

GOD'SPOWER TAMARAUKURO PREZI

Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

## **Ịzọn narratives: Nengi-Ilagha's *Condolences*, and Okara's *The Voice* and "Little Snake and Little Frog".**

### **Abstract**

Beyond its definition as a story or an account of a sequence of connected events and experiences that is told or written in prose or poetry form in great detail and arranged in a logical sequence, or as the practice and art of telling stories, the narrative holds a special place of honour in the West African literary space. Although comparatively few are gifted in the art of story-telling, many often participate in listening. The griots, as these story-tellers or narrators are called in the countries that make up the Old Mali Empire, still wield some respect in modern times and often tell their stories in huge festival-like settings to the accompaniment of drums and tambourines. From the Senegambia in the West to Nigeria in the East, West Africa has produced literary giants in the narrative art form. Ousmane Sembene's *God's bits of Wood* (1960) and William Conton's *The African* (1960) through D.T. Niane's *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* (1965) and Camara Laye's *The African Child* (1953) to Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God* (1964) and J.P. Clark's *Ozidi* (1966) all follow this narrative tradition. Ịzọn narratives consist of both the oral and written forms. However, this paper will focus on Bina Nengi-Ilagha's *Condolences* (2002), Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (1964) and "Little Snake and Little Frog" (1992).

*Key words:* story, narrative, narrator, griot, Ịzọn.

### **1. Introduction**

Owing to the lack of availability in Malta and Poland of many narrative texts from West Africa, and even journals and important materials on West African and Nigerian literature written in English or French, I have chosen to present this paper in a rather more open form. I have also opted to write on the content of Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (1964) and "Little Snake and Little Frog" (1992) rather than do a literary appreciation or criticism of the narratives, knowing that not many persons in the reading audience here have read many of these Ịzọn and West African narratives.

## 2. Narrative

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Narrative can be defined as a long or short story, report or account of connected factual or imagined past, present, or future events and experiences, presented in a sequence of written or spoken words, or still or moving images, or both (see Wikipedia).<sup>1</sup> It describes oral storytelling as the earliest method for sharing narratives. It also states that narratives are used in indigenous traditional societies, to entertain through myths and legends, transfer knowledge and guide children on proper behaviour, cultural history, formation of a communal identity, and to maintain the values and morals of the community such as individuality, obedience, honesty, trust and compassion.

## 3. The Griots

The *griots* of West Africa are story-tellers and much more. The griot tradition began about seven centuries ago during the Malinke Empire which stretched from modern day Senegal to Timbuktu and Gao in Mali as well as to parts of Ivory Coast. In the cultures of West Africa especially in the Mande society, the *griots* are at the same time story-tellers (narrators), historians, advisors to court, musicians, praise-singers and oral poets or *bards*.

From the Gambia, through Senegal, Guinea, Mali, Ivory Coast, Ghana to Nigeria, and in the culture of the African Diaspora especially in the United States, South America and the West Indies, they are the guardians of oral literature and history in the sub-region. The art of being a griot (*Jeli* or *Jali*) is known in Mandinka or Maninka (Mandingo) tradition as *Jeliya* or *Jaliyaa*.

## 4. West African Narratives

On the literary front, one cannot fail to mention the literary 'griotism' of the narratives of Ousmane Sembene from Senegal, D.T. Niane from Guinea, and Chinua Achebe from Nigeria. Below is a non-exhaustive list of 'classic' West Africa novels.

- From Senegal: Ousmane Sembene's *Les Bouts de bois de Dieu* (*God's Bits of Wood*) (1960), Cheikh Hamidou Kane's *L'aventure Ambigue* (*Ambiguous Adventure*) (1961), Mariama Ba's *Une si longue lettre* (*So Long a Letter*) (1979), and Aminata Sow Fall's *La Grève des Battu* (*Beggar's Strike*) (1979).
- From Gambia: William Conton's *The African* (1960). Conton was originally from Sierra Leone.
- From Mali: Yambo Ouologuem's *Le Devoir de Violence* (*Bound to Violence*) (1968).
- From Guinea: D.T. Niane's *Soundjata ou l'Epopée Mandingue* (*Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*) (1960) and Camara Laye's *L'Enfant Noir* (*The African Child*) (1953).
- From Sierra Leone: Robert Wellesley Cole's *Kossoh Town Boy* (1960).
- From Ivory Coast: Bernard Dadie's *Climbie* (1956), and Ahmadou Kourouma's *Les Soleils des Indépendances* (*Suns of Independence*) (1968).

