities to learn from Ananse and Ìjàpá's mistakes without having to make those same mistakes him or herself. Once the teller tells the listener what Ananse or Ìjàpá did and what became of him, the listener is furnished with an opportunity to decide to proceed with similar behaviors (to see for oneself) or to wisely forego such behaviors altogether. Along the same lines, there is a Yorùbá proverb which states:

5. O   l'ógbọ́n,   o   ò   jìyà;   ta ní   olùkọ́   rẹ?
   2SG   have'wisdom   2SG   NEG   suffer;   who   teacher   2SG.POSS
   "You are wise, you didn't suffer; who is your teacher?"

Perhaps, the path to greater wisdom without having to suffer firsthand could be found in these stories which allow us to access deeper transcendental truths without the limitations that may be found in more historical stories with less "fanciful flights of imagination" in which one is limited by specific personalities, dates, places, and events (Okpewho, 1983, p. 62). The stories also provide direct experience in the sense of exposure to content, function, worldview and structure.

CONCLUSION

Stories enable opportunities for flight from time–bound history allowing for progressively more fantastic and fanciful elements that not only serve the purposes of delight but also allow us to get at deeper transcendental truths(Okpewho, 1983, p. 62). There is an opening formula of Anansesɛm that says Anansesɛm yɛ asisie oo "Ananse stories are (only) make–believe." Although they may be seen as "make believe," in this "pretending" we are able to reach deep truths that we may not have been able to if we had to wait for an actual historical event to happen before we could address them. Stories also empower the teller and the listener to bring their own experiences and wisdom to bear in their analysis and understanding of a given story that has been conveyed. In both the Akan and Yorùbá traditions, these stories give the storyteller control in reaching his or her overt and expressed goals while simultaneously serving as a conduit for the accomplishment of underlying goals.

In this paper, I have used Dikènga as a conceptual framework for understanding story structure in terms of content and function. By extending the analogy of Dikènga by applying them to stories, the Afrikan principle of complementarity becomes manifest in moving the conversation beyond the debate between function vs. art for art's sake towards a more holistic and complementary Afrikan conceptual, analytical and methodological research paradigm.

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