<sup>1</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narrative> [accessed: September 2018].

- From Ghana: Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones are not yet born* (1968), and Kofi Awoonor's *This Earth my Brother* (1971).
- From Benin: Olympe Bheley Que num's *Un pie ge sans fin* (*Snares without end*) (1960).
- From Nigeria: Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Arrow of God* (1964), Wole Soyinka's *The Interpreters* (1965), J.P. Clark's *Ozidi* saga (1966), Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (2006) and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2003) and *Half of a yellow Sun* (2006).

## 5. Niger Delta Narratives

The Niger Delta is that area of Nigeria which is rich in crude oil, stretching along the coastal plains in the South-South parts of Nigeria, consisting of Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers States in Nigeria.

The narratives of the Niger Delta of Nigeria include Ken Sarowiwa's *Sozaboy* (1985), Elechi Amadi's *The Concubine* (1966), Neville M. Ukoli's *The Twins of the Rainforest* (1968), A. Igoni Barrett's *Black-ass* (2015), Isidore Okpewho's *Tides* (1993), Anthony Abagha's *The Children of Oloibiri* (2008) and Kaine Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* (2006).

## 6. Narratives by IẀon Authors

The major IẀon narratives are J.P. Clark's *Ozidi* saga (1966), Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* (1964) and "Little Snake and Little Frog" (1992), Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro's *The 12-day Revolution* (2006), J.E. Ifie and Bina Nengi-Ilagha's *Condolences* (2002) and *Crossroads* (2003). These texts are written in English about IẀon traditional and cultural experiences.

J.P. Clark's *Ozidi* is an epic drama. The story which is common to the IẀon people of the Niger Delta is usually told in seven days to the accompaniment of music, dance, drama and a cultural festival. J.P. Clark was the first to write the 'Okabou' version of the *Ozidi* story down having been told to him by three different narrators. He chose to tell the story in drama form. The story itself is multiple-edged: it is a narrative, a piece of drama and an epic poem. It is the most outstanding IẀon text in the sense that it is the text that has the most outstanding literary merits as it has a beginning, a middle and an end in such a way that no part of the story is superfluous.

## 7. Short Stories

Stories are a rich literary form of the IẀon cultural heritage. Story-telling is a rich IẀon cultural tradition. It was the favourite pastime of the IẀon people until the 1960s and 1970s. After taking their supper stories were told for several hours in the evening on weekdays and until very late or even the early hours of the morning on weekends. When I was in primary school we used to gather in an old woman's house to be

told stories by herself and her husband. Also in small communities and villages people gathered at compound halls and *atele*, community halls or market squares to listen to stories.

From time to time, famous story-tellers (bards—the equivalents of griots in the Mandingo story-telling tradition) from other parts of Iẓonland were invited to narrate the Ozidi Saga and other Iẓon cultural myths, legends and fables during the season of Iẓon festivals which usually coincides with present day Christmas and New Year or Iẓon cultural, traditional or religious holidays. At such times they would be well hosted with choice foods and sent on their way back home with loads of gifts of both fish and farm produce like cassava, water yams, sugar canes and sweet potatoes.

## 8. Iẓon Narratives

### 8.1 Bina Nengi-Ilagha's *Condolences*

Bina Nengi-Ilagha is a native of Okoloba in Kolokuma-Opokuma local government area of Bayelsa State.

Uzor Maxim Uzoatu, in a newspaper article in THIS DAY of 14 October 2003 titled **Nigeria: Fictions of Folk-Memory**, says “Prose - Great fiction sustains communal memory. Bina Nengi Ilagha is a consummate weaver of folk-memory in her award winning first novel *Condolences* and in her equally ground breaking collection of short stories *Crossroads*. The two books make seamless music out of past and present. We are dealing here with lyrical poetry wearing the mask of prose.”

In this narrative, the author skilfully uses her narrative ability including a lucid language and vividness in her interesting descriptions of events, characters and brief scenes of life in present day Nigeria to explore the atmosphere of mourning Pere the protagonist, to unravel the complex patterns of human behaviour.

*Condolences* portrays the interplay between shadow and substance, love and hate, life and death. It tells the absorbing story of the protagonist Pere Alazibo, a remarkable, dashing and wealthy young entrepreneur with a pleasant personality and appearance, who dies at the height of his powers in a ghastly car accident. As his friends, relatives and enemies queue to write in the condolence register in the days of mourning before his burial, a contrast is revealed between their real feelings and the falsehood which they write down in the register.

Ugwu (2015) writes on *Condolences* as follows:

*Condolences* is a tale of man's exploitation, abuse and degradation of man's natural endowments, and the consequences of the evils associated with willful destruction of the environment in all its ramifications—physical, psychological, social, ecological, etc.

*Condolences* is the story of the life and death of a young and prosperous Ijaw taxidermist, by name Pere Lazio. Pere grows up in the little Asoama village that lies along the shores of the River Nun, one of the many tributary rivers of the Niger Delta. He is the son of Matthew Alazibo. Matthew's father compels him to marry Atari, one of the village girls before he proceeds for studies abroad. Matthew, however, returns from London with a white woman and four children. He settles in Port Harcourt with his new family, abandoning Pere and his mother, Atari, in Asoama. Atari dies of a broken heart, leaving Pere to the care of his uncle, Immanuel, while Matthew dies a few years later “of disappointment” (148). His European wife and children return to London, abandoning him in Port Harcourt.

Through sheer determination and hard work, Pere studies zoology at the university and goes into taxidermy as a business, making connections and attracting great wealth and fame to himself, at home and internationally. At his death in an auto crash, a condolence register is opened where relations, friends, supposed friends, business associates, employees, different people from various works of life write words, most of which are at variance with their thoughts and intents. Working through the minds of the characters, the writer successfully weaves this tale of deceit, empathy, apathy, and sundry feelings, hinting, at the same time, on the squalor, desolation and degradations that are associated with the novel's time and geographical settings.

Pere's death seems to bring to an end the confusions, successes, failures, intrigues, loves, hatreds, and betrayals that he symbolizes. Yet, it does not offer a solution to the poverty, criminality, injustice, and other vices, but most importantly, it does not offer a solution to environmental degradation, hinted at towards the end of the story. Briefly on page 142 and more intensely between pages 151 and 156, the writer just suddenly awakes to a realization of the root of all the society's ill.

## 8.2 A Brief Biography of Gabriel Imomotimi Okara

A native of Bumoundi town in Ekpetiama clan of Bayelsa State in the Niger Delta of Nigeria, Gabriel Imomotimi Okara is one of the earliest exponents of African literature in English. Okara developed a deep interest in the language, literature and culture of his people at a very early age. The most significant thing about Okara's *The Voice* in African literature in English is his pioneering linguistic experiment with transliteration from IẪn to English which gives us an insight into the linguistic, socio-cultural and ancestral origins of the writer.

### 8.2.1 Okara's *The Voice* (1964)

Gabriel Okara's *The Voice* is about Okolo and his search for *it* (truth, goodness, faith, integrity, etc.). Immediately after finishing Secondary school, when his kinsmen were happy because they thought that development would soon come to their village, Okolo began his search for the true meaning of life and the nature of human existence. Because of this, the greedy and corrupt Chief Izongo and his cohorts (the puppet council of Elders) said Okolo was either out of his mind or insane due to his secondary school education or staying too long alone by the river. "Okolo's eyes were not right, his head was not correct" (23). They also spoilt his name by saying that he was not courageous. "Okolo had no chest, his chest was not strong and he had no shadow" (23). People even ran away from him when he approached them for fear of his saliva falling into their mouths and consequently making them to become mad also. Three messengers were sent to get him, but he escaped from their grip after they wrestled him to the ground. He ran into Tuere's house. Tuere had been dubbed a witch by her townsmen, when her father and later her mother also died. They were thus afraid to go and get him because of her threatening posture. Seitu, the voice of the people, and the messengers were terrified when Tuere starts stalking them. They were afraid they would die of itches. Tuere asks him how or where on earth Okolo expected to find *it* when everybody had locked up their minds.

Okolo asks Chief Izongo to tell him the "bottom of it": that is, why Chief Izongo wanted him so badly that he came personally to get him. Okolo tells Chief Izongo that his "head is as clear and cool like rain water." (38)

He is confronted by Chief Izongo and his henchman and adviser, Abadi who ask him not to search for the meaning of *it* in Amatu. They wondered why it was during their own time as Elders of Amatu community he should start looking for *it*. They ask him to take his search elsewhere. Chief Izongo addresses Okolo saying "Hear him. Always asking questions. Questions will take you nowhere. I keep telling you these teaching words." (42). I keep advising you). Abadi who claimed to have been to England, America and Germany and have an MA and a Ph.D. took sides with Chief Izongo, but Okolo exposes him asking:

Whom are you fighting against? Are you not simply making a lot of noise because it is the fashion in order to share in the spoils? You are merely making a show of straining to open a door that is already open? (44).

In order to allow peace reign, Okolo said he would keep his thoughts to himself if his hands were untied. Chief Izongo refuses and tells Okolo instead to agree to be one of them (i.e. abandon his search for *it*). Okolo refuses and Chief Izongo orders him to leave his hometown Amatu.

Tebeowei, Benitu (the leader) and Tudou are Okolo's childhood friends. Benitu and Tudou are Chief Izongo's messengers, with Benitu as the leader. Tebeowei advises Okolo to "change and do as others are doing". (49). Despite Okolo saying:

"Our fathers' insides always contained things straight. Our insides were also clean and we did the straight things until the new time came. We can still sweep the dirt out of our houses every morning" (50),

Tebeowei replies saying:

"... you must see the fact of the new time. Everybody's inside is now filled with money, cars and concrete houses and money is being scattered all around. If any falls at my feet, I stoop and pick it up. If I don't and kick it away, I will be called a know-nothing man and I will be kicked away." (50)

Tebeowei warns Okolo that things are as bad in Sologa as in Amatu. However, he refuses to quit his search for *it* and boards the 'Sologa mail' engine-boat to travel to Sologa the small urban town.

On the boat to Sologa, Okolo meets different sorts of persons: a woman wearing an Accra suit; a white man's cook; another woman who trained her son, paid twenty pounds for him to get a job as a clerk, married a bride for him; the corrupt policeman; and the man who failed in politics because he had no money to give. On the boat they encounter bad weather, thunder and storm. They call on *Woyengi* 'God' and other gods such as *Amadosu*, *Kolokumo Egbesu*, *Benikurukuru* 'their clan's deity'. Okolo had an old raincoat which he used to shield himself and the girl-bride. However, his good intentions are mischievously misinterpreted. He is accused of having touched the bride in an unbecoming manner.

On arrival at night in Sologa of the Big One, Okolo was met by two strangers who advised him not to try to know the root of things. They claimed to be taking him to a place where he could find *it*, but in reality took him to a human slaughter house with human skull and bones. He reports to a policeman who tries to bring in tribalism into the matter, but Okolo is uninterested. The policeman says the owner of the said house is "a big man" (79). He tells Okolo that the law respects big men in Sologa. As such, he discards his report as soon as he is out of Okolo's presence. Okolo walks past different eyes in Sologa- "frustrated eyes, ground-looking eyes, harlots' eyes, nothing-looking eyes, hot eyes, cold eyes, bruised eyes, despairing eyes, nothing-caring eyes, grabbing eyes, dust-filled eyes, aping eyes, ..." (80). Okolo ate in a restaurant with the inscription "Even the whiteman's Jesus failed to make the world fine. So let the spoil world spoil. 'Eat and drink O, die one day we go.'" (82). The owner of the restaurant counsels him not to go further in his search for it saying:

"Look, my man, stay here with us. The thing you are searching you cannot find here... You can only this thing find in rubbish heaps or in night soil dumps and those who go there do not come back. We, here too, we have our best tried, but it is like trying to see if the body of a person who is in the water with you is dry." (83).

Okolo believes in his search for *it*, but his inside is not sweet. His inside would only be sweet when he finds *it*. A tall listener of the Big One of Sologa finds him and drags him to the whiteman, but Okolo is disappointed at the outcome of his interview with the whiteman, their head, whom he thought would provide him with answers and allow him to meet the Big One. The whiteman advises him, thus: "Be sensible and be a good lad. This country will need men like you if only you learn to shut your eyes at certain things." ... Look, my lad, these things simply don't exist in real life, if you want to get anywhere, if you want to make good. No one will thank you, especially one who is in authority, for telling him by implication that you are, morally, a better person. You've got to be discreet." (88). The whiteman threatens to put Okolo in an asylum if he did not accept to go back home to Amatu. Okolo realizes that "nothing has any more meaning but the shadow-devouring trinity of gold, iron, concrete..." (89) Okolo decides to return home and face Chief Izongo and his Elders. This time around, he proposed to create, plant and make *it* grow in the insides of the masses. (90).

On the seventh day of the expulsion of Okolo from Amatu, Chief Izongo invited the Elders and people for a celebration. Ukule the cripple overhears Tiri the messenger say that the money paid to them by Chief Izongo was "bad money". Ukule and Tuere both prayed to *Woyengi*, the supreme God "to make Okolo's words gather power before his returning time" because they envisaged that Okolo must return to Amatu "since his umbilical cord was buried in the ground of the town." (97).

In order to find Okolo to swear to the fact that he did not touch Ebiere the bride, the husband said he needed money to do so. "Without money I can't find him. Money is inside everything in Sologa." (104).

Okolo's father's dying words to him were:

"The world is changing and engine canoes and whiteman's houses have everybody's inside filled...believe in what you believe. Argue with no one about the whiteman's god and Woyengi, our goddess. What your inside tells you to believe, you believe and, always the straight thing do and the straight thing talk and your spoken words will have power and you will live in this world even when you are dead. So do not anything fear if it is the straight thing you are doing or talking." (106).

Okolo embarks on the journey back to Amatu, his village. In Okolo's view, "spoken words are living things like cocoa-beans packed with life. And like the cocoa-beans they grow and give life." (110). He wonders if his meaning of life is to plant *it* in people's insides by asking if they've got *it*...? (110-111). Okolo knew his purpose in life. He sees Chief Izongo as someone lost in a fog in a river trying to guide "those who are also lost in the fog, and those in the village who, by their voices, want to guide him." (111). Okolo concludes that every man or woman, including Chief Izongo, the Big One of Sologa and the whiteman, the superintendent of the listeners, has or ought to have his or her own meaning of life;

"a purpose apart from bearing children and the sweetness of one's inside in the world is in the fulfillment of that purpose. ...one of the two hard things, is knowing your purpose in this world. The other which is harder, is not to corrupt it after knowing what your purpose is." (112).

Okolo arrives at Amatu in the night they are dancing and remembering his deportation from Amatu. In spite of, and disregarding Elder Abadi's suggestion that the Council of Elders should allow him

counsel Okolo to leave Amatu, at the command of Chief Izongo, Okolo and Tuere are tied back to back unto a canoe, with their feet tied to the seats of the canoe and set on the river where the current carried them from one bank of the river to another and eventually the canoe was drawn into a whirlpool and they drown with no one to come to their rescue. Okolo sacrifices himself in the quest for *it*.

For some lexico-semantic study of Okara's *The Voice*, you may see Yeibo (2011:216).

### 8.2.2. Gabriel Okara's "Little Snake and Little Frog" (1992)

Gabriel Okara is an Izon literary writer who had before this short story written a popular novel, *The Voice*.

This story was first published by Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc in 1992. Below is a summary of the story:

Once upon a time there was an animal town called Nama-ama where all animals, big and small, lived. It was inhabited by lions, elephants, goats, sheep, rabbits, tortoise and other animals.

Mother Frog and her son Little Frog and Mother Snake and her son Little Snake also lived in Nama-ama. The frogs and the snakes lived at either end of the town, and the two mothers never spoke to each other because they did not like each other.

There was a field in the town where all the little animals went to play everyday. One early morning, Little Frog and other little animals went to the field to play. Other little animals went there to play with their friends. Little Frog and Little Snake were very good friends and they played together on the field every day.

On this particular day, Little Frog arrived at the field first and met other little animals playing. His friend Little Snake had not yet arrived. Little Rabbit was playing with his friend, happily riding high above all other animals on Little Elephant's back. Little Lion played with Little Sheep, happily running around each other. Little Frog was not happy because Little Snake had not come. *He was sad*.

Then he saw Little Snake coming very fast. Little Frog was now happy and hopped about with joy. He ran to Little Snake and they too began to play.

Little Frog and Little Snake rolled on the grass. Little Snake put his head into the mouth of Little Frog and Little Frog also put his hand and then his head into the mouth of Little Snake. They were very happy and played until they were very tired. Then they fell asleep for a long time.

When they woke from their sleep and looked around, they were the only little animals left. The field was quiet, and the sun had gone down. They were very hungry, so they left in a hurry.

Mother Frog came out of her house, looked and saw that the sun had gone down. She was afraid because it was almost night time. She mused that Little Frog had been away since morning, playing and had not returned. She said "This child will kill me one day".

Mother Frog went to cook supper. Having made the fire and put a pot of soup on it, she waited. She saw other little animals running home, but did not see Little Frog. She was very much afraid because some bad animals even ate little animals.

She sat near the fire and the soup pot and waited. Then she got up and hopped along the road. She looked and saw Little Frog coming. She went back quickly and sat where she sat before and waited.

When Little Frog came he said he was very hungry and would fall down and die if his mother did not give him food at once. Mother Frog was very happy about his return, but she did not show it. She pretended to be very angry and said "You will kill me one day." Then she asked where he had been since morning. Little Frog said he had gone to the field to play with his friend. He thought he would get beaten for returning so late. He was almost in tears.



His mother asked him who his friend was. He responded saying it was Little Snake. He said they played every day and did not fight. Mother Frog looked at him and was afraid. She asked whether it was actually true he played with Little Snake. Little Frog confirmed saying that Little Snake was actually his friend. However, Mother Frog did not want him to play with Little Snake any longer and advised him not to play with Little Snake anymore. She said they were food for snakes, and little snake will eat him some day. She reminded him before going to bed.

Meanwhile, Little Snake also arrived home very hungry and asked for food from Mother Snake but she did not listen to him. She was angry with Little Snake for returning very late in the evening. Little Snake cried for food. His mother asked him where he had been, and he replied that he had gone to the field to play with his friend, Little Frog. He said they didn't fight but only played. Mother Snake was very angry with him and told him he was a fool for not eating his friend, Little Frog. She said he ought not to ask for food when he had food with him in the field but only played with it. She said frogs are good food for snakes to eat. She told Little Snake to go to the field the next day and wait for his friend Little Frog and eat him when he comes. She made sure that Little Snake understood her, then she gave him food.

Little Snake felt sleepy after eating, but before asking him to go to bed Mother Snake reminded him of what she had told him. She also made him to repeat that he would eat Little Frog. He did this until he fell asleep.

Little Snake went to the field very early the next day before all the animals. He waited in the grass while the other little animals played and shouted. Little Snake waited for Little Frog and wondered why he hadn't come. He began to fear that Little Frog would not come.

Little Snake was very happy when he saw Little Frog coming from afar. He thought he was going to eat Little Frog for breakfast and was sure Little Frog would have a very good taste. As Little Frog came nearer, Little Snake raised his head and shouted to him to come quickly.

Little Frog heard Little Snake and stopped. Little Snake asked Little Frog to come so they could play, and moved towards him. Little Frog moved back. Little Snake asked Little Frog not to go away but come so they could play as they did the previous day, and again moved towards him. Again, Little Frog moved back. Little Snake begged Little Frog to come, and moved forward. Yet again, Little Frog moved back. Little Snake asked Little Frog if he was afraid of him, his friend. Then, Little Frog told Little Snake that what Mother Snake told him, his own mother also told him. And he quickly hopped away.

### 8.2.2.1 Conclusion

This animal tale or fable, a 'children story' by Gabriel Imomotimi Okara is a didactic meant to teach children the lessons of life and a home truth. This said, however, it can also be viewed as a satire of some political groups and ethnic groups in Nigeria. In the case of political groups it is the case of the big parties like PDP and APC versus the smaller parties in Nigeria, and in the case of the ethnic groups, it is the case of the 'major' languages—Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo versus all the other 'main' language groups such as Izon, Efik/Ibibio, Tiv, Edo, Fulfulde, Kanuri) and 'minor' language groups (Urhobo, Itsekiri, Isoko, etc.) in Nigeria. I will leave each one to his own analysis of the story.

